

## Metro Press Article:

### Genoa Limestone Company Approaching 100th year

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Graymont Dolime Inc., located at 21880 W. State Route 163, in Genoa, has produced dolomitic lime products for over 90 years.

According to Keith Hille, plant manager, the lime plant has been in Genoa since 1915 and will most likely continue quarrying dolomitic limestone for generations to come.

"The limestone deposit is over 450 feet deep," Hille said. "There is enough stone to meet the demand for well over 100 years."

Formerly USG, the plant has had first and second generation employees working there. The plant currently has 61 full-time employees with most coming from Genoa, Oak Harbor and Elmore in Ottawa County. There are also a few employees from nearby Lucas, Wood and Sandusky Counties, as well, Hille said.

The Genoa facility is owned by Graymont LTD, of British Columbia, the third largest producer of lime products in North America.

Dolomitic Limestone is a sedimentary rock. The dolomitic limestone in Genoa is considered to be one of the best deposits in the world for the production of building lime products in part because of the bright white color of the processed stone.

"The difference between regular limestone and dolomitic limestone is that the dolomitic limestone contains around 40 percent magnesium," Hille explained. "It has an almost 50/50 split of calcium and magnesium."

The product produced in Genoa is used for a wide variety of applications including construction. The dolomitic lime is used as a component of plasters, mortars, finish coats, and stuccos.

Dolomitic quicklime is used to remove impurities from steel and can be used to remove silica, increase pH and stabilize heavy metals in both liquid and solid wastes. When added to soil, lime can be a very effective way to solidify and prevent future discharge of hazardous wastes and to stabilize soil.

Lime is also used for the production of glass, to remove pollutants from gases created in industry and is used agriculturally to adjust soil ph as well as add calcium and magnesium into the ground for plant growth.

"There are 14 plants throughout the US and Canada," Hille said. "Most of our products from Genoa are used in building products."

According to Hille, the limestone is quarried - drilled and blasted - out of the ground. The rock is then crushed and sized. Larger pieces of stone are used for construction base material and construction aggregate, Hille said.

Once sized and crushed, the stone is run through rotary kilns which results in quicklime consisting of calcium and magnesium oxides.

"We also hydrate the lime here in Genoa," Hille said. "We add water to the lime which transforms it from an oxide state to a hydroxide and that is what most of our product goes out as."

For a company that spends a lot of time moving heavy stone, blasting it from its resting place, the lime plant has had an outstanding safety record over the years.

Graymont has earned numerous safety awards from the National Lime Association in the past.

"We have had 550 days without a "lost time" accident," Hille said. "We are approaching two years without a lost time accident. The last accident was in March of 2006."

Also surprising, given the blasts, many people do not know much about the lime plant even in Genoa, Hille said. "A lot of people do not know we are here even though 163 goes by," he said. "You really do not see a lot of the plant or quarry from the roads. You will see trees and that is about it."

