

## Press Release

# Potential to save 90% emissions PORR and Wiener Netze now rectify outages with almost zero emissions

Vienna, 09.10.2025 - Wiener Netze and PORR have initiated the decarbonisation of their emergency response service. In a pilot project, the “CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral construction team” uses only equipment powered by alternative drives and fuels to carry out work on the electricity, gas, district heating and data infrastructure of Austria’s largest combined network operator. The project’s official launch is 9 October 2025.

If excavation work is required due to a gas leak, damage to a power cable or a fault in a district heating pipeline, that’s when they arrive: The five-person PORR construction team, equipped with around ten machines. The site is cordoned off, the ground is excavated, and repair work begins. It’s common to use excavators and other machinery powered by diesel for operations like this. But alternatives are already available now, explains PORR CEO Karl-Heinz Strauss: “For this joint pilot project with Wiener Netze, PORR has assembled a fleet of vehicles powered exclusively by electric and hydrogen-based drives. In addition, a truck with a crane running on HVO 100 (hydrotreated vegetable oil) is being used. This will allow us to reduce the CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions of this construction team by roughly 90% over the course of a year.”

The Vienna University of Technology (TU Wien), which is providing scientific support for the project, calculates that approximately 46,500 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub>e can be saved annually. The calculation takes into account emissions from diesel, HVO 100, hydrogen, and electricity.

### Energetic project launch

The starting signal came on 9 October: Work began on a district heating pipeline in Vienna’s 6th district in the presence of Peter Weinelt, CEO of Wiener Stadtwerke, Gerhard Fida, Chairman of the Management Board of Wiener Netze, and Karl-Heinz Strauss, CEO of PORR.

“Sustainability is a top priority for Wiener Stadtwerke. Together, we are pursuing the city of Vienna’s goal of becoming CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral by 2040 across multiple levels. Alongside our *Raus aus Gas (Ditch the gas)* initiative, we’re also focusing on implementing green measures within our own operations. Since the construction sector is a major contributor to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, we’re taking proactive steps: By applying special construction or relining methods, we reduce excavation work and are now making Wiener Netze’s construction team largely CO<sub>2</sub>-free”, says Peter Weinelt. “As Wiener Netze, we’re responsible for the safe operation of the electricity, gas, and district heating networks in our city”, adds Gerhard Fida. “In the rare event of an interruption to supply, our aim is to reconnect our customers to the network as quickly as possible. With our construction team now using hydrogen as a clean energy source, we’ll be able to carry out this work in a way that is almost CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral”.

### Hydrogen-powered backhoe loader as centrepiece

The CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral construction team’s fleet includes passenger cars, trucks with cranes, vans, power storage units, demolition hammers, compaction attachments, vibrating plates, and small equipment. The team’s centrepiece is a

new backhoe loader from the international manufacturer JCB, which uses hydrogen directly as its primary fuel. The Vienna pilot project marks the world's first deployment of this machine by the manufacturer, serving to test its viability in practice.

JCB, the world's third-largest manufacturer of construction machinery, is a leader in innovative alternative drive technologies, including battery-electric and hydrogen-powered systems. Frank Zander, JCB Director Major Accounts Europe, says: "JCB has demonstrated that internal combustion engine technology can successfully run on hydrogen in our machines. This pilot project with PORR and Wiener Netze shows how the decarbonisation of construction sites can become reality using hydrogen as a CO<sub>2</sub>-free fuel".

PORR is currently working with various clients on multiple pilot projects using alternative drive technologies. For instance, data is being collected at a construction site in Vienna's 14th district to support academic research by TU Wien on the forward-looking topic of "CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral construction sites".

### Decarbonising the machinery fleet

Within PORR's new decarbonisation strategy, the systemic conversion of its vehicle and machinery fleet is regarded as the most essential lever for reducing Scope 1 emissions. That's why PORR is focusing on innovative drive technologies and alternative fuels such as HVO 100 as part of the strategic development of its equipment portfolio. However, progress is naturally limited by what machinery is available on the market.

Karl-Heinz Strauss: "We're already taking targeted, step-by-step measures to electrify small equipment. For medium to large machines, however, battery-electric concepts often bump up against technical and economic limitations. In the long term, we see significant potential in the expanded use of hydrogen. We're working closely with machinery manufacturers, research institutions, and of course innovative clients such as Wiener Netze to drive forward these developments together".

### Photo:



*Start of pilot project 'CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral construction team (v.li.) Gerhard Fida, Chair of the Executive Board of Wiener Netze; Peter Weinelt, CEO Wiener Stadtwerke; Karl-Heinz Strauss, PORR CEO; Hannes Zeilinger, JCB General Manager Major Accounts Europe; Frank Zander, JCB Director Major Accounts Europe © Roland Rudolph*



*Hydrogen powered backhoe loader © Roland Rudolph*

The press release including high-resolution images is available for download from the [PORR Newsroom](#). All photos of the event can be found in [our photo database](#).

### About the PORR Group

Top performance driven by innovation - that's what PORR has embodied for over 150 years. With around 21,000 employees and production output of around EUR 6.7 bn (business year 2024), PORR is one of the largest construction companies in Austria and among the top players in Europe. As a full-service provider, PORR offers every aspect of building construction, civil engineering and infrastructure construction along the entire value chain. The focus is on the home markets of Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania. PORR also works in selected international project markets such as Norway, the UK and Qatar. The PORR share is listed in the prime market segment of the Vienna Stock Exchange and is part of the ATX, Austria's leading index (ISIN: AT0000609607).

More info: [www.porr-group.com](http://www.porr-group.com)

### For enquiries, please contact:

**Melanie Manner**

Press Spokesperson

PORR AG

T +43 50 626 5867

[comms@porr-group.com](mailto:comms@porr-group.com)

**Tamara Weixelbaum**

Head of Group Communications

PORR AG

T +43 50 626 1727

[comms@porr-group.com](mailto:comms@porr-group.com)