

DUNLOP RUBBER PROTECTS ERCO'S PLANT

lined, more than 400 fittings, 10 rubber lined tanks, considerable footage of acid-conducting hose, brick linings, protective coatings and even certain specialized carpentry services. During all phases of the project, our personnel worked very closely with ERCO design engineers and the crews that built the plant."

Important though it is, the hydrofluosilicic acid operation is actually a relatively small satellite of ERCO's huge fertilizer manufacturing complex at Port Maitland, Ontario. The fertilizer plant produces sufficient triple superphosphate, single superphosphate and phosphoric acid to satisfy the phosphatic fertilizer needs of most of Southern Ontario and part of northern U.S.A. In addition to these products which are sold to fertilizer blenders for mixing with other soil nutrients, ERCO manufactures calcium phosphate which is used by producers of dairy and poultry feeds.

When built five years ago, this chemical complex did much to revitalize a sleepy, and depressed, fishing village. At that time, Dunlop supplied thousands of feet of hose, pipe and tank linings of all kinds, and a great deal of belting for materials handling purposes. Through the

success of this work, we were in a favourable position when plans for the hydrofluosilicic acid plant were being prepared and were subsequently awarded the contract to supply corrosion-resistant linings and hose for the new plant.

Now completed, the acid plant is a three storey maze of piping, tanks and towers located inside the process building. Outside stand more tanks and several hundred additional feet of pipe and hose. Here, phosphoric acid is produced by the reaction of phosphate rock granules with sulphuric acid — in what is known as the "wet process", after which hydrofluosilicic acid and other "impurities" are removed to leave the pure phosphoric acid. It is interesting to note that, in the past, hydrofluosilicic acid had been only an incidental by-product of regular phosphoric acid production at Port Maitland. After it had been extracted, it was neutralized and simply thrown away. There was not a sufficient market to warrant refining.

This situation no longer prevails, of course, and the hydrofluosilicic acid liquor is now retained in special rubber-lined storage tanks. Later processing makes it

This view of the process building shows some of the rubber-lined pipe and tanks, and acid hose supplied by Dunlop.

