

Sustainable Production

In view of recent events, the ceramics industry is reminded once again of how fragile the supply of raw materials and energy can be. Shortages, supply stoppages and rising prices affect the whole production chain and the people who work along it.

Solutions to these problems may arise from new research and developments, for example in identifying alternative sources of clay materials. Clays are irreplaceable raw materials for ceramic processing and the identification of adequate sources is an important issue that requires an appropriate methodological approach. Strategic prospecting involves several steps, starting with the selection of a suitable area, not only in terms of resource availability, but also in terms of local legislation and access to the area, which will

affect future exploitation costs. This is of course followed by a variety of testing methods to determine the quality of the sampled material.

On the other hand, the production of ceramics is governed by high-temperature processes, as are numerous other industrial operations, such as cement making, oil cracking, steel production or aluminum recycling, to name just a few. Here, porous ceramics can act as thermal insulators to prevent unwanted heat exchange. In line with the wide range of applications, there are also many different types of insulators and different ways in which they can fail during operation. In this context, new and innovative ideas are needed to overcome these obstacles and enable novel developments that make industrial processes more energy efficient. ◀



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