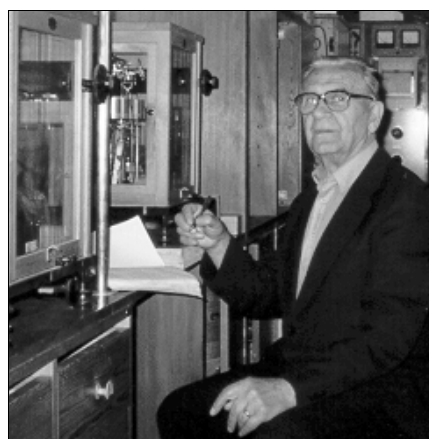


PEOPLE

ALFRED ELENURM – 50 YEARS IN OIL SHALE RESEARCH

It was 1951. Behind A. Elenurm there were five years of studies at the faculty of chemistry of Tallinn Technical University (then Tallinn Polytechnical Institute). There followed an episodic job at the Board of Weights and Measures, then employment at the Institute of Chemistry of the then Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR – about a year in a laboratory, thereafter consistent work at solid heat carrier units for processing oil shale fines beginning with the first small pilot plant situated beside the boiler house of *Ilmarine* works. The work continued at pilot-scale units of Kiviõli (200 and 500 tonnes of shale per day) and finally at 3000 ton-per-day retorts in Narva. Meanwhile he maintained his Ph.D. (Soviet Union candidate degree) thesis dealing with sulfur compounds in units for processing oil shale fines.



Dr. A. Elenurm
in his laboratory (1999)

As establishing solid heat carrier units for oil shale processing proceeded



Oil plant of AS Narva *Elektriijaamad* and co-workers in Narva engineers O. Chikul and A. Kaidalov

under great difficulties, there appeared critics who started a full-scale offensive against the novel processing method. The attacks were directed at various sides of the technology such as its impact on the environment, pollution of shale oils, economic considerations. Unfavourable criticism was often topped with some absurd accusations notwithstanding the assignment (in 1967) of the national science prize to the researchers of the Institute of Chemistry dealing with this method of processing oil shale fines. Systematic studies of A. Elenurm have enabled him to create a thorough conception of the formation of sulfur compounds during oil shale processing in solid heat carrier units demonstrating that the method yields no specific sulfur compounds characteristic of this method only.

From the first studies on a novel method 50 years ago to the present day, A. Elenurm has shown courage and consistency to investigate and employ this method of oil shale processing in spite of the offensive opposition of some authoritative scientists. The solid heat carrier unit SHC-3000 is at present being used also for utilization of various wastes. Here again, investigations of new prospective materials for this purpose rests greatly upon A. Elenurm's shoulders.

Oil shale processing in SHC units as a valuable method has been acknowledged in 2000 by an honour certificate of the Ministry of Environmental Affairs of the Republic of Estonia given to a number of employees of the oil plant of Narva power plants for their success in utilization of industrial wastes.

Your colleagues whom you have always nerved by your calm and invigorated by systematic work during difficult times wish you further strength and energy.

Dr. A. Elenurm and his
co-workers in the Institute
of Chemistry at TTU (1999)

