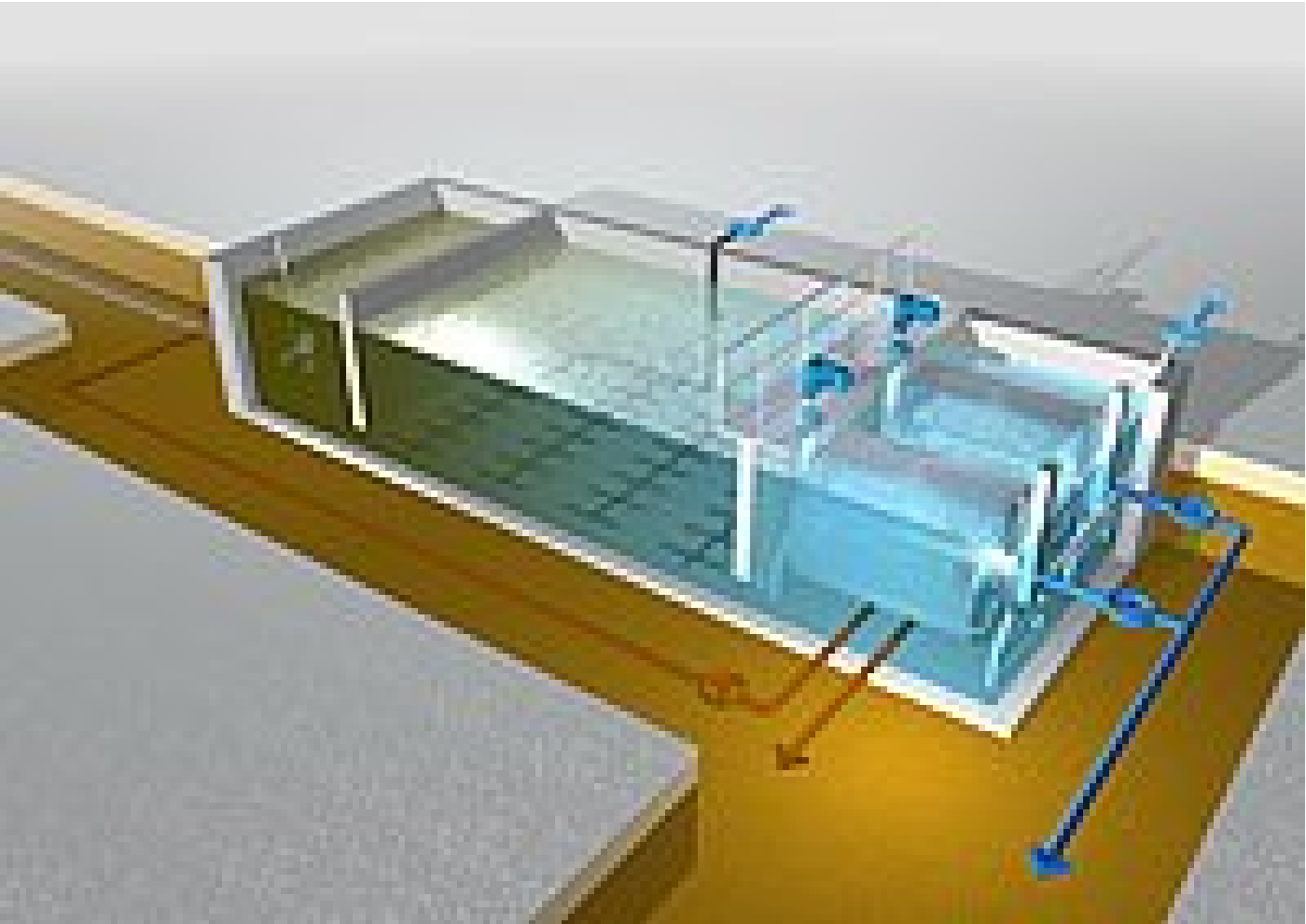


Energy-Efficient Membrane Bio-Reactors



Membrane bio-reactors (MBR) are modified activated sludge systems, whereby secondary clarifiers are replaced by membrane filters.

- MBR systems combine biological wastewater treatment with membrane filtration and disinfection.
- Mixed-liquor solids concentration is increased by a factor of 3 - 5 and tank volume reduced to 20 – 35 %.
- Ultra-filtration membranes retain all solids and bacteria; effluents are of excellent quality.
- Power consumption of MBR-systems is 40 – 80 kWh/(PE•a), whereof about 50 % is consumed by membrane filter operation.
- Membrane scouring air introduces some oxygen into the wastewater so that oxygen supply by fine bubble aeration can be reduced.
- Increased mixed-liquor concentration lowers aeration alpha-factors (e.g. from 0.7 to 0.5) and thus aeration efficiency.
- These two effects approximately cancel each other out.
- MBR-systems increase power consumption by around 10 % in comparison with conventional biological treatment + sand filtration + disinfection.
- MBR-systems should be used where plant footprint is limited and/or where excellent effluent quality is required.

Since membrane filters are major power consumers, installation of energy-efficient units is very important.

The table shows power consumption of a HUBER Vacuum Rotation Membrane VRM® Bioreactor for a 20,000 PT plant in comparison with those of competitors.

Effluent Flow	HUBER VRM	Competition
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$Q_{av} = 140 \text{ m}^3/\text{h}$	$0,32 \text{ kWh/m}^3$	$0,45 \text{ kWh/m}^3$
$Q_{max} = 220 \text{ m}^3/\text{h}$	$0,23 \text{ kWh/m}^3$	$0,40 \text{ kWh/m}^3$
$Q_{min} = 30 \text{ m}^3/\text{h}$	$0,31 \text{ kWh/m}^3$	$0,43 \text{ kWh/m}^3$



Генеральный директор: Железнов Алексей Игоревич  
Адрес: пр-кт Андропова 18, к. 6 · 115432 Москва · Россия · Телефон: +7 499 6830048 · Факс: +7 499 6830048  
www.huber-technology.ru · www.huber.de · E-mail: huber@mail.ru · info@huber-technology.ru  
Банк ЗАО «ЮниКредит Банк» г. Москва · Расчетный счет: 40702810900010660385 · БИК: 044525545  
Корресп. счёт: 30101810300000000545

