
CITY OF QUILEHTLA

Santa Cruz Quilehtla

Tlaxcala, Mexico



clockwise from top left: Constructed wetlands; Imhof tanks; A sample of treated effluent; A local operator in the constructed wetland

Quilehtla is a small community of 6,000 people east of Mexico City in the Central Highlands. The community required a simple wastewater treatment system that required little or no maintenance, was inexpensive to build, and had no machinery. The requirements at Quilehtla are common in many small Mexican communities.

The wastewater treatment system consists of modified Imhof tanks for primary treatment, sub-surface flow constructed wetlands for advanced secondary treatment, and reed beds for treatment of sludge from the Imhof tank. The system is totally passive and is capable of treating both wastewater and sludge. The water quality consistently meets a 20/20 design standard and requires a minimal amount of energy to operate. Additionally, the system was constructed with local labor and 90% local materials.

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