

Evonik expands fumed silica capacity

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- New plant for fumed silica comes on stream in Antwerp
- Capacities have been aligned to high demand
- Strengthening of businesses with specialty chemicals character

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Essen/Antwerp. Evonik has started up on schedule its new plant complex in Antwerp for production of fumed silica. With this, the specialty chemicals company can now serve the high demand for fumed silicas marketed under the AEROSIL® brand. Typical applications include paints and coatings, advanced adhesive systems, transparent silicones, and nonflammable high-performance insulation materials. Evonik has invested a sum in the upper double-digit million euro range in the new plant complex.

“We’re pursuing a clear growth strategy for our silica business. With the additional capacities, we’re ensuring supply for our customers over the long term,” said Harald Schwager, deputy chairman of Evonik’s executive board. As part of Smart Materials, silica belongs to one of Evonik’s four strategic growth engines with above-average market growth. The growth of the global market for fumed silicas is expected to exceed 4 percent annually, outpacing the global economy as a whole.

Along with the market for hydrophilic fumed silica, demand is also growing for specialty hydrophobic silicas. The existing plant in Antwerp has accordingly been upgraded such that hydrophilic fumed silica can be given hydrophobic properties by special post-treatment. Evonik therefore now produces hydrophobic AEROSIL® at a second European site in addition to Rheinfelden, thus servicing continued high demand.

Andreas Fischer, member of the management board of Evonik Resource Efficiency GmbH, said: “We’re happy we’re now in a position to meet customer’s requests for higher

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quantities, in particular for hydrophobic AEROSIL®. The capacity to supply our own raw materials at the site, and its central location in Europe, were also especially important to us for this project. The site's proximity to the international export port in Antwerp is an important factor in supplying our customers worldwide."

With the simultaneous modernization of the silane production plants as part of the investment, raw-material supply for AEROSIL® production as well as tire silanes is assured. AEROSIL® is produced as fumed silica by high-temperature hydrolysis of silanes in a hydrogen flame.

Evonik is a leading global manufacturer of silica. In addition to the fumed silica AEROSIL® and the precipitated silica ULTRASIL®, SIPERNAT®, ZEODENT® and SPHERILEX®, Evonik also produces silica based matting agents under the brand name ACEMATT® and other fumed metal oxides under the brand AEROXIDE®. Overall, Evonik has a global production capacity for all silica based products of about 1 million metric tons/year.

Company information

Evonik is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. The focus on more specialty businesses, customer-oriented innovative prowess and a trustful and performance-oriented corporate culture form the heart of Evonik's corporate strategy. They are the lever for profitable growth and a sustained increase in the value of the company. Evonik benefits specifically from its customer proximity and leading market positions. Evonik is active in over 100 countries around the world. In fiscal 2018, the enterprise with more than 32,000 employees generated sales of €13.3 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of €2.15 billion from continuing operations.

About Resource Efficiency

The Resource Efficiency segment is led by Evonik Resource Efficiency GmbH and produces high performance materials and specialty additives for environmentally friendly as well as energy-efficient systems to the automotive, paints & coatings, adhesives, construction, and many other industries. This segment employed about 10,000 employees, and generated sales of around €5.7 billion in 2018.

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