

Evonik Examining Construction of a Methyl Mercaptan Plant in the USA

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Essen, Germany-based Evonik Industries AG, is proceeding on schedule with its preparations for closely examining the construction of a methyl mercaptan plant at its site in Theodore, Alabama, USA. The results of the basic engineering and feasibility studies will be available in the coming months, and tax relief for the project in Alabama has already been approved, too. Evonik intends to make a decision on the construction of the plant this year. The investment volume is expected to amount to some \$65 million. Methyl mercaptan is a building block for the amino acid DL-methionine, which is produced at Evonik's site in Theodore.

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Dr. Klaus Engel, member of the Executive Board of Evonik Industries responsible for the Chemicals Business Area, comments: "Our methionine activities are a significant part of our specialty chemicals portfolio. By expanding backward integration, we seek to strengthen this business consistently further." The concept of backward integration includes supplying Evonik's DL-methionine plants with all key intermediates such as acrolein and methyl mercaptan from in-house production. Evonik has been successfully doing this at its DL-methionine facilities in Antwerp (Belgium) and Wesseling (Germany).

Evonik anticipates that building the plant in Theodore could bring substantial savings in production and freight costs. The ability to integrate the methyl mercaptan plant directly into the present acrolein production could leverage further synergies. "We see the plans for a methyl mercaptan facility as preparation for expanding DL-methionine capacity further in Theodore," says Engel.

DL-methionine is an essential amino acid for healthy and environment-friendly nutrition of livestock, especially pigs and poultry.

Evonik Industries is the world's only company to produce and market all four main amino acids for animal nutrition: DL-methionine, L-lysine (Biolys®), L-threonine and L-tryptophan. With innovative products and services, Evonik also makes a valuable contribution in this area to the cost-efficiency of its customers and to healthy and environment-friendly animal nutrition.

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Company information

Evonik Industries is the creative industrial group from Germany which operates in three business areas: Chemicals, Energy and Real Estate. Evonik is a global leader in specialty chemicals, an expert in power generation from hard coal and renewable energies, and one of the largest private residential real estate companies in Germany. Our strengths are creativity, specialization, continuous self-renewal, and reliability. Evonik is active in over 100 countries around the world. In its fiscal year 2007 about 43,000 employees generated sales of about €14.4 billion and an operating profit (EBIT) of more than €1.3 billion.

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