

Press release

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Agreement between Degussa Antwerpen, E.ON Kraftwerke and Electrabel to build and operate cogeneration units

Degussa Antwerpen, E.ON Kraftwerke and Electrabel, SUEZ Group, have signed an agreement for the construction and operation of cogeneration units. The two power companies will jointly invest 45 million euros in a joint venture for combined generation of electricity and heat.

A tailor-made solution

The chemical industry is an important user of energy. Within this sector, Degussa Antwerp produces basic chemicals that go into numerous applications and products used daily by everyone. Due to the large increase in production the need for energy has risen strongly. Among other things, Degussa has recently invested heavily in a big methionine project. Despite this expansion, constant application of new technology helps the plant to continually reduce its CO₂ emissions per ton produced.

The Degussa Antwerpen chemical company and Electrabel already operate a 43 MW cogeneration unit in partnership, located on the site of Degussa's chemical plant in the port of Antwerp. In the future, the company's energy requirements will increase further as a result of the growing demand for products such as methionine. To meet this requirement Degussa went in search of a partner for a second cogeneration unit.

Degussa opted for E.ON Kraftwerke and Electrabel. Recently the three parties signed an agreement under which electricity and steam will be generated by an integrated combination of the two cogeneration units, operated under a 50/50 joint venture between Electrabel and E.ON Energy Projects, an operative unit of E.ON Kraftwerke focusing on industrial customers.

The new installations will take two years to build and will enter operation around mid-2010.

All the steam and some of the electricity output will be used by the Degussa Antwerpen production plants. The remainder of the electricity will be marketed in equal shares by each of the joint venture partners.

"The agreement as well as the new installation itself represents a highly efficient solution which has been especially developed for the industrial site," said Dr. Ingo Luge, Chairman of the Executive Board of E.ON Kraftwerke. "I believe that the new power plant offers a good future perspective for our industrial partner Degussa."

"This partnership once again confirms Electrabel's flexibility and dynamism. We are able to offer tailor-made solutions to meet the specific requirements of our customers. Furthermore, with this agreement we have demonstrated that we are open to solutions that let other operators enter the Belgian market," explained Electrabel CEO Jean-Pierre Hansen.

"This is a further step in the optimisation of our energy supply," stated Jan Van den Bergh, managing director of Degussa Antwerpen NV. "It will give us the breathing space we need not only to meet our present requirements but also to make further investments."

The new cogeneration unit: facts and figures

Cogeneration is a technique for simultaneous production of electricity and heat (in this case in the form of steam), so that there are hardly any energy losses. Thanks to state-of-the-art technology the new cogeneration unit will have an energy efficiency of more than 85%. The present unit has a capacity of 43 MW, while the new installations will produce 42 MW (30 +12).

To increase energy savings even further, the waste gas from the Degussa chemical processes will be used as fuel for cogeneration, in addition to natural gas.

The integrated plant will have an electrical generating capacity of 85 MW and a thermal capacity of between 85 and 160 MW. The resulting energy savings will avoid emissions of 60 000 tons of CO₂ annually.

About Degussa

Degussa is a multinational group that focuses on speciality chemicals. With an annual turnover of more than € 10.9 billion and around 35,000 employees it is the third-largest chemical concern in Germany and the number one speciality chemical producer in the world. Degussa Antwerpen with 14 production units is one of the largest multi-user plants in the group. The company employs around 1,000 people and made a turnover of € 394.7 million in 2006

E.ON Kraftwerke GmbH – built on experience

E.ON Kraftwerke GmbH, with its head office in Hannover, operates power stations at more than 30 locations in Germany with a combined installed capacity of approximately 15,000 megawatts. This makes E.ON Kraftwerke Germany's largest conventional electricity generator. E.ON Kraftwerke's mission is to generate electricity reliably and in a manner that conserves natural resources. It can honour the commitment to safeguarding people and the environment thanks to the leading-edge technology used in its plants. It is constantly exploring new ways of improving the efficiency of its generation assets, and is therefore continually achieving reductions in our plant emission levels. E.ON Kraftwerke also invests heavily in expanding Germany's renewable generation capacity, specializing in the construction and operation of biomass-fired power plants and wind turbines. It also engineers and builds power stations in several countries abroad. Within E.ON Kraftwerke, E.ON Energy Projects GmbH is the group's unit focussing on tailor-made solutions for industrial customers.

Electrabel, a European supplier of global, tailor-made energy solutions

Electrabel is one of the top power companies in Europe and the market leader in the Benelux. The company is taking advantage of deregulation of the electricity and gas markets in Europe to achieve sustainable growth based on strict criteria of profitability. In developing its range of energy products and services the company takes maximum advantage of the synergies between electricity and natural gas. It has a high-quality, personalised range of products for each customer, made available through marketing subsidiaries in partnership with local operators. Electrabel manages diversified generating facilities amounting to more than 29,000 MW, and is active on all the energy trading markets. In Belgium it operates the electricity and gas distribution networks on behalf of the distribution network operators. Electrabel is part of SUEZ, an international industrial and services group operating in the fields of energy and the environment.

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Ce communiqué est également disponible en français.

Deze persmededeling is ook in het nederlands verkrijgbaar.