



Further investments in France and the Netherlands

press release

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Industrial Merchant activities of Air Liquide

The Industrial Merchant business line ensures the management of the production and distribution of **gases in bulk and cylinders**, and provides customers with the applications and services required for their implementation.

Its customers, who range from artisans to major businesses, use **industrial gases** in 5 key sectors:

- food and pharmaceuticals
- automobile and manufacturing
- crafts and distribution
- materials and energy
- technology and research.

2007 revenue amounted to **€4.439 billion**.

The use of carbon dioxide in industry

Purified and liquefied carbon dioxide is needed for **numerous industrial applications**: quick-freezing of food products, controlled-temperature transport, carbonation of soft drinks, water treatment, etc.

The European market in **industrial applications for carbon dioxide**, essentially food processing and water treatment, represents **3 million tonnes per year** and has been growing steadily by **3% annually**. To support this growth, **Air Liquide**, the **European leader in this market**, is investing in **two new carbon dioxide recovery units**, one in **Bazancourt, France** and one in **Rozenburg, the Netherlands**, for an overall investment of nearly **€20 million**.

The **Bazancourt** unit will recover **120,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year** and will be commissioned **at the end of 2009**. This investment will include rail links to the site, reducing road transport. The **Rozenburg** unit, scheduled for commissioning in the **first half of 2010**, will recover **50,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year**, in particular to respond to demand created by strong growth in the greenhouse cultivation market in the Netherlands.

These investments come in addition to the carbon dioxide liquefaction unit in Geleen in the Netherlands, where a third extension was commissioned in October 2008, representing an additional production capacity of 80,000 tonnes per year. In all, Air Liquide's **total European carbon dioxide production capacity will be increased** by more than **250,000 tonnes from 2008 to 2010**. Thanks to these new production units, carbon dioxide will be purified and liquefied for reuse instead of being released into the atmosphere.

Guy Salzgeber, Vice-President for European Industrial Operations and a member of the Group's Executive Committee, commented: ***"These new investments in Europe, in addition to those at Geleen, will enable us to increase our carbon dioxide recycling capacity by 25%. This will allow us not only to meet the needs of our customers in this market; it will also significantly improve supply-side stability as the Group continues its policy of targeted investments in growth markets."***

With more than **40,000 employees** in **75 countries**, Air Liquide is the **world leader** in industrial and medical gases and related services. The Group offers **innovative solutions** based on constantly enhanced **technologies** and produces **air gases (oxygen, nitrogen, argon, rare gases...)** and **many other gases including hydrogen**. The Group contributes to the manufacturing of **many everyday products**: bubbles in sparkling beverages, protective atmosphere for packed foods, oxygen for hospitals and homecare patients, ultra-pure gases for the semiconductor industry, hydrogen to desulfurize fuels...

Air Liquide is committed to **sustainable development** and helps to **protect life**. Founded in 1902, Air Liquide has successfully developed a long-term relationship with its shareholders built on **trust** and **transparency** and guided by the principles of **corporate governance**. Since the publication of its first consolidated financial statements in 1971, Air Liquide has posted **strong and steady earnings growth**. Sales in 2007 totaled **11,801 million euros**, with sales outside France accounting for almost 80%. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris stock exchange and is a component of the CAC 40 and Eurostoxx 50 indices (ISIN code FR 0000120073).