

finland

Glaston Sells its Interpane Glass Oy Joint Venture to Rakla

Finland-based Glaston has sold its joint venture, the glass processing company INTERPANE Glass Oy, to Rakla Finland Oy.

INTERPANE Glass Oy began its operations in April 2009 and was owned jointly by AAA Glass & Design Finland Oy and a Glaston subsidiary. The share-

holders of INTERPANE Glass have agreed on rearranging their ownership, and as a result of the agreement 100 percent of the shares in INTERPANE Glass Oy were sold to Rakla. After the rearrangement transaction, Glaston still holds a \$5.4 million USD (4 million EUR) secured loan receivable in IN-

TERPANE Glass Oy.

The result effect of the rearrangement transaction, a decrease of approximately \$3.6 million USD, is recognized in Glaston's first quarter result as a financial expense.

"Rakla Finland Oy has a strong knowledge of glass processing," says Arto Metsänen, chief executive officer and president of Glaston. "INTERPANE Glass Oy is sold to a glass processing professional with a positive outlook for its future operations."

"The technological expertise brought by the completed acquisition will strengthen Rakla's chosen line as an expert of innovative and technically challenging glass solutions. The acquisition will facilitate better customer service in Finland and also in Russia and the Baltic countries," says Antti Luukko, Rakla's chairperson of the board.

► www.glaston.net

china

Solutia Opens Regional Testing Center in Suzhou, China

St. Louis-based Solutia Inc. has designed and completed a new regional testing facility at its Saflex® polyvinyl butyral (PVB) manufacturing center in Suzhou, China. The new facility will support the company's laminate testing service program for customers located in the Asia Pacific region serving the architectural, automotive and photovoltaic markets. The facility marks the third testing lab for the company, joining centers in Indian Orchard, Massachusetts and Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.

"While Solutia has always taken part in rigorous internal and external testing of our Saflex interlayers to ensure the quality of our products, the opening of a new customer service laboratory located at our plant in Suzhou, China, brings this support to the Asia Pacific region," says Mark Slock, global technical service director for Solutia's Saflex division. "The new laboratory will allow Saflex applications staff to locally test laminated glass products made with Saflex PVB interlayers in-house to ensure that they meet critical architectural, automotive and photovoltaic industry norms."

The new investment includes such testing equipment as a bake oven, thermal bath, pummel testing equipment and an impact tower. The customer service lab will also house a sample center, which will provide Saflex sheet samples on request to customers across the region.

"Previously, Saflex had used our lab located in Belgium to conduct laminate testing for Asia Pacific customers, which had become time intensive and resulted in long lead times for the market," says Rick Calk, vice president of commercial operations for Saflex. "By bringing laminate testing capabilities to our Suzhou plant, this allows Saflex to be more proactive and responsive to our regional customers' needs and requests for additional testing."

► www.saflex.com

the netherlands

Ferro Announces Restructuring of European Dielectrics Business

Cleveland-based Ferro Corp. has announced that it is closing its facility in Uden, the Netherlands. The company will in some cases transfer the dielectric products manufactured there to other facilities and in other case production will be discontinued. Approximately 120 positions are expected to be eliminated as a result of the restructuring. The actions are expected to be completed by the end of 2010.

The company expects to record net charges of approximately \$13 million during 2010, related to the costs of the restructuring. The charges include approximately \$9 million in severance

charges and approximately \$3 million in site clean-up and shut-down costs. The initiatives are expected to generate pre-tax cost and expense savings of approximately \$6 million on an annual basis.

► www.ferro.com

brazil
Brazil's Glass Industry Still Feels Earthquake's Aftershocks

According to an April article in *El Mercurio*, an 8.8-magnitude earthquake that hit Chile in February has destroyed nearly \$1 million USD worth of glass held in warehouses by the country's glass companies—and led to a nationwide glass shortage when its largest manufacturer, Lirquén temporarily

closed due to damage.

According to the article, the Lirquén facility is expected to reopen in September, and until that time, the country is relying on imported products from Brazil, Argentina, the United States and England. The increased prices—up to 30 percent—are expected to remain in the local market until the local facility reopens.

russia
New Fenzi Alu-Pro Plant in Russian Almost Ready for Production

Fenzi and Alu-Pro have announced that construction of their new manufacturing site in Lipesk, on the outskirts of Moscow, is nearing completion. Built on an area covering roughly 86,000

square feet, operations at the new plant are expected to begin this summer and will initially be dedicated to the production of Thiover sealants and aluminum spacer bars.

According to the announcement, the production capacity will be enough to respond to what the Russian market requires and will meet the needs of insulating glass processors and producers. The companies add that the technology and productive processes applied to the new location meet the same standards of all their other plants in Italy and around the world. In terms of technical assistance and customer service, the area will be covered by a network of distribution, already active for quite some time through the presence of the Glass Alliance network. ■



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