

PRESS RELEASE

OUTSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: PAPER FACTORY IN SANDERSDORF-BREHNA RECEIVES EU'S EMAS CERTIFICATE

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Sandersdorf-Brehna/Landau, 31 January 2020. Progroup AG's new PM3 paper factory in Sandersdorf-Brehna is being awarded the European Union's "Eco-Management and Audit Scheme" (EMAS) certificate. This means it is already setting the benchmark for the future when it comes to sustainability before it starts operating in August 2020.

EMAS is a scheme that has been developed by the European Union for companies that want to improve their environmental performance. By participating in the scheme, Progroup is once again pledging to reduce its energy consumption, save valuable resources such as water and minimise residues (waste materials). As part of a public statement, each year Progroup will provide information about relevant environmental protection measures and also subject itself to a review by independent, government-accredited auditors. A recertification audit will be conducted by an expert auditor every three years.

The certificate is awarded by the Halle-Dessau Chamber of Industry and Commerce. "By deciding to embrace EMAS, Progroup has voluntarily pledged to significantly improve on the statutory requirements for environmental protection in its business operations," stresses Reinhard Schröter, deputy managing director of Halle-Dessau CIC. "It is particularly commendable that this is happening even during the planning and construction phase of the new paper factory – for example when it comes to the logistics of the construction site," Schröter continues.

"Sustainability is a core element of the philosophy that we have pursued for 27 years. It is therefore obvious for us to act in a way that is environmentally friendly and conserves resources right from day one," stresses Maximilian Heindl, Chief Development Officer and member of Progroup's Executive Board. In the construction phase, for example, most of the soil that is excavated will be temporarily stored and reused once the construction work has been completed. It will be used, for example, to construct an earth wall that will minimise noise emissions. Thanks to a dedicated concrete mixing plant, up to 2,000 m³ of concrete can be produced on site every day. This is equivalent to a saving of around 200 truckloads. Progroup also cooperates primarily with regional companies. This enables journey distances and therefore CO₂ emissions to be minimised.

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Landau i. d. Pfalz
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Investments of more than 100 million euros in resource-conserving technology mean that the new paper factory will also satisfy the highest environmental protection standards when operating normally. For example, the integrated circulating water treatment plant will make it possible to reduce the amount of fresh water that needs to be used by around 80 per cent compared to similar factories. It operates like a biological kidney and cleans the water. It can then be used again. This means that around 3,750,000 cubic metres of fresh water are saved each year. This is equivalent to the amount of water used annually by more than 80,000 people in Germany.

As well as using highly efficient production plants, Progroup also focuses on reducing the volume of raw materials used. The new paper machine will produce around 750,000 tonnes of containerboard a year from 100 per cent recovered paper. The subsequent end product of corrugated board can also be fully recycled.

The new factory therefore exemplifies the Green Hightech strategy that Progroup is pursuing. Progroup's PM2 paper factory in Eisenhüttenstadt has also been EMAS-certified for more than ten years. Progroup therefore operates a sustainable environmental management system across its sites.

About Progroup

Progroup AG, located in Landau in the German state of Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany, is one of the leading manufacturers of containerboard and corrugated board in Europe. Since it was founded in 1992 in Offenbach/Queich, the company has been pursuing a consistent growth strategy which, in addition to technological leadership, is also based on the use of innovative and environmentally friendly production technologies. Progroup operates production sites in six countries in Central Europe. Progroup currently operates two paper factories, eleven corrugated sheetfeeder plants, a logistics company and an RDF power plant. With 1,150 employees, the company generated sales of around 966 million euros in 2018.

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