

PRESS RELEASE

With PM3 Progroup will be operating one of the world's largest and most modern paper factories

Progroup AG
Group Office
Horstring 12
76829 Landau
Deutschland
+49 6341 5576 0
info@progroup.ag
www.progroup.ag

Sandersdorf-Brehna, 26 August 2020 – Following a record-breaking construction and assembly time of just 18 months, Progroup's new high-tech paper factory PM3 in Sandersdorf-Brehna is starting to operate. At the heart of the factory is one of the world's most modern and high-performance paper machines for manufacturing environmentally friendly and high-quality containerboard. The plant has an annual capacity of 750,000 tonnes. Progroup is thus increasing its production of containerboard from 1.1 million tonnes to a total of around 1.85 million tonnes annually. The company has been pursuing a Green Hightech strategy since it was founded. Progroup only ever uses recovered paper as the raw material for making paper.

“As a family company, we very much think about the generations to come. The new paper machine is designed so that it will continue to produce containerboard in a sustainable and energy-efficient way for the next 50 to 60 years. This is why we are investing 100 million euros in sustainability measures alone. It means that, when it comes to environmental protection and energy efficiency, the new factory sets the benchmark for the future in the paper industry,” says Maximilian Heindl, Chief Development Officer and member of the Board of Progroup.

Sustainable production thanks to world's largest recovered paper drum and biological kidney

Around 860,000 tonnes of recovered paper per year will be processed at PM3 to create containerboard. The raw material is treated in a state-of-the-art drum pulper and drum screen. With an overall installed length of 78 metres, this recovered paper drum is the largest of its type in the world. The special design of the drum means that it is particularly good at conserving resources.

To preserve the precious resource of water, Progroup has integrated a new type of circulating water treatment plant. It works like a biological kidney by treating the process water which is used and returning it to the closed circulation system for paper production. Progroup thus reduces the amount of fresh water used by 80 per cent. This is equivalent to 3,750,000 cubic metres of water per year. During this process, recovered paper impurities are biologically degraded and converted into biogas. This means that the plant overall consumes ten per cent less fossil resources. For the consistent implementation of the sustainability measures, the paper factory was awarded the “Eco-Management and Audit Scheme” (EMAS) certificate from the European Union during the construction phase in January 2020.

Biggest investment project in Saxony-Anhalt creates jobs and long-term prospects

With a total level of investment of 465 million euros, PM3 is currently the biggest investment project in Saxony-Anhalt. The State Economics Minister, Prof. Dr. Armin Willingmann, emphasises the importance of Progroup setting up its business: “In the last four years in particular, Saxony-Anhalt has increasingly developed to become an attractive business location for national and international investors, which is also demonstrated by the major investment that Progroup has made in the new paper factory in Sandersdorf-Brehna. The paper factory – one of the most modern and powerful in the world – exemplifies a second pleasing development: Saxony-Anhalt is evolving to become a state for the technologies of the future in which as well as technical innovations high-quality jobs are also being created. I am therefore very optimistic that the economy in Saxony-Anhalt will cope well with the consequences of the corona pandemic and will grow dynamically again in the next few years. Progroup’s new paper factory will also have a very positive effect on the economic strength of the state over the long term.”

“The state-of-the-art and environmentally friendly plant really does showcase the region,” adds Andy Grabner, Mayor of Sandersdorf-Brehna. “The working relationship with the town council was characterised by mutual respect and appreciation right from day one. Since construction work began, Progroup has considered many local companies in the supply chain. With the commissioning of PM3, further jobs and apprenticeships are now being added.” Whereas in other regions in Germany employment is stagnant in places, thanks to Progroup the Sandersdorf-Brehna site will see the creation of around 140 direct jobs and up to 350 indirect jobs with great potential for the future.

PM3 is an important part of Progroup’s growth strategy

As one of three paper factories that the company now operates, the new plant forms an important part of Progroup’s consistent “Two Twentyfive” growth strategy: The aim is to double the size of the company by 2025 compared to 2015. In addition to the new paper factory PM3, there are another eight corrugated sheet board plants and more than 500 new employees. The total level of investment for these growth projects is around 1.35 billion euros. Progroup’s plans for new corrugated sheet board plants and paper factories all focus on doing sustainable business. This starts during the construction phase by awarding contracts to regional companies in order to minimise journey distances and thus CO2 emissions. It culminates in investments worth millions in innovative, sustainable technology, as the paper factory PM3 impressively demonstrates.

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 1991 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. These currently include three paper factories, eleven corrugated sheet board plants, a logistics company and an RDF power station. With 1,293 employees, the company generated sales of around 887 million euros in 2019.

Press contact

Martin Wilhelm, Senior Manager, Corporate Communications

E-mail: martin.wilhelm@progroup.ag

Mobile: 0173-3680649