

PRESS RELEASE

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WACKER Opens Regional Innovation Center in the USA

Munich / Ann Arbor, May 11, 2022 – Wacker Chemie AG yesterday opened a new regional Innovation Center based in Michigan, USA. The research building, which will develop high-margin biotech and silicone specialties for high-tech applications in key industries, will also serve as the headquarters of WACKER's subsidiary Wacker Chemical Corporation, which is responsible for the Group's business activities in North and Central America. The research campus is part of the company's growth campaign announced at the end of March. WACKER intends to significantly expand its market position in the USA and other target regions through investments in research and development, additional production capacities and accelerated growth. The investment for the research building, which also acts as an administrative center, amounts to around €40 million.

On the new campus located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on a 70,000 square meter site, biotech and silicone experts who have previously conducted research at different locations will be able to develop products for the North American market under one roof. The building houses more than 20 technical and analytical laboratories. The equipment for the development of new products and applications is state-of-the-art.

“After China, the United States is the largest market for chemicals and silicone products”, said Robert Gnann, president of WACKER’s silicones business division, at the official opening yesterday. “Our new Innovation Center is an essential prerequisite for serving customers in North America with tailor-made silicone specialties, which are used in a wide range of application fields”, he continued.

“WACKER will thus become the preferred choice for customers who are looking for sustainable and forward-looking solutions for tomorrow’s products and technologies.” With the decision to pool and expand its regional research and development expertise in Ann Arbor, the company is fully committed to growth. “Over the next few years”, Gnann emphasized, “we will systematically expand our market position as a manufacturer of silicone specialties in this important region.”

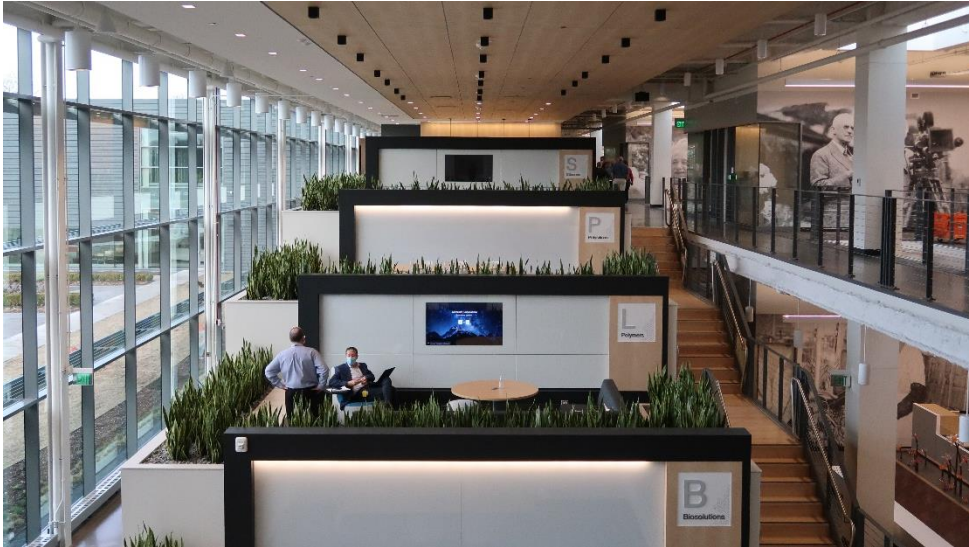
WACKER is one of the few silicone manufacturers that produces pyrogenic silica in addition to silicones. Pyrogenic silica is an important filler for the production of high-temperature vulcanizing silicone rubber for the automotive, electrical, health and household industries. WACKER produces pyrogenic silica from the by-products of polysilicon production at its integrated site in Charleston, Tennessee. Here, too, the Group is planning to invest in silicone production in the coming years.

The focus of the research and development work at WACKER’s new Innovation Center is on special products for innovative and above all sustainable technologies and applications. Topics range from biotechnology to silicones: skin-sensitive silicone adhesives for wound care and portable medical devices, silicone-based defoamers, which

control foaming and enable significantly more energy-efficient process control, and novel cyclodextrin applications for food supplements are just a few examples of the projects scheduled at the new facility. Circular economy and the recycling possibilities of silicones will also be a major topic.

The 13,000-square-meter building also houses the administrative headquarters of Wacker Chemical Corporation (WCC). In mid-April, management, sales and administration – more than 200 employees – moved to Ann Arbor from the previous company headquarters in Adrian, Michigan. The production site, where WACKER has been producing silicones for more than 50 years, continues to manufacture silicone fluids, silicone emulsions and silicone rubber.

“We are pleased to formally open this world-class Innovation Center today to our valued partners”, said David Wilhoit, President and CEO of WCC. “The site will serve as an important anchor for our growing operations across North and Central America. The Ann Arbor area is home to dozens of research facilities and educational institutions, making it one of the leading communities in Michigan and the entire nation for R&D, enabling the company to network with, and recruit from, among the best high-tech talent in the nation.”



WACKER's new Innovation Center in Ann Arbor, MI, USA. Silicone products for customers in North and Central America are developed and tested here. (photo: WACKER)






Inside one of the silicone labs in Ann Arbor. WACKER's new Innovation Center develops high-tech products for the medical sector and other key industries. (photo: WACKER)

Please note:

These photos are available for download at:
<http://www.wacker.com/pressreleases>

For further information, please contact:

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The Company in Brief:

WACKER is a global chemical company with some 14,400 employees and annual sales of around €6.21 billion (2021). WACKER has a global network of 26 production sites, 23 technical competence centers and 52 sales offices.

WACKER SILICONES

Silicone fluids, emulsions, rubber grades and resins; silanes; pyrogenic silicas; thermoplastic silicone elastomers

WACKER POLYMERS

Polyvinyl acetates and vinyl acetate copolymers and terpolymers in the form of dispersible polymer powders, dispersions, solid resins and solutions

WACKER BIOSOLUTIONS

Biotech products such as cyclodextrins, cysteine and biologics, as well as fine chemicals and PVAc solid resins

WACKER POLYSILICON

Polysilicon for the semiconductor and photovoltaic industries