

NEWS

Short News Items

[Planter Products Fertilizer Plant Will Be Upgraded and Expanded]. Procter & Gamble Inc., subsidiary of UOP, has been contracted to assist in the expansion of a plant which will raise capacity of NP/NPK grade fertilizer from 170,000 to 220,000 metric tons/yr. The plant is located in Limay on Bataan Peninsula. Planter Products is the Philippines largest fertilizer firm. (no more info in article)

Chem. Eng. News 56 #17:14 (4/24/78) [25-3137]

[Hydrocarbon Products Proprietary Ltd.] Hydrogen Purification Unit Has Been Started Up by Air Products & Chemicals Inc., marking the company's first cryogenic hydrogen purification unit in Australia. The plant, located in West Footscray, Victoria, has a capacity of 3.5 million std cu ft/day of 90% purity hydrogen. Hydrogen is separated from a hydrodealkylation-process benzene plant's offgases and recycled. (no more info in article)

Chem. Eng. News 56 #17:14 (4/24/78) [25-3138]

[New Dimethyl Terephthalate Capacity Has Been Started Up in Bulgaria and Turkey] by Krupp-Koppers G.m.b.H., West Ger. The Dimitri Dimov Chemical Fibre Collective plant in Jambol, Bulg., has been expanded to 10,000 metric tons/yr; and SASA's plant in Adana, Turk., has been expanded to 60,000 metric tons/yr. (no more info in article)

Chem. Eng. News 56 #17:14 (4/24/78) [25-3139]

NIOSH [(U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health)] Studying Sulfuric Acid Exposure. NIOSH has awarded a two-year, \$59,000 contract to Enviro Control Inc. to perform a retrospective mortality study of workers exposed to sulfuric acid. Under contract, the company will identify facilities where potential sulfuric acid exposure can occur, collect demographic data and a detailed work history of exposed workers, and determine the vital status of at least 95% of the cohort. Death certificates, pathology reports, and possibly tissue samples will be collected in cases of deceased workers. (no more info in article)

Chem. Eng. News 56 #17:15 (4/24/78) [25-3140]

✓ Hoechst A.G. Starts Up SCP [(Single Cell-Protein)] Pilot Plant. Hoechst A.G. has brought a 1000 metric ton/yr unit into operation and built a scale commercial plant. The organism involved, *Methylomonas clara*, grown on a medium comprising methanol, ammonia, phosphates, and selected minerals. When dried, the pure product, tradenamed Probion-S, contains of 90% protein. It is viewed as a supplement both for human and animal foodstuffs. The unit, built by Uhde, a Hoechst subsidiary, draws on fermentation technology arising from the parent company's pharmaceuticals division. The development was funded partially by West Germany's research and technology ministry. (no more info in article)

Chem. Eng. News 56 #17:18 (4/24/78) [25-3141]

✓ Families Sue Sun [Oil Co.] Over Refinery Gas Blast. Twelve families, displaced from their Marcus Hook, Pa., homes by a butane explosion on 1/28/78 at Sun's oil refinery, filed a suit against the company. They charge loss in value of their homes and other damages as well as emotional distress. No dollar amount has been specified in the suit. One of the attorneys who filed the suit in Delaware County asked for access to the company's records and information about the gas leak and subsequent fire and explosion. Sun has been paying for food and lodging of several families at hotels since they were evacuated, and is installing gas monitoring and alarm systems in basements of the homes that are being repaired or rebuilt. Families affected by the blast want Sun to shut down its four other underground gas-storage areas, install louder alarms, and give written guarantees that another explosion will not happen. All the requests have been refused except one: installation of louder alarms for residents who want them. (little more info in article)

Chem. Week 122 #17:9 (4/26/78) [25-3142]

✓ Package Film Producers May Get FDA [(U.S. Food & Drug Administration)] Break. Producers of PVC and acrylonitrile food packaging may be relieved of further regulation by the FDA, which proposed in Sept. 1975 that certain PVC products be banned because of vinyl chloride migration into foods. Ethyl Corp., FDA researchers, and others now indicate they find a lower level of residual monomer in plastic wraps, trays, and bottles; the level may be lower than the threshold point theoretically required for migration. The FDA recently said that it was aware that circumstances have changed significantly since its 1975 proposal; and staffers indicate that the hearing record may be reopened to include results of new research if industry can show that migration is not detected at the present low residual levels. If there is no measurable migration, it could mean that FDA's jurisdiction over acrylonitrile bottles would be lifted. Without

migration into foods, neither acrylonitrile nor PVC could be considered food "additives". (no more info in article)

Chem. Week 122 #17:10 (4/26/78) [25-3143]

[Union Carbide Corp.'s Niox Catalyst ESN Was] Banned in California by the California Industrial Safety Division in mid-Apr. 1978. According to A. Carter (Calif. Ind. Safety Div.), as many as six California plants may be using the catalyst, and inspections of all the facilities will begin immediately. Numerous foam makers in other states have voluntarily stopped using ESN until health questions are answered, and many have switched to other catalysts. The International Federation of Chemical, Energy and General Workers Union, based in Zurich, has issued an alert to its affiliates around the world warning of a high health risk. (little more info in article) See also Abstract No. 25-2904.

Chem. Week 122 #17:17 (4/26/78) [25-3144]

South Korea Plans a Third Petrochemical Complex, which will be located at Yochun and based on a 350,000 metric ton/yr ethylene plant [Abstract No. 25-2456]. This will be the third ethylene-based complex in the country and the second one at Yochun. The new units now planned (and their capacities in metric tons/yr) include low-density polyethylene (150,000), vinyl chloride (200,000), styrene (100,000), propylene oxide (30,000), vinyl acetate (30,000); and planned expansions include polypropylene (80,000), styrene-butadiene rubber (50,000), butadiene (50,000), and acrylonitrile and terephthalic acid. According to K. K. Choi (South Korea Minist. Commer. Ind.), the total cost of the project is estimated at \$1 billion. Although local private firms are expected to be given priority in bidding for the plants, 50:50 joint ventures with foreign companies are highly likely. Gulf Oil and Mitsui have reportedly expressed interest. (little more info in article)

Chem. Week 122 #17:41 (4/26/78) [25-3145]

Maruzen [Oil Co. Ltd.] Has Bigger Plans for Polymeric p-Vinylphenol. Maruzen, which is now making the product in a three 3 ton/mo pilot plant at Satte, near Tokyo, plans a two year marketing effort and expects to build a unit by 1981 to make about 500 metric tons/yr. The product, priced at \$4.14/lb, is seen as having potential as a thermosetting and photosensitive resin; can withstand 200°C for an extended period; and according to Maruzen, will be useful as a curing agent in epoxy resins and may be especially useful in copper-clad laminates for electronics. The starting material is p-ethylphenol, which is made from ethylbenzene. The ethylphenol is fed, along with steam, into a dehydrogenation column containing a fixed-bed catalyst made from iron and an unidentified ingredient. The monomer is dried and purified, and by-products like cresol and phenol are burned as fuel. Polymerization is carried out at 100°-150°C. (little more info in article)

Chem. Week 122 #17:44 (4/26/78) [25-3146]

[Anic S.p.A.] and BP [Proteins Ltd.] Decide to Liquidate Italproteine [S.p.A.]. The plant has been closed except for a short period in 1977, when 900 tons of Toprina were made [Abstract No. 25-2024 and 25-2404]. No decision has been made on the next move. In Apr. 1978, Liquichimica Biosintesi received permission to produce 40,000 tons/yr at its bioproteins plant near Reggio Calabria; the product must be marketed outside Italy. (little more info in articles)

Eur. Chem. News 32 #832:6:8 (4/14/78) [25-3147]

Dutch Gas Production Falls for the First Time. Deliveries by Nederlandse Gasunie N.V. fell 0.4 billion to 94 billion cu m, including foreign sales of 50.6 billion cu m. Gasunie plans to limit its foreign sales to 50 billion cu m/yr from now on and to increase imports to maintain Dutch reserves for as long as possible. Ekofisk gas is already imported; Algerian LNG deliveries will start in the 1980's, and the Netherlands is interested in taking gas from the Danish sector of the North Sea. Big Dutch gas consumers, including chemical companies such as Hoechst Holland N.V., Nederlandse Stikstof Mij. N.V., Nederlandse Staatsmijnen, Dow Chemical Co., Du Pont, Akzo Chemie N.V., and Air Products are very concerned over the growing price differential between Dutch gas prices and the lower prices paid by competitors in West Germany, Belgium, and France. (little more info in article) See also Abstract No. 24-7471.

Eur. Chem. News 32 #832:8 (4/14/78) [25-3148]

Ciba-Geigy [A.G.] Revives Lead Chamber H₂SO₄. A production plant based on the classical nitric oxide/sulfuric acid lead chamber process will be brought on stream by Ciba-Geigy Environmental Services and H. C. Starck at Starck's Goslar complex in the fall of 1978 to handle exhaust gases from molybdenum roasting, containing 1% by vol of sulfur dioxide, and produce 74% sulfuric acid. The companies claim that the process offers considerable advantages, arising from process engineer-