

BASF more than doubles its butadiene capacity in Europe

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BASF of Ludwigshafen, Germany, has started-up a new butadiene extraction plant at its site in Antwerp, Belgium.

The plant has an annual production capacity of 155 kt, and is BASF's second butadiene extraction plant in Europe. The company's butadiene extraction plant at its site in Ludwigshafen has an annual production capacity of 105 kt. With the plant in Antwerp, BASF is more than doubling its production capacity for butadiene in Europe.

The Head of BASF's Basic Petrochemicals Europe business unit, Uwe Kirchgassner, says: "This plant secures our internal supply of butadiene at competitive costs. In addition, it enables us to take advantage of opportunities on the external market and strengthens our market position in Europe."

The butadiene will be extracted from crude C4, a product from the steam cracker at the Antwerp site. Butadiene is a raw material that can be used to produce synthetic rubber, among other applications. The tyre industry is one of the main consumers of butadiene. Other applications for butadiene include plastics production and paper chemicals.

BASF announced its decision to build the plant in 2012, stating that it had been driven by the increasingly tight supplies of butadiene on global markets. In recent years, the volumes of butadiene available on the market have declined sharply. At the same time, demand from the tyre and other industries has been rising. This has led to a considerable increase in prices.

SOURCE High Performance Plastics