

# BASF restarts butyl-A unit, lifts FM at Freeport, Texas

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Germany-based BASF confirmed on Wednesday that its butyl acrylate (butyl-A) unit at Freeport, Texas, has restarted after repairs were completed following a mid-May outage.

The company said the unit is operating normally. BASF also lifted its [force majeure](#) on butyl-A, which was implemented on 15 May after an equipment failure at the unit.

Sources said the butyl-A outage had not strained supply of that product, and that tightness seen in the market in the first and second quarters has eased.

"The market is relatively well-balanced right now," a customer said. "Buyers can get what they want, but demand is not sluggish enough to cause sellers to discount to secure volume."

In June, falling [propylene](#) inventories and stronger spot pricing slowed the feedstock's downward price momentum.

In the meantime, July free-market price talks were just getting underway for some, but rollovers were beginning to surface.

The development tracks predominant market sentiment, given the rollover in upstream June propylene and some talk this week that strong demand seen during the first half of 2017 was perhaps beginning to soften.

Only Dow Chemical announced an effort to increase acrylates prices in July. The company is seeking gains of 5 cents/lb (\$110/tonne), citing some current and imminent snugness as it anticipates some planned maintenance this quarter.

The company also cited the possibility of higher near-term propylene. Several sources have suggested propylene will settle flat to higher for July.

[June declines](#) took butyl-A free-market prices to a new range of 91-95 cents/lb FD (free delivered), as assessed by [ICIS](#), for smaller-volume buyers.

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Acrylates are commonly used to make products including paint and coatings, plastics and construction and pressure-sensitive adhesives.

Other US acrylates suppliers include Arkema and Sasol.

Source *Icis News*