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Southeast Texas BUSINESS JOURNAL

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A promising partnership

Entergy Texas partners with Habitat for Humanity to improve energy efficiency in 40-plus homes

A promising new partnership is already benefitting more than 40 Southeast Texas homeowners whose houses were weatherized during a recent endeavor involving more than 60 volunteers and businesses.

Entergy Texas and Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County teamed up Sept. 29 to help make homes in the Jenard Lane neighborhood of Beaumont more energy efficient and sustainable during extreme weather events. Volunteers installed insulation, sealed ducts and air leaks around doors and windows, replaced old bulbs with LEDs and installed other ENERGY STAR energy-efficient items like advanced power strips to help homeowners save money on their monthly electric bills and better stave off the effects of severe weather.

According to Entergy Texas President and CEO Eliecer "Eli" Viamontes, the goal of the new community partnership is to help reduce utility costs for homeowners – particularly older adults, indi-



Entergy Texas President and CEO Eliecer "Eli" Viamontes

viduals with disabilities, families with children and other households with repeatedly high utility bills.

"Entergy Texas has partnered with the Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson

County to weatherize homes in the area," Viamontes said at the event. "It's intended to help customers save on their electric bill through energy

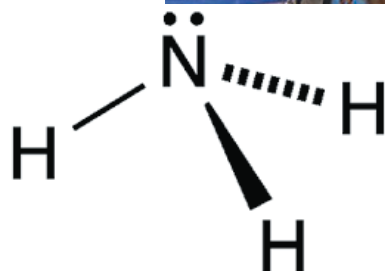
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OCI selects Beaumont site for new facility

A global producer and distributor of hydrogen-based products that previously picked Southeast Texas as the site for the successful Natgasoline partnership project has again selected Beaumont as the location for another large new facility planned to begin production in the first quarter of 2025.

OCI N.V. announced Sept. 8 that it will start construction of a world-scale 1.1 million ton per annum blue ammonia project in Beaumont, based on KBR technology. The passage of the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the enhanced 45Q credits in the Act strengthened the attractiveness of this project, stated OCI when making the announcement.

In order to entice OCI to again select Southeast Texas as the site for this investment, Jefferson County Commissioners and the Beaumont City Council offered incentives to OCI in the form of tax abatements. The council unanimous-



ly approved two industrial development agreements (IDAs) on July 19, offering 15-year tax abatements to OCI for two projects it was considering with a combined worth estimated from between \$4.1-\$4.9 billion.

The first development mentioned on the council's July 19 agenda would be "a facility that would convert biomass (local

woodchips) into biosynthesis gas and bio methanol." The project's estimated value is \$1.7-\$2.1 billion and would require from 600-1,000 construction workers, employing up to 120 permanent staff upon completion. The agreement between OCI Fuels USA and the city extends to Phase 1 and Phase 2 of construction.

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The second development is a plant that would produce blue ammonia. The project's anticipated value is \$2.4-\$2.8 billion. It would employ up to 2,000 construction workers and provide up to 120 permanent positions. The agreement between OCI Clean Ammonia LLC and the city extends to Phase 1 and Phase 2 of construction.

Blue ammonia is produced from hydrogen derived from natural gas where the CO2 by-product is captured and sequestered. Green ammonia is produced from hydrogen based on renewable sources, such as wind and solar, rather than fossil fuels. This project has been designed to transition from blue to green ammonia production in the future as green hydrogen becomes available on a larger scale.

During the Beaumont City Council meeting on July 19, then Interim City Manager Chris Boone recommended approval of the abatements, reminding those gathered for the meeting that the global producer with headquarters in The Netherlands already has significant interests in the area with OCI Beaumont and its joint venture Natgasoline, which each come to the ends of their 10-year abatement periods in 2025 and 2026 respectively.

"OCI has already invested over \$3 billion in the Beaumont area, converting a moth-balled plant into the OCI and Natgasoline methanol plant, bringing approximately \$350,000 in revenue annually to the city of Beaumont beginning in 2025 from OCI and an estimated \$5.3 million being provided to the city of Beaumont from the NatGas facility beginning in 2026," Boone told councilmembers. "This demonstrates pretty clearly an ability to realize such projects of this magnitude."

In an interview with the Southeast Texas Business Journal, Boone said if OCI selected the local site for even one of the projects, the benefits would extend well beyond the initial investment, just as the other local OCI investments he mentioned bring in business and provide numerous jobs in the community.

"The implications are going to be much more than just what they're proposing to invest because of the construction jobs and the permanent jobs," said Boone. "Those dollars are going to be new dollars to the community. They're going to turn over many, many times in the community. So, even if we only get half of it, the impact is going to be terrific."

"It's also an endorsement of our region. They were so pleased with how well things go in our region – logistics, workforce, the business climate – that

"The recent passage of the IRA, which bolsters the regulatory framework and competitiveness of clean ammonia in the US, in addition to technological developments in carbon sequestration, is supporting ammonia as a key driver of the energy transition."

We believe OCI, a global leader in hydrogen, will play a pioneering role in the future of this industry."

Nassef Sawiris, Executive Chairman



OCI

they are considering our area for new projects. I think they were pleasantly surprised by how smoothly things have gone here."

According to the company's recent announcement, OCI has selected Beaumont as the site for the larger of the two potential investments, the blue ammonia production plant. The city is still in consideration for the biosynthesis facility.

OCI is constructing the new plant at its property off Highway 347, just outside the city limits near OCI Beaumont. The U.S. Gulf is a strategic location that allows the facility to serve both the U.S. market and export clean ammonia as a hydrogen carrier to hydrogen-deficient markets around the world, such as Europe and Asia, as well as catering to significant demand from new applications, including power and shipping fuels. The blue ammonia will be delivered to customers using future zero carbon ammonia-fueled engine ships, leveraging OCI's global infrastructure.

OCI's two core products, ammonia and methanol, "are the most promising hydrogen carriers to drive the hydrogen economy and enable the energy transition," the company described. As one of the largest producers and traders of ammonia and methanol globally, with access to abundant low-cost renewable energy sources, OCI is well-positioned to benefit from the emerging demand for clean hydrogen and is exploring a variety of projects at its existing global sites in the United States, Europe and at Fertiglobe in the Middle East and North Africa "to capitalize on this opportunity."

Nassef Sawiris, executive chairman of OCI N.V., commented, "The recent passage of the IRA, which bolsters the regulatory framework and competitiveness of clean ammonia in the U.S., in addition to technological developments in carbon sequestration, is supporting ammonia as a key driver of the energy transition. We believe OCI, a global leader in hydrogen, will play a pioneering role in the future of this industry."

Capital expenditure is expected to be up to \$450 million, reports OCI, and the facility would have plenty of room

to grow, with utilities and land allowing for the possibility of doubling its capacity, potentially adding an additional 1.1 million ton per annum blue ammonia line in the future.

The project is well underway, with detailed engineering and procurement work having started earlier this year, and production targeted for the first quarter of 2025. The project has been awarded to Maire Tecnimont on an Engineering and Procurement basis, critical long-lead pieces of equipment have been ordered, and site works are

scheduled to start in the coming weeks, OCI reports.

Ahmed El-Hoshy, CEO of OCI N.V., remarked, "We have been working on this project over the past year to put us in a position to break ground by the end of this year. Alongside our existing blue and green ammonia projects in the U.S. and the Netherlands, at Fertiglobe in the Middle East and North Africa, and our green methanol business, this facility will allow us to continue to build and strengthen our world-leading ammonia and clean fuels platform."

"We are also very excited to extend our partnerships with Jefferson County, the city of Beaumont, Beaumont ISD, the special districts and the state of Texas," he continued. "Their efforts continue to make Southeast Texas an attractive place to do business and we look forward to continued development in the area and working together to position the region as a clean energy leader."

Learn more about OCI online at: www.oci.nl

– Sharon Brooks

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