

PRESS RELEASE

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WACKER Inaugurates Global Competence Center for Thermal Interface Materials in Shanghai

Munich / Shanghai, September 16, 2020 — Today, Munich-based chemical group WACKER opened a global competence center for thermal interface materials in Shanghai, China. The new laboratory is located at the company's China headquarters in Caohejing High-Tech Park. It will conduct fundamental research in order to develop novel silicone-based thermal interface products and solutions for the electrical vehicle market as well as for consumer electronics and telecommunication industries.

Over the past decade, thermal interface materials (TIM) have been one of the fastest growing segments of the materials market globally, with an average compound annual growth rate of more than six percent. Widely used in personal computers, consumer electronics, automotive and telecommunication industries, the demand for silicone-based TIMs is expected to grow continuously, as power density is rising exponentially and thermal management systems become increasingly important.

Electronic devices and batteries generate a great deal of heat that impacts their functionality and service life and can lead to serious faults. Efficient thermal management is therefore increasingly essential. "For improved thermal management of components, the

industry is increasingly turning to heat-dissipation materials”, says Christian Gimber, head of Engineering Silicones at WACKER’s silicone division. “Our thermally conductive silicones can be processed very efficiently, and they also meet the stringent and rising safety and reliability requirements imposed by the electronics and automotive industries.”

The company’s new R&D lab in Shanghai will focus on the development of silicone-based thermal interface materials and novel applications, Gimber emphasizes. “With the new lab installed, WACKER will be able to significantly improve its capability of fundamental research for such materials and come up with tailor-made products to support our customers around the world.”

Located at WACKER’s Shanghai Center in Caohejing High-Tech Park, the TIM competence center shares existing resources such as analytics and the e-mobility lab of the site. Experts will conduct fundamental research aimed at overcoming technical hurdles with regard to performance, processability and cost-effectiveness and leverage WACKER’s proprietary technology to work on new material designs. The facility will develop customized products and solutions with locally available raw materials for the Chinese market, but also support other labs in the company’s worldwide network, such as labs in Germany and Korea, when creating new formulations.

The Chinese industry uses thermal interface materials in a wide array of products. “In fact, China’s range of TIM applications is quite remarkable and one of the most comprehensive in the world”, says Paul Lindblad, President of WACKER Greater China. The new R&D

lab will leverage WACKER's worldwide technological network and expertise to deliver market-driven innovations. "What's more, operating a major TIM research facility here in China also means that our Chinese customers will be able to benefit from a faster response time", Lindblad says.

Thanks to their unique properties, silicones are widely used for thermal management in the automotive, consumer electronics and telecommunication industries. Featuring excellent electrical insulation properties and a high degree of resistance against hot and cold temperatures, chemicals and UV radiation, silicone-based thermal interface materials are available as gap fillers, potting glues, adhesives, greases and foams for smartphones, telecommunication base stations, battery packs and power control unit modules for electric vehicles.






WACKER's new competence center in Shanghai will conduct fundamental research and develop novel silicone-based thermal interface materials for the fast growing electrical vehicle market, for consumer electronics and for the telecommunication industries. (Photo: WACKER)

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The company in brief:

WACKER is a globally-active chemical company with some 14,700 employees and annual sales of around €4.93 billion (2019). WACKER has a global network of 24 production sites, 23 technical competence centers and 51 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