

# The US company Novelis from Atlanta, Georgia is building its most important location for aluminium recycling in Nachterstedt

It is one of the biggest commercial investments to have been initiated in Saxony-Anhalt in recent years. The US company Novelis from Atlanta, Georgia is building its most important location for aluminium recycling in Nachterstedt. The first systems are set to begin operating in 2014, taking used drinks cans, vehicle parts, former metal cuttings and old facade elements and producing bars of die cast aluminium from them.

200 million euros are set to be invested in the new plant approximately 50 kilometres south of Magdeburg. Nachterstedt is therefore becoming the centre for the American firm's long term strategy: by 2020, up to 80 percent of the aluminium should be made from waste metal. In comparison with primary aluminium, this allows a saving in energy costs of approximately 95 per cent, in addition to raw materials such as bauxite. When Nachterstedt reaches its full capacity of 400,000 tonnes in 2015, the share of recycling aluminium of the world leading Novelis group will more than double and reach at least 50 per cent.

Phil Martens, Chief Executive Officer of Novelis, wants to save more than ten million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in the area of global aluminium production by the year 2020. "Our investment in the new plant is bringing us one step closer to our goal of drastically increasing the recycling proportion in rolled aluminium sheets," explains Martens. Nachterstedt will become the biggest location in this context, with three recycling lines. In Germany, the most important market for the use of aluminium alloy in Europe, the potential for renewed use is especially high. Here, only two thirds of drinks cans are recycled at the moment, with many waste transports also going to China.

Novelis made a conscious decision in favour of Nachterstedt, where the company constructed a cold rolling mill with an annual capacity of 170,000 tonnes in 2007. "We want to become a model for sustainable production and are planning a global network for recycling, which will also include Brazil and Korea. Key factors in favour of the Nachterstedt location was its central location in Europe as well as its excellent infrastructure and, of course, the superb work of the approval authorities," describes Tadeu Nardocci, President of Novelis Europe. His company has purchased large amounts of commercial space here at reasonable prices, while real estate for expansion at the company's other locations, such as Düsseldorf is in short supply. He is also expecting to be able to find well qualified employees for the 200 new jobs and that it will also be possible to develop a fruitful cooperation with the neighbouring universities.

Dr. Oliver Picht, who is managing the project for Novelis from the planning through to the commissioning, sees Nachterstedt as an important part of Novelis' global recycling network. "We will be able to process up to 18 varieties of old aluminium which can be delivered from all over Europe," he explains. In this context, agreements will be made concerning the constant quality of individual varieties with the raw materials and scrap dealers. In the new factory, the pressed bales will then be sorted, shredded and stripped. After cleaning, the aluminium is then melted into ten meter by two meter bars, each of which weighs 25 tonnes, and the waste heat from the processes will be used to generate electricity, as Picht explains.

The hot rolling that is required as the next step is completed in the two Novelis works in Neuss and Sierre (Walis, Switzerland). The company is now using its own special wagons to transport the goods from there to the cold rolling mill in Nachterstedt, which it will be possible to load in both directions in the future. The cold rolling mill adjacent to the recycling works produces metal sheets in all dimensions – from materials with just a few micrometers thickness for the drinks industry through to rough blanks for the auto industry. "Premium manufacturers in particular are making more and more use of lightweight constructions, which means we are now supplying blanks to Jaguar, Land Rover and the new Mercedes SL," reports Oliver Picht. In addition to this, the first vehicles with aluminium parts will soon have their lifecycles behind them, which means that one day it will also be possible to close the cycle of materials here as well. Metaphorically speaking this means cans are becoming cars, and cars cans – without the customer being able to notice. In addition to this, further finishes, laser cuts and coatings for the widest range of uses of aluminium are possible.

The Novelis growth plans – the company currently operates five plants in Germany, global aluminium production currently totals roughly 2.8 million tonnes – is also making a further development in Nachterstedt appear possible – its own warm rolling mill. Whether this will be decided on after the commissioning of the recycling plant ultimately depends on the economic development in Germany and Europe. "We find this location very attractive and also have space here for future growth," explains Oliver Picht with confidence.

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