

# Long Term Success for New Dow Photovoltaic Plant in Schkopau



Based on the system started a comparable production plant in Map Ta Phut in Thailand in 2012, the first Dow production plant for photovoltaic films started in Findlay, Ohio in 2010. "In this way we are able to service and deliver to our clients in each region more efficiently", says Mark Bradford, EMEA product marketing manager for photovoltaic units at Dow.

The new units are based on Dow's polyolefin plastic ENLIGHT™ Polyolefin Encapsulant Films and have a number of advantages, according to the company. Due to their mechanized, electrical and optical properties, they are optimally suited for solar modules. In comparison to standard foils they enable better long-term efficiency, a longer lifespan and reliability of photovoltaic modules. In this way loss of performance starts at around only 10,000 hours of service. In standard modules this loss of performance starts at around 2,000 hours. Despite the current issues in the photovoltaic industry, the company is assured of the success of the global production strategy of its product. Bradford states that their decision to invest in the production plant in Schkopau was made during the boom in the photovoltaic market in Europe and in Germany in particular. The construction and the completion of the plant in Schkopau took place simultaneously with the consolidation phase within the ever growing photovoltaic industry. From the start the decision for the plant in Schkopau was long term. "The role of photovoltaic industry will play an increasing higher role, than what it does today, in the future of the generation of energy", says Bradford. The solar market is still in its early days. To assure that the energy revolution in Germany and Europe is sustainable, a much higher production capacity will be needed.

Bradford likewise admits that Dow was not at all surprised about the energy crisis. "As an investor, one is often confronted with the question if it is economically viable to maintain an investment plan within the current market environment? We have, after intensive research, been clearly able to answer this question with a YES!" he emphasised. The decision to build in Schkopau just proves that Dow believes in the future of the solar energy industry in Germany.

Dow is set to produce an innovative product with their Enlight™ Films in Schkopau that will ensure a considerably more efficient and cost effective production of solar modules. This has been rooted into the global strategy of the company in their continual development of products and innovation within the alternative energy sector. This includes photovoltaic in particular says Bradford. The new plant in Schkopau is an investment in the future.

Europe, Germany and in particular central Germany possess vital technical advantages in quality and reliability. This is due to the network of research facilities and companies along the entire economic chain. Dow works intensively alongside the Fraunhofer-Centre for Silizium-Photovoltaic (CSP), as well as the Fraunhofer Institute for Mechanics of Material (IWM). Furthermore, the Dow plant is located in close proximity to the other photovoltaic companies in the Solar Valley. Its proximity to the well-developed system of infrastructure and its central location in Europe have left the firm strongly positioned for the future. Therefore the new Enlight™ Film production is currently found within an innovative network. Lastly, as in any other economic market, is the fact that the focus market is found directly where production takes place. The decision for using the Schkopau location was made easier due to the cost effective investment terms within Germany and Saxony-Anhalt. Reiner Roghmann, director of the Dow plants in Central Germany, says that the Schkopau plant is forerunner within a new market and at the same time close to its clients.

With their highly-qualified staff and technical know-how, they are able to react in a flexible way to their clients in Europe. Saxony-Anhalt and the plant in Schkopau offer a fertile environment for such a settlement, due to the support of all levels of local government in politics and administration", says Roghmann.

Dow is a US company and global undertaking with an annual turnover of \$57bn in 2012. They currently employ 54,000 employees. Dow produces at 188 locations in 36 countries, 5,000 different products. In Germany there are 18 different locations.

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