

## Media release

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### **AkzoNobel increases capacity for expandable microspheres to meet growing demand**

AkzoNobel's Specialty Chemicals business is investing more than €20 million to increase production capacity in Sweden for its Expancel product line for expandable microspheres.

Increasing demand for the product – an essential ingredient in many consumer goods, industrial applications and the construction industry – means the company will expand its Stockvik facility near Sundsvall. Completion is expected by the end of 2018.

“Expancel microspheres are used in a number of important growth markets, such as food packaging, paints and the automotive industry,” says Sylvia Winkel, Director of Expancel at AkzoNobel. “We are seeing a strong increase in demand for the product and the expansion will ensure our ability to serve our customers globally.”

Expancel consists of expandable, microscopic spheres comprising a thermoplastic shell encapsulating a gas. When heated, they expand dramatically – up to 60 times in volume – making them ideal for a variety of uses, such as insulation in shoe soles or as filling material. The number of applications for microspheres is growing all the time, particularly for products where weight is critical, such as cars and wind turbines.

“We continuously develop new solutions to fulfil new and exciting customer needs,” adds Winkel. “For example, we worked with key customers to introduce microspheres to corks, allowing better preservation of bottled wine. Another niche growth market is the use of microspheres in porous ceramics, such as for diesel particulate filters in trucks, which lead to lower emissions.”

Added Thierry Vanlancker, AkzoNobel's Executive Committee member responsible for Specialty Chemicals: “This is an important strategic investment which will support our customers and strengthen our leadership position in this market. The increasing demand mirrors the growing trend towards more sustainable and smart solutions, and with Expancel, we can contribute to the cost-effective development of innovative products which are lighter and more durable.”

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AkzoNobel creates everyday essentials to make people's lives more liveable and inspiring. As a leading global paints and coatings company and a major producer of specialty chemicals, we supply essential ingredients, essential protection and essential color to industries and consumers worldwide. Backed by a pioneering heritage, our innovative products and sustainable technologies are designed to meet the growing demands of our fast-changing planet, while making life easier. Headquartered in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, we have approximately 46,000 people in around 80 countries, while our portfolio includes well-known brands such as Dulux, Sikkens, International, Interpon and Eka. Consistently ranked as a leader in sustainability, we are dedicated to energizing cities and communities while creating a protected, colorful world where life is improved by what we do.

For more information on Expancel see: <https://expancel.akzonobel.com/>

#### **Not for publication – for more information**

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