

Nagase FineChem Singapore (Pte) Ltd. Strengthening Operations for High-Purity Chemicals for Electronics

Centering its efforts on its Tuas production base, Nagase & Co.'s Singapore subsidiary, Nagase FineChem Singapore is strengthening its operations for supplying high-purity chemical products for the manufacture of liquid crystal displays and semiconductors. It has already completed construction of its electronics chemicals plant, received the approval of Advanced Flat Panel Display (Toshiba and Matsushita Electric Industrial joint venture, AFPD), the primary customer, and will replace imports from Japan with this plant's production sometime during this month. Second phase construction is scheduled to begin next month, with collection and recycling operations to come on line during the second through fourth quarters of next year. The company will also embark on market research for the supply of products for semiconductors and begin considering facilities and other aspects of such an operation, which would get under way in one to two years.

Nagase FineChem Singapore had been working to construct a chemical plant (in the Tuas area) to supply the liquid crystal display plant recently officially opened by AFPD, its primary customer. This chemical plant, which produces removers, etching agents, and solvents, was completed in July and the company has been steadily increasing its production in line with the AFPD plant's production increases. This new plant is, thus, gradually replacing imports from Japan.

With product tests already completed and AFPD's approval obtained, the company will complete the switch of supplies from Japanese products to Singapore products during this month.

Additionally, the company is set to begin construction of facilities for collection, re-refining, and recycling in May or June of next year. The centerpiece of these facilities will be a distillation plant and the total budgeted investment, including that spent in the first period, will be 2 billion yen.

Nagase FineChem Singapore will continue to diversify its product line with developer and other chemicals, as it also cultivates demand for products other than those for liquid crystal displays. Semiconductor manufacturers in Singapore are particularly reliant on imports for all but a few chemical products, so the company is targeting them as potential customers.

The company is already performing market research for this purpose and will also consider construction of facilities necessary to supply products to semiconductor plants.

With its eyes on the growing possibility of Singapore gaining a second liquid crystal display plant, (adding to the one owned by AFPD) and the expanded demand it would

engender, Nagase FineChem Singapore has already secured an industrial site, including that for next-phase investments.

(The Chemical Daily)