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Braskem to build new UHMWPE plant

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Braskem, the largest thermoplastics resins producer in the Americas, announces its plans for the construction of an Ultra High Molecular Weight Polyethylene (UHMWPE) plant at its site in La Porte, Texas.

Braskem's UHMWPE products are produced under the trade name UTEC. Groundbreaking of the new plant in La Porte will start during the third quarter of 2014. Construction is expected to last approximately 18 months with a targeted completion date during the first half of 2016. The U.S. plant's output will complement the existing UTEC product line that is produced in Brazil.

The main advantages of UTEC are its excellent mechanical properties, such as high abrasion resistance, impact strength and low coefficient of friction. UTEC is a self-lubricating, high-strength, light-weight machinable product used for semi-finished goods. UTEC is eight times lighter than steel and lasts ten times longer than HDPE. UTEC is used in a vast array of applications in the following industries: construction, agriculture, automotive, textile, pulp and paper, food and beverage, coal and mining, high performance fibers, battery separators and waste water treatment.

"We are excited about today's announcement. We believe our investment reinforces Braskem's dedication to the plastics industry and to our strategic markets and clients," said Fernando Musa, CEO, Braskem America. "This is the next logical step for our UTEC business as we have been providing UTEC to clients in the United States and Europe for over ten years. Further, this new plant will potentially enable Braskem to serve more markets than we have been able to serve in the past," Musa added.

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