

Media Release

Voith Paper

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Highest-performing glass non-woven production line starts up at Owens Corning's Fort Smith plant

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- World's widest glass non-woven line begins production in Fort Smith, Arkansas
- The line is already running at a speed of around 300 m/min two months ahead of the target date
- The successful implementation is based on a strong partnership between Voith and Owens Corning

FORT SMITH, USA. Owens Corning, a global residential and commercial building products leader, has signed the takeover document for its new Fort Smith glass non-woven production line. This means the world's highest-performing non-woven line is now in production. The machine includes the most extensive layout Voith has ever created for a glass non-woven production line. The scope of delivery includes the forming, binding and drying sections.

The technological highlights include the world's largest inclined wire former HydroFormer, the FiberDry glass mat dryer and a comprehensive Papermaking 4.0 and automation package to increase efficiency, product quality and machine availability. Voith also supplied two IntensaPulper machines based on the Process Line Package (PLP) concept, which has set industry standards in the field of pulping with its energy-efficient technology. The HydroFormer covers a width of 5.5 meters and enables exceptionally uniform forming of fibers up to 40 mm in length with extremely low stock consistency. Sustainability and efficiency were important factors for Owens Corning when deciding on the individual components.

The design speed of the line is 510 m/min, which will enable the production of 90,000 tons of glass nonwovens per year. Already two months before the target date, the line is achieving a speed of around 300 m/min.

Success based on a trusting partnership

This success lies in a strong partnership between Owens Corning and Voith from the start of the project through the takeover. Both teams focused on finding solutions and moving forward using a goal-oriented approach.

"The start-up of the glass non-woven production line in Fort Smith is a huge milestone for us. Our customers expect high-quality, consistent products that are delivered on time. This new facility is best-in-class and employs highly sustainable practices that are the result of strong partnerships," says Rachel Marcon, Vice President of non-wovens business at Owens Corning. "The fact that we can now produce at a speed of 300 m/min has been a positive outcome and shows the success of the trusting partnership between both teams."

"We are proud that this project can demonstrate our expertise as the leading global full-line supplier. Not only did we deliver customized solutions according to Owens Corning's specific requirements, but we also provided the customer with intensive support until the machine was successfully taken over and beyond – a truly unique selling point for Voith," says Guenter Meuser, Senior Project Manager at Voith Paper.

About the Voith Group

The Voith Group is a global technology company. With its broad portfolio of systems, products, services and digital applications, Voith sets standards in the markets of energy, paper, raw materials and transport & automotive. Founded in 1867, the company today has around 22,000 employees, sales of € 5.5 billion and locations in over 60 countries worldwide and is thus one of the larger family-owned companies in Europe.

The Group Division Voith Paper is part of the Voith Group. As the full-line supplier to the paper industry, it provides the largest range of technologies, services and products on the market and offers paper manufacturers holistic solutions from a single source. The company's continuous stream of innovations facilitates resource-conserving production and helps customers minimize their carbon footprint. With its leading automation products and digitalization solutions from the Papermaking 4.0 portfolio, Voith offers its customers state-of-the-art digital technologies to improve plant availability and efficiency for all sections of the production process.

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The project team in front of WLM 2 in Fort Smith

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