

Commissioning of the new chlorine production capacity with membrane and cessation of mercury technology in Ercros

The Ercros' chlorine production plants with mercury technology, located in Flix and Vila-seca I factories, have ceased their activity in compliance with the provisions of the Industrial Emissions Directive (2010) and the European Commission Decision (2013), that establish conclusions on the best available technologies (BAT) for the chlor-alkali production and ban the use of mercury technology as of December 11, 2017.

In Flix, the chlorine plant stopped working yesterday afternoon, 118 years after the first electrolytic plant in Spain and the third in Europe was put into operation in this factory.

The chlorine production plant with mercury technology in Vila-seca I factory stopped operating on December 4, after 47 years of activity. As of this date, the tests for the commissioning of the chlorine plant with membrane technology expansion have started. This technology is considered BAT and therefore is not affected by the EC ban. This factory was the first in Spain to implement membrane technology in 1992.

The expansion of chlorine production capacity with membrane technology at the Vila-seca I factory has been 65,000 t/year, which added to the capacity that had so far, totals a capacity of 120,000 t/year. Ercros expects the expansion of the plant to be fully operational before the end of the year. Parallel to this action, new manufacturing plants for sodium hypochlorite and hydrochloric acid and caustic concentration have also been built in this centre, in order to satisfy the customers' demand. All these actions have required an investment of 29 million euros.

Throughout the first quarter of 2018, Ercros expects the commissioning of the 15,000 t/year expansion of the production capacity of the chlorine plant with membrane technology at the Sabiñánigo factory, to reach a total capacity of 45,000 t/year. Anticipating to the European legislation, this factory had already made the switch from mercury to membrane technology in 2009. In this period, it is also planned to start a new hydrochloric acid plant in this centre. The cost of both actions amounts to 14.5 million euros.

Barcelona, December 11, 2017