CHEMPARK INSPIRES CONFIDENCE

Being a good neighbor is a key competitive advantage

Companies, investors and customers are all well aware that top product quality, an excellent infrastructure and an optimal price-performance ratio are key requirements for market success. However, it is not just economic factors that the three CHEMPARK sites in Leverkusen, Dormagen and Krefeld-Uerdingen and the operator CURRENTA have to take into account – a good relationship with neighbors that is based on acceptance and trust is also essential.

In the face of global change and the questions being asked about Germany’s suitability as an industrial location, the country’s biggest chemical park sees it as being a top priority to engage in continuous, open and honest communication with its neighbors. With almost 50,000 employees and more than 70 companies at its three locations covering a total area of 11 square kilometers, CHEMPARK is very important to the German economy. This area accounts for around one-third of the total chemical production in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Communication with neighbors is crucial because many of the products manufactured at the sites are hazardous and need to be explained further. Open dialogue is made more important by the fact that the sites use complex production stages, that the public has a general interest in what goes on here and that the sites are located close to residential areas. A company can gain a clear competitive advantage if social disseminators and local and state policymakers trust in the work at the sites and recognize the importance of investment and expansion. This endorsement can also be incorporated into the sites’ marketing activities, e.g. in presenting CHEMPARK as an attractive industrial location with high safety and quality standards, highlighting the responsible actions of the companies at the park, and identifying and commenting on new developments.

All in all, in the words of a recent CHEMPARK poster: working to create a good neighborhood on safe ground. All this helps shape the overall image of CHEMPARK, maintain a tolerant environment for the chemical park, and...
allow critical topics to be fairly assessed. It creates understanding and acceptance among all parties, thus safeguarding the future of the sites and jobs.

In addition to traditional communication channels – such as PR activities, the Internet, advertising, donations and sponsorship – cultivating personal contacts with disseminators is also a top priority. CURRENTA takes an active approach to CHEMPARK communication by, for example, sending out invitations to selected target groups or going out into the community to meet those concerned, be they physicians, teachers, kindergarten teachers, church representatives, residents, citizens’ groups, or experts from industry, politics and the public authorities. The range of issues covered at such meetings is tailored to the target audience and the information they require. Ongoing communication of this kind enables facts and figures to be exchanged, questions to be answered, controversial topics to be discussed, and misunderstandings to be explained.

One form of communication is the CHEMPARK safety dialogue. This wide-ranging program includes various activities and is geared towards specific target groups. It is designed to engender trust in the site’s actions and serve as a basis for credibility if an incident occurs. What’s more, even the youngest members of the community are shown how chemicals are a part of everyday life. In special experiments tailored to their age groups, schoolchildren are shown in a playful way which chemicals they encounter on a daily basis and how they should handle them.

All these activities are designed to establish good neighborly relations in the region on a long term basis on trust and mutual respect. This raises acceptance and creates the basis for additional economic development in the region. One thing is clear – good relationships may not necessarily be a guarantee for the future, but they play a key role in building up and maintaining confidence in the neighborhood. Therefore, the CHEMPARK operator CURRENTA places just as much emphasis on being a good neighbor as it does on product quality, infrastructure, cost structure and safety.

**Infrastructure:**
With a total area of 11 km² – divided among the Leverkusen, Dormagen and Krefeld-Uerdingen sites – CHEMPARK is one of Europe’s largest chemical park networks. Europe’s most important chemical region offers established chemical companies and start-ups ideal conditions for research, development and production. The extensive product network of around 10,000 materials features virtually every raw material and intermediate for processing. Integration via international railroads, freeways, seaports and airports ensures links to markets worldwide.

**Services:**
The business units at CURRENTA are:
- Environmental Services
- Safety and Security
- Services, such as Analytics, Training, and Translations
- CHEMPARK-Management, such as Infrastructure, Public Relations and support at administrative decisions
- Energy/media supply: electricity, steam, gases, refrigeration, compressed air, water
- Waste disposal: wastewater treatment, landfilling and incineration

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