

Press release

Fire hits Huntsman Corporation's titanium dioxide manufacturing facility in Pori, Finland

Brussels, 2017-02-14 - News has emerged that the Huntsman Corporation's titanium dioxide manufacturing facility in Pori, Finland suffered a fire on 30th January 2017, stopping production at the site until repairs can be completed.

The Finnish plant accounts for 15% of Huntsman's global titanium dioxide (TiO₂) capacity and produces much of Huntsman's graphic arts grade pigment. The graphic arts market has specific requirements for the white pigments produced in Pori, in terms of gloss, abrasiveness etc. The impact of the fire on the supply chain into the ink manufacturing sector has been declared as Force Majeure by the main resellers, exerting severe and immediate pressure on inward costs. Double digit price increases have already been announced by the pigment suppliers as a direct consequence of the shortages in the market. Huntsman is committed to repairing the site as quickly as possible but serious shortages in the supply of graphic arts grade pigments throughout 2017 can be expected.

The industry is diligently and swiftly working to find products and alternative grades, with China offering possible relief, however the Chinese government has recently implemented mandatory production cuts and stops when pollution levels reach a trigger point, to help improve air quality. This has meant that many days' production can be lost per month, with no financial compensation. Several TiO₂ producers in China have been affected by this mandate, which only exacerbates the current supply constriction.

The manufacturers of white inks are doing what they can to keep customers supplied, but warn that users must evaluate alternative grades if they wish to continue printing.

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