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Contact:
Henry Raab
Swb&r
P: 610-866-0611
henry.raab@swbrinc.com

Garlock garners EPA clean air award

Palmyra, N.Y., May 19, 2009 – Garlock Sealing Technologies has received the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s 2008 Clean Air Excellence Award for using a more environmentally friendly solvent in the production of its industrial gasketing.

“From the over 120 applications received, Garlock’s project was chosen by the EPA’s Office of Air and Radiation for its impact, innovation, and replicability,” said EPA administrator, Pat Childers, in announcing the award. “Garlock is to be congratulated for its dedication to improving our nation’s air quality.”

Established in 2000 at the recommendation of the EPA Clean Air Advisory Committee, the award annually recognizes outstanding efforts toward achieving cleaner air. Winners must directly or indirectly reduce pollutant emissions, demonstrate innovation, offer sustainable outcomes, and provide a model for others to follow.

“It is indeed an honor to be recognized nationally for our environmental efforts,” said Garlock President Paul Baldetti. “I should note that this and similar initiatives have been voluntarily undertaken across all EnPro Industries companies to provide a healthier, safer workplace, and to improve our environmental stewardship.”

Most recently, the company has also developed a solution for sealing valve stems, the single largest source of fugitive emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and hazardous air pollutants (HAPs). The new product, 212-ULE compression packing, limits these emissions to well below allowable levels.

The three-year, \$3 million solvent-replacement project involved the elimination of an EPA-regulated VOC/HAP from the manufacture of Garlock’s sheet gasket products. Used to seal pipe flanges in a wide range of process industries such as chemicals, oil refining, pulp and paper, and power generation, these products are manufactured by compressing mixtures of fibers and solvated rubber.

Garlock not only eliminated the regulated emissions from production of these gaskets, but also installed a high-efficiency recovery system that captures 95% of the solvent for reuse. Conversion to the new solvent also provided significant economic benefits, as well as a better end-product. In addition to improving process yields, it resulted in gaskets that seal 20% more effectively, an important advantage for the industries that use them reduce fugitive emissions from their own piping systems.

In 2005, Garlock decided to remain in its upstate New York location and, with economic incentives from state, county and local agencies, embarked on a five-year, \$35 million plant modernization project. The company had been operating in an antiquated, inefficient manufacturing complex constructed between 1907 and 1956. Now near completion, the project involved construction of two new production plants. The first, a plant that manufactures dynamic seals, was completed in 2006. A second plant for production of PTFE-based gaskets came on stream last summer.

Particularly notable is Garlock's use of water piped from nearby Canandaigua Lake for comfort and process cooling, producing significant annual savings with no adverse impact on the environment. Among other conservation-minded aspects of the project are closed-loop process equipment saving up to 20,000 gallons of water per day, use of non-treated water for production processes, separation of the storm water system and creation of green spaces to reduce runoff.

The new production facilities also feature high-efficiency, water-cooled chillers with ultrasonic humidification, reflective roofs to reduce heat loading and highly insulative exterior panels. In addition, on-demand water heaters serve isolated areas, and waste heat is recovered from exhaust ventilation systems and air compressors. Where possible, even the materials resulting from the deconstruction of old structures have been recycled or reused on site to minimize waste.

For more information, contact Jim Drago, Garlock Sealing Technologies, 1666 Division Street, Palmyra, NY 14522. Phone: 800-448-6688; Email: jim.drago@garlock.com; Web: www.garlock.com.

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Photo Caption: Garlock President Paul Baldetti and EPA Acting Assistant Administrator Beth Craig