

For immediate release

Koehler converts power plant in Greiz from coal to fine wood fraction - the innovation will save more than 24,000 metric tons of CO₂ a year

- **Renewable fuel will help keep Koehler's '2030 promise'**
- **Substantial reduction in CO₂ and sulfur emissions by switching fuel in the combined heat and power plant from lignite to fine wood fraction**
- **Commissioning of expansion planned for June 2022**

Greiz, Germany, 9/23/2021 – The Koehler Group is to convert its power plant at the Koehler Paper site in Greiz from pulverized lignite to fine wood fraction fuel. The experts at Koehler Renewable Energy, a part of the Koehler Group, have succeeded in developing an innovative technique that will allow a type of biomass to be used as fuel in the existing coal-fired power plant in a completely new way. It is an innovation on the market. The power plant will start operating with the new fuel in June 2022. The Koehler Group has spent a generous 6.5 million euros on the entire conversion.

The project is part of Koehler's climate strategy, as the Group has set a goal of producing more energy from renewable sources by 2030 than is required for its paper production operations. Udo Hollbach, Managing Director of Koehler Paper mill Greiz, is delighted about the conversion: "Switching from lignite to fine wood fraction will allow us to save more than 24,000 metric tons of CO₂ emissions per year at the Greiz plant."

The art of paper-making has been going on in Greiz for more than 400 years. The former Euler paper-site was acquired by the Koehler Group in 1998. Koehler Paper Greiz produces premium quality paper made of 100% secondary fibers. In addition to first-class paper recycling, the plant also uses advanced color technology that allows high-grade recycled paper with an unparalleled range of colors to be produced. Products made in Greiz bear the 'Blue Angel' ecolabel as a result.

As large volumes of energy are needed for paper processing and drying, the company started up its own combined heat and power plant in 2010. It has a rated thermal input of 16.7 MW and generates up to 19 metric tons of steam according to demand, as well as electricity to supply the production plant. Pulverized lignite has been used as the fuel until now. Seven employees ensure the combined heat and power plant runs seamlessly around the clock.

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Conversion to fine wood fraction fuel is part of Koehler's climate strategy

The plant's conversion from lignite to fine wood fraction as the fuel, is part of the Group's climate strategy. It is an important contribution to keeping Koehler's promise of producing more energy from renewable sources by 2030 than is required for its paper production operations. By converting the power plant, Koehler is also meeting the amended regulations brought about by the Fuel Emissions Trading Act and stricter emission requirements in general, particularly concerning sulfurous emissions from fuel.

Fine wood fraction instead of pulverized lignite significantly reduces CO₂ and sulfurous emissions

The plant conversion process has been given extensive support from the experts at Koehler Renewable Energy. Koehler Renewable Energy has already implemented numerous projects in the fields of biomass cogeneration plants, wind power, photovoltaics, and hydropower. The experts are proficient in all stages of the value chain, from acquisition, to planning and development, to seamless, long-term operation.

During the project phase, two combustion tests were carried out that produced positive results for developing the new technique. A stable flame pattern and excellent combustion were achieved, alongside lower sulfur dioxide emissions. Sieved fine wood fraction from wood processing and wood preparation are to be used as the new fuel. The heat value of fine wood fraction is approx. 14 MJ/kg, compared with 21 MJ/kg for pulverized lignite. Structural and engineering measures need to be taken and extra silos purchased so the new fuel can be used in the existing heat and power plant. In total, this will save 24,000 metric tons of CO₂ emissions per year at the Greiz site. In addition, converting the fuel will also significantly reduce sulfurous emissions and pollutants compared with pulverized lignite. Another benefit is that the plant will operate well below nighttime noise limits despite the additional plant construction.

Commissioning planned for June 2022

The structural changes at the power plant and the additional plant engineering required are set to start in October 2021 and will be completed by May 2022. The plant is expected to start operating with the new, sustainable fuel in June 2022.

In the Paris Agreement from 2015, 190 parties, including the European Union, committed themselves to taking measures to keep global warming significantly under 2 °C. Private companies were called on to contribute to emission reductions within this context. Kai Furler, CEO of the Koehler Group, emphasized: "By replacing fossil fuels, Koehler is proactively playing its part in reducing global warming."



Figure: Koehler Paper, Greiz/Germany

More about the Koehler Group

The Koehler Group was founded in 1807 and has been family-run to this day. The Group's core area of business is the development and production of high-quality, specialty paper, including thermal paper, playing card board, drink coasters, fine paper, carbonless paper, recycled paper, decor paper, wood pulp board, sublimation paper, and, since 2019, innovative specialty paper for the packaging industry, too. In Germany, the Koehler Group, with its around 2,500 employees, has five production sites, as well as three more in the USA. The Group operates on an international level, with an export ratio of 70% in 2020 and annual revenue of €770 million.

As an energy-intensive enterprise, Koehler invests in renewable energy projects such as wind energy, hydroelectric power, photovoltaics, and biomass. The Koehler Group has committed itself to producing more power from renewable sources than is needed for paper production by 2030.

More information is available here: <https://www.koehler.com>

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