



# Raw to Refined

La Porte Open House for Linde: (L-R) Dan Fisher, Head of HyCo Operations – Americas; Louis R. Rigby, Mayor of La Porte; Thomas Blades, Member of Executive Board; and Pat Murphy, President – Linde Americas. Photo courtesy of Linde Images

By RUKSANA HUSSAIN

Shale gas discoveries thrust Texas forward in the competition for plastics and chemical industry investment.

**T**he Texas manufacturing sector has demonstrated consistent growth over the years. According to Forbes magazine, the \$1.4-trillion local economy is the second biggest in the US. Texas is the only state that ranks in the top five for current economic climate and growth prospects. It is already known for its top oil-producing capabilities, but a tip of the hat also is in order to the state's chemicals and plastics manufacturing industries. Thanks to advances in science and technology, increasing shale gas projects have propelled both industries.

The Texas Chemical Council (TCC), a trade association of chemical-manufacturing facilities in the state, notes the chemicals manufacturing industry is America's top exporter, adding more to the nation's GDP than any manufacturing industry. It created a \$67-billion trade surplus over the last 10 years and employs nearly 1 million people. Texas is home to at least 68 chemical companies with over 200 separate facilities providing more than 74,000 jobs. As the expansion of shale gas production continues, many companies have fortified their presence in the state, including industry powerhouses Dow Chemicals, Eastern Chemicals, Clariant and Natgasoline.



## Choice Speaks Volumes

Linde North America has expanded its existing facility in La Porte, investing more than \$200 million. Todd Kenning, area sales manager based in Houston, agrees that the availability of abundant reliable natural gas and tax incentives played a strong part in the company's

decision to invest more.

"Texas has a friendly business environment including tax incentives on the state and local level," he says. "When you consider the number of permits from many agencies and easements that must be obtained for rail and pipeline, barge and shipping, it requires a

supportive business community and has to be economical."

The plant at La Porte currently produces syngas, which is pipelined to chemical companies for use in their processes. The new chemical plant being added is an ASU — an air separation unit. It will be one of the largest in the country, representing a significant addition in capacity to the whole Southwest US.

The Milken Institute named many areas of Texas in its Best Performing Cities of 2013 study. Houston's growth has been fueled by the boom in oil and gas exploration. San Antonio's Eagle Ford Shale is the largest oil and gas development in the world, so record drilling levels and high-yield wells are pumping new jobs into energy and related sectors. Dallas and Austin are not left behind either. Texas' extremely business-friendly climate with a



The Linde site at La Porte is expected to be commercial in January 2015.

Photo courtesy of Linde North America

# CORPORATE ATTIRE.

## *League City Style.*







The CarbonLite recycling plant coming to Abilene, Texas, is similar to this plant in Riverside, Calif.

Photos courtesy of CarbonLite Images

CarbonLITE's new bottle-to-bottle recycling plant will process used plastic beverage bottles into food-grade raw material to make into new bottles.

## *Work Hard, Play Hard*

**STUNNING** neighborhoods, some of Texas' **BEST SCHOOLS**, a **BUSINESS FRIENDLY** environment, and an active **RECREATIONAL LIFESTYLE** puts League City in a league of its own. So **PLANT YOUR ROOTS** and your **BUSINESS** in League City - a **FAMILY-CENTRIC COMMUNITY** built around sports, recreation, and an active, **VIBRANT** lifestyle.

[WWW.LEAGUECITYEDC.COM](http://WWW.LEAGUECITYEDC.COM)





**“Texas is a good place for plastics manufacturing because it is a major producer of plastic raw materials.”**

— Leon Farahnik, Chairman and CEO, CarbonLITE

low-tax, low-regulation environment makes it attractive to firms nationally and internationally.

Being a global company, Linde's choice to focus on La Porte speaks volumes of Texas' business worthy climate. "When we considered where to make our next investments, it wasn't just a matter of what part of the US but what part of the globe did we see as having the best opportunities for those investments," says Kenning. "Making such a sizeable investment in southern Texas, that is competing globally for where we should go next, shows we have a very strong commitment to the area. We have quite a footprint here in Texas — 25 sites of various configurations, employing over 250 people. Our customers are many different industries, not just oil refining and chemicals but also food and beverage, steel, hospitals and plastics, so our resources and

facilities are scattered throughout the state. This is clearly one of our bigger investments ever made in Texas."

### Plastics — The Third Largest Manufacturing Industry

Texas is one of the largest states for plastics wholesale trading, and manufacturing in the state includes plastic pipes, plastic packaging and film, foam products and laminates. The plastics industry has been one of the largest and fastest-growing industry sectors of the local economy.

Abundant raw materials and excellent infrastructure ensure the plastics manufacturing industry's growth in the Lone Star State. Proximity to major end-users and new shale gas deposits being developed here spur even more plastics manufacturing facilities every day.

That, coupled with a few other

## The Texas Hill Country is good for business and BURNET is good for YOUR business.

Burnet is located just 50 miles northwest of Austin and 35 miles from Interstate 35. Take advantage of big city amenities with a small town atmosphere. Your **business and your family** will love Burnet's offerings.

- Planned unit developments
- Fiber optics and high speed broadband
- Industrial/Commercial incentives
- Industrial Parks
- Aggressive population growth
- Shopping and tourism
- Municipal airport with 5,000 ft. runway
- Seton Highland Lakes acute care hospital
- Excellent school district
- County seat



Go to [www.cityofburnet.com](http://www.cityofburnet.com) and click on the EDC logo.

City of Burnet Economic Development Office · P.O. Box 1369 · Burnet, TX 78611 · 512.715.3217







**“We have quite a footprint here in Texas  
— 25 sites of various configurations,  
employing over 250 people.”**

— Todd Kenning, Area Sales Manager, Linde North America

vital factors, resulted in plastic bottle recycling manufacturer CarbonLITE Industries LLC, an HPC Company founded by plastics stalwarts Leon Farahnik and Neville Browne, choosing Abilene for its next business move. CarbonLITE’s new bottle-to-bottle recycling plant will process used plastic beverage bottles into food-grade raw material to make into new bottles. The facility will employ around 100 people who will operate the high-tech \$40-million processing plant.

Production will begin in the first quarter of 2015, and the plant will process around 1.6 billion used bottles (80 million pounds) annually.

CarbonLITE Chairman and CEO Leon Farahnik says other locations were considered before zeroing in on Abilene.

“Taking into consideration doing business in the city, the population available for labor, the electricity and water consumption rates —

Abilene provided everything,” he says. The city offers incentives for job creation, type A sales tax and grants for capital investment as well as retention and expansion programs including grants for job training, relocation and manufacturing assessment.

This is in addition to skills development, workforce development and a Freeport exemption that Texas offers at the state level as part of its ongoing efforts to entice more business in the area. Other manufacturing companies with a presence in Abilene include Colombia’s Fehr Foods Inc. and New Zealand’s PWP Industries.

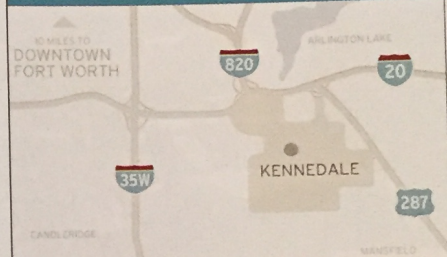
The deal clinchers for Farahnik? The grants available, the money for training and the help provided to come do business in the city.

“Texas is a good place for plastics manufacturing because it is a major producer of plastic raw materials,” he says. “A lot of plastic manufacturing happens here.” ★

**WE LOVE IT**

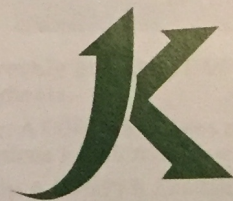
**WHEN BUSINESSES YELL**

**“LOCATION,  
LOCATION,  
LOCATION”**



When business needs a prime location, Kennedale has the answer. **Located at I-20, Loop 820, SH 287, and Business 287, not to mention five miles from I-35**, we are a natural crossroads for shipping and commerce to the Metroplex and beyond. Reasonable land values, low taxes and a business-friendly attitude make it easy to see why Kennedale prides itself on being Progress Central.

To find your ideal location, contact Bob Hart at 817-985-2102 or [bhart@cityofkennedale.com](mailto:bhart@cityofkennedale.com) today.



**KENNEDALE**

**Kennedale: Progress Central**  
[www.gokennedale.com](http://www.gokennedale.com)