



Ashland Acquires the Assets of Nanjing Clear Environment Protection Co. Ltd. to Increase its Water Technologies Business in China

NANJING, China, March 9, 2006 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH) announced today that it has acquired the assets of Nanjing Clear Environment Protection Co. Ltd., executing its strategy to further invest in the water treatment business in the rapidly expanding Chinese market. Ashland has formed a new company, Ashland (Nanjing) Chemical Co. Ltd., which will integrate Nanjing Clear with Ashland's existing water technologies business in China.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20040113/ASHLANDLOGO>)

"The opportunity for us to gain a locally-based business with such a well-regarded reputation as Nanjing Clear fits well with Ashland's strategy," said James J. O'Brien, chairman and chief executive officer, Ashland Inc.

Len Gelosa, senior vice president, Water Technologies, Ashland Specialty Chemical, added, "China's economy continues to experience dramatic growth and, as such, their needs for industrial water treatment also grow. The new entity will leverage our combined knowledge, skills and abilities to offer a global product source to supply China's industrial sector."

The focus of the newly formed company will continue to be on the customer. "Combining our resources will enable us to offer customer-driven solutions," said Larry Hale, vice president of Drew Industrial's Asia Pacific Region, Water Technologies, Ashland Specialty Chemical. "We are very pleased that our companies provide complementary strengths."

The company will manufacture products for water, wastewater and environmental protection, and also manufacture feed, control and monitoring equipment in Nanjing. These will be sold into all industrial, commercial and institutional markets in China. Programs will be used to treat cooling, boiler, wastewater, influent raw water, gas cleaning (air scrubbers), and other process applications in customer locations.

Ashland (Nanjing) Chemical Co. Ltd. products, services and technical support will assist customers in reducing their overall cost of operation, conserving water resources and complying with environmental regulations.

Ashland Water Technologies, a business of Ashland Specialty Chemical, is a supplier of specialty products and consulting services to the manufacturing and institutional markets through its Drew Industrial business group and a leading supplier to the global marine industry through its Drew Marine business group. Drew Industrial provides industrial, commercial and institutional water treatments, wastewater treatment, pathogen control, paint and coating additives, pulp and paper processing and mining chemistries. Drew Marine provides fuel treatment, welding, refrigeration and sealing products; and fire fighting, safety and rescue products and services.

Ashland Specialty Chemical, a division of Ashland Inc., is a leading, worldwide supplier of specialty chemicals serving industries including adhesives, automotive, composites, metal casting, merchant marine, paint, paper, plastics, watercraft and water treatment. Visit www.ashspec.com to learn more about these operations.

Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH) is a Fortune 500 chemical and transportation construction company providing products, services and customer solutions throughout the world. To learn more about Ashland, visit www.ashland.com.

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Ken Gordon of Ashland Inc., +1-614-790-1832, or kdgordon@ashland.com

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