
Work starts on 'world's largest' gasification plant

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By Will Date

Industrial gas and equipment supplier Air Products has begun work on a gasification facility in the Tees Valley with the capacity to treat 350,000 tonnes of municipal, commercial and industrial waste a year.

The plant, which is scheduled to come online in 2014, is expected to produce electricity to power up to 50,000 homes and the company is also looking to produce hydrogen for use in zero-emissions vehicles.

The facility, which secured planning permission from Stockton-on-Tees council in August 2011, is set to cost around \$500 million (£320 million), and will be financed solely by Air Products. The environmental permits needed to operate the site have already been granted by the Environment Agency.

Once completed, the plant - located at the Reclamation Pond site adjacent to the North Tees Chemical Complex, near Billingham - will use advanced gasification technology provided by plasma gasification specialists AlterNRG to convert pre-processed waste into renewable energy.

According to Air Products the Tees Valley plant will be the first energy-from-waste gasification plant of its kind in the UK, and the largest of its kind in the world. Preparatory work has already begun onsite, with full scale construction expected to begin shortly.

Waste

Air Products did not reveal if contracts to supply waste to feed the plant have been secured.

John McGlade, chairman, president and chief executive of Air Products, said: "Our investment in advanced gasification EfW technology is a natural extension of our onsite business model. Offering an innovative growth opportunity, it allows us to further extend our leading position in the global energy market and continue to deliver on Air Products' commitment to sustainability.

"The UK is committed to diversifying its sources of energy, strengthening its energy and reducing carbon emissions. This pioneering clean energy technology model is well-suited to these requirements, offering a sustainable solution to the UK's waste management strategy.

"The facility will also create skilled jobs in the area and we are hopeful that it will provide an indirect boost to the local economy through the use of local service companies, hotels and other businesses."

It is anticipated that overall the facility will create up to 50 permanent jobs, as well as 700 jobs during the construction period.

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[Air Products \(http://www.airproducts.co.uk/\)](http://www.airproducts.co.uk/)



An artist's impression of Air Product's Tees Valley gasification facility

Commenting on the plans, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, said: "Advanced gasification has a key role to play in delivering renewable energy and I warmly welcome the decision by Air Products to proceed with its Tees Valley Renewable Energy Facility. Air Products' announcement reflects the UK's commitment and support for clean energy, combined with our stable and transparent environment for investors."