

Audi invests in the future: Topping-out ceremony for paint shop and groundbreaking ceremony for a water circuit

Neckarsulm, May 31, 2023 - New processes, and more environmentally compliant methods, including for future electric models: The renewal of the paint shop at the Neckarsulm site continues. The topping-out ceremony for its base coat production section was celebrated on May 30. The facilities are being renewed, and processes optimized for future electric models. Around 300 guests were invited for the topping-out ceremony. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new water supply system took place in a smaller gathering shortly before. A closed water circuit with the municipal wastewater treatment plant reduces the Neckarsulm site's use of fresh water during production.

Welcoming the guests of honor - Steffen Hertwig, the Mayor of Neckarsulm, and Timo Frey, the Mayor of Bad Friedrichshall, was at the top of the topping-out ceremony's program. Representatives of the local press, the approving authorities, and the planning and executing companies were also present. They were joined by the entire Audi project team. After the formal ceremony, the guests enjoyed an in-depth tour of the construction site.

The renewal of the paint shop includes two significant projects: restructuring the topcoat in building A17 and a new basecoat in building A22. This will optimize processes in the future and implement environmentally compliant production methods for vehicles, including electric models. "With the comprehensive renewal of the paint shop, we are strengthening the site and gearing it up for the future. We are taking the right and important step toward electromobility with the new facilities. We are contributing to Mission:Zero with new, environmentally compliant processes," said plant manager Fred Schulze.

In addition to the topping-out ceremony for the paint shop, there was also the next step for the new water supply plant to celebrate. Works Council Chairman Rainer Schirmer praised the construction projects at the plant: "The groundbreaking ceremony for the new water supply plant and the topping-out ceremony for the new paint shop shows that the site is investing in sustainability and thus in the future. Especially in the year of the 150th anniversary, this is a strong signal in the direction of the workforce."

Groundbreaking for a sustainable water cycle

In the cross-site environmental program Mission:Zero, water supply is one of the items on the agenda concerning using resources responsibly. The goal is to halve water consumption in production by 2035. To achieve this, Audi relies on a closed water cycle with the wastewater treatment plant of the Zweckverband Unteres Sulmtal adjacent to the plant. Audi further processes the water purified by the wastewater treatment plant for production with the help of filter systems and membranes. The processed water then flows back to the wastewater treatment plant.

"Sustainable water use as part of our Mission:Zero plays a central role. We are delighted to be able to start construction of the new plant after a successful test phase," said Dr. Achim Diehlmann, Head of Corporate Environmental Protection and Mission:Zero project manager. From 2025, the process water for the entire plant will be run in a closed loop, saving up to 70 percent of fresh water.

Audi bundles all activities and measures to reduce the ecological footprint in production and logistics in the cross-site environmental program Mission Zero. The focus is on Audi's key challenges of decarbonization, water use, resource efficiency, and biodiversity.

Since 2023, Audi has been the first premium carmaker to become a member of the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS). The global alliance of companies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the public sector promote the concept of responsibility for water resources along the value chain.

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In 2022, the Audi Group delivered 1.61 million Audi vehicles, 15,174 Bentley vehicles, 9,233 Lamborghini vehicles, and 61,562 Ducati motorcycles to customers. In the 2022 fiscal year, AUDI Group achieved a total revenue of €61.8 billion and an operating profit of €7.6 billion. Worldwide, more than 87,000 people worked for the Audi Group in 2022, over 54,000 of them at AUDI AG in Germany. With its attractive brands, new models, innovative mobility offerings and groundbreaking services, the group is systematically pursuing its path toward becoming a provider of sustainable, individual, premium mobility.
