

Press release

December 16, 2016

Heraeus and Hensel Recycling commit to strategic cooperation for processing of precious metals

Heraeus and Hensel Recycling GmbH signed a long-term cooperation contract today for the processing of precious metal wastes. Heraeus will recycle precious metal scrap collected by Hensel Recycling, taking over Hensel's Vino Plasma facility in Karlstein (near Aschaffenburg) for this purpose. Vino Plasma operates one of the world's most modern plasma smelting furnaces for the recovery of platinum group metals (platinum, palladium, rhodium), mostly from automotive exhaust catalysts.

"This agreement strengthens the core competencies of both companies. Heraeus secures long-term access to new precious metal recycling streams, and with the new plasma technology, the company expands its globally leading position in the processing of platinum group metals," says André Christl, president of Heraeus Metal Management.

"We are pleased about this cooperation with Heraeus. Hensel Recycling is already one of the largest specialists in the recycling of automotive catalysts. We have established the smelting process and made it part of our regular recycling operations. Heraeus will now vigorously pursue its industrial development. This cooperation therefore meets an important prerequisite for further growth," says Clemens Hensel, a co-owner of Hensel Recycling GmbH.

Catalytic converters contain platinum, palladium, and rhodium at the gram scale

Designed for the recovery of platinum group metals from exhaust catalysts, the plasma smelting furnace is the only one of its kind in continental Europe. The furnace is operated using an electrical plasma, which makes it energy efficient and low in emissions. The plasma furnace is primarily used to process the ceramic substrates (monoliths) of catalytic converters. These generally contain 2 to 3 grams of platinum group metals per kilogram of ceramic. The ground ceramic material is separated into collector metal and slag at temperatures far above 1000°C. In the process, the feed material is almost completely recycled. The concentrated collector metal, which contains precious metals, is then further processed within the Heraeus precious metals cycle to recover the fine metals.

Precious metal recycling is a core competency at Heraeus

Since as far back as the 1980s, Heraeus has been continually expanding recycling as a key part of the precious metals cycle, and the company is a global leader in this sector. Whether it involves gold for the jewelry industry or ruthenium for the data storage industry, silver for the jewelry industry or the chemical industry, platinum for industrial catalysts and catalytic converters, or iridium for the semiconductor industry – a wide variety of applications requires an equally wide range of recycling methods.

About Hensel Recycling

The Hensel Recycling Group is an international leader in the recycling of catalytic converters. With more than 240 employees in nine countries, the Group offers its customers a complete range of services in precious metal recycling.

Heraeus, the technology group headquartered in Hanau, Germany, is a leading international family-owned company formed in 1851. With expertise, a focus on innovations, operational excellence and an entrepreneurial leadership, we strive to continuously improve the businesses of our customers around the world. We create high-quality solutions for our customers and strengthen their long-term competitiveness by combining material expertise with technological know-how. Our ideas are focused on important issues such as the environment, energy, health, mobility and industrial applications. Our portfolio ranges from components to coordinated material systems which are used in a wide variety of industries, including the steel, electronics, chemical, automotive and telecommunications industries. In the 2015 financial year, Heraeus generated revenues without precious metals of €1.9 bn and a total revenue of €12.9 bn. With approximately 12,500 employees worldwide in more than 100 subsidiaries in 38 countries, Heraeus holds a leading position in its global markets. In 2016, the Foundation for Family Businesses named Heraeus as one of the "Top 10 Family Businesses" in Germany.

For additional information, please contact:

Dr. Jörg Wetterau
Communications & Marketing
Head of Technology Communications & Trade Press
Heraeus Holding GmbH
Heraeusstraße 12-14
63450 Hanau
Phone +49 (0) 6181.35-5706
E-mail: joerg.wetterau@heraeus.com
www.heraeus.com