



PRESS RELEASE

AGA and PRAXAIR sign agreements for brown stock washing technologies and advanced air separation

Praxair has signed an expanded licensing agreement for AGA's patented brown stock washing technology for the pulp and paper market in the southern and western states of the United States.

AGA has signed long term agreements to purchase Praxair's membranes for the production of nitrogen and vacuum pressure swing adsorption (VPSA) plants for the production of oxygen.

AGA is recognized as one of the leading industrial gas companies in pulp and paper areas, and their patented technology for the pulp and paper industry involves the addition of carbon dioxide in the brown stock washing system. Carbon dioxide increases the carbonate content, which liberates soaps originating from the wood, resulting in a cleaner pulp to the bleach plant. As carbon dioxide also is a weak acid, pH is reduced, leading to decreased fiber swelling, which improves pulp drainage. Praxair previously secured from AGA exclusive rights to the technology in Canada, Japan, Spain and Portugal.

Praxair is recognized as the industry leader in advanced air separation systems. The systems that AGA now will purchase, Praxair's VPSA and membrane systems, currently produce over 11,000 tons per day (10,000 metric tons) of gaseous oxygen and nitrogen with proprietary processes that eliminate the steps of liquefying and distilling the air. These systems greatly reduce power consumption and enable customers to realize significant savings over the cost of cryogenic liquid delivery.

For additional information, please contact AGA, Arvid Liepe, Investor Relations, phone +46 8-731 1346, Praxair, Bill Hoerger, Media Relations, phone +1 203-837-2145 or Joe Cappello, Investor Relations, phone +1 203 837 2073.

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AGA is one of the world's leading gas companies. The Group produces and supplies gases to industrial and medical gas markets in some 40 countries in Europe, the US and Latin America.

Information on AGA is available on the Internet: www.aga.se

Praxair is the largest industrial gases company in North and South America, and one of the largest worldwide, with 1997 sales of \$4.7 billion. The company produces, sells and distributes atmospheric, process and specialty gases, and high-performance surface coatings. Praxair is a recognized leader in the commercialization of new technologies that bring productivity and environmental benefits to a diverse group of industries. For more information, visit Praxair on the Internet at www.praxair.com