

## **Akzo Nobel commissions state-of-the-art heavy-duty Coatings plant in the USA**

**Arnhem, the Netherlands, November 22, 2001 – Akzo Nobel Coatings has commissioned a state-of-the-art production plant at its Marine & Protective business unit site in Houston, Texas, USA. The USD 17 million project, executed in phases while production continued, has created one of the most up-to-date manufacturing sites in the world for the production of heavy-duty marine and structural steel coatings.**

“This investment underscores Akzo Nobel Coatings’ strategy to lower our cost base by adopting more innovative approaches,” said Rudy van der Meer, member of Akzo Nobel’s Board of Management responsible for Coatings. “We have definitely succeeded in doing just that at this plant.”

The facility incorporates six new manufacturing lines for thin film products and seven for high build epoxies, all computer monitored. Four new packaging lines use the latest fill-by-weight technology and a new small batch area has been created. Throughout the plant, the latest techniques for reducing solvent emissions and hazardous waste have been adopted. Improved efficiency throughout the process means that product manufacturing losses in the new unit have been reduced substantially over the previous operation.

“The improved batch size flexibility of the Houston plant will allow Marine & Protective to respond more quickly to changing demands by matching batch sizes more directly to customer orders, something which will greatly improve our customer service levels in North America,” explained Vice President of Operations-Americas, Guy Sullaway. “This state-of-the-art facility was designed with input from all our process operators, production and planning staff, as well as our technical group. The result is a highly responsive facility that achieves superior product quality, not only at a lower cost, but also with considerably improved environmental performance.”

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### **Note for the editor**

Akzo Nobel, based in the Netherlands, serves customers throughout the world with healthcare products, coatings and chemicals. Consolidated sales for 2000 totaled EUR 14 billion (USD 13 billion, GBP 8.5 billion). The Company currently employs 67,400 people in 80 countries. Financial results for the full year 2001 will be published on February 22, 2002.

The business unit Marine & Protective Coatings has operations in 54 countries worldwide and over 3,500 employees. Its International® brandname, has worldwide market leadership positions in marine protective and yacht paints. Sales for 2000 were EUR 670 million.

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