

PRESSEINFORMATION
PRESS RELEASE

Japanese earthquake disrupts polymer availability

Polysulphide Supply Issues

Following the Japanese earthquake, Toray Fine Chemicals Co Ltd, Japan, have announced 'Force Majeure' for polysulphide polymer. Operations have ceased at their Chiba facility, north of Tokyo, as a result of disruption to the supply chain of key raw material suppliers whose plant was seriously damaged, and due to the heavy damage to the power supply and unstable power supply situation.

It is not possible to predict when the situation will normalise, but there will be supply disruption to Europe from the end of April for a foreseeable period after current shipments on the water have arrived. Toray currently supply more than 30% of polysulphide polymer used in Western Europe. With other suppliers operating close to capacity, polysulphide sealant supplies could be restricted during the busy mid-summer period and there are indications of significant price rises in the pipeline from the other polymer suppliers.

KÖMMERLING estimates that it will be able to maintain normal supplies to existing customers during this period, but will not be able to take on additional volumes for the foreseeable future. Further price increases should be expected.

PIB Supply Issues

The primary PIB based sealants used in IG production are also in a tight supply position following disruption of Japanese production.

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Raw material for PIB is short and escalating in price. KOMMERLING predicts that it has sufficient supplies at present to meet normal high summer demand from existing customers, but prices are likely to increase.

Insulating Glass producers should be cautious about fixing long term prices in this unstable situation.

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