

Manufacturing Chemist

October 20, 2009

Construction starts on new Ash Stevens expansion project

<http://www.manufacturingchemist.com/story.asp?sectioncode=109&storycode=56529&c=1>

US contract drug development and cGMP manufacturer Ash Stevens has begun construction on the initial phases of a multi-year expansion project to upgrade the capacity and capabilities of its API manufacturing facility located in Riverview, Michigan.

The initial spend will exceed US\$6m (€4m) and will include a new reactor bay and warehouse. The reactor bay is scheduled to be operational in January 2010 and will house two 100-gallon glass-lined reactors and a 50-gallon hydrogenation vessel. The new reactor bay will provide redundant capacity to a similarly designed existing bay that holds three 100-gallon reactors, while providing additional plant capacity and plant-scale hydrogenation capabilities.

The prefabricated concrete structure of the new 10,000ft² warehouse will be built off-site and is expected to be erected and ready for occupation by June. The company is also planning a new tank farm that will enable it to buy and store solvents in bulk rather than in drums, giving it economies of scale in purchasing and reducing testing costs.

‘The continuous upgrading and modernisation of our operations is an essential component of our business model to provide our clients the highest quality of service while ensuring delivery of their API on time and on schedule from a safe and environmentally friendly facility,’ said Dr Stephen Munk, president and ceo of Ash Stevens. ‘As we increase our efficiencies with larger equipment, we also enhance our cost-effectiveness.’

Subsequent phases of the expansion plan call for a new large-scale reactor bay, process development labs and additional facilities to handle highly potent APIs. The cost is likely to be around \$12m (€8m) and the next stage is scheduled for three years’ time, according to Dr Munk.