

## Dow, BASF to add jobs, revenue in next year

By JOHN TOMPKINS | Posted: Friday, September 9, 2011 2:00 am

ANGLETON - Dow and BASF leaders say their Freeport sites are doing rather well after pulling out of the recession two years ago.

Gary Hockstra, outgoing Dow Texas Operations site director, and Greg Masica, BASF petrochemical operations vice president, spoke about their companies' uptick Thursday during a Greater Angleton Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

Hockstra highlighted Texas Operations' planned expansions, including the \$1 billion propylene plant set to begin operations in 2015, an ethylene cracker and the Dow-Mitsui chlorine plant, expected to be operating by 2013. Those expansions, plus others, will create more than 200 permanent jobs, he said.

The company also is about to hire about 800 workers this year due to new positions and retiring employees, Hockstra said.

"We haven't hired that many people in a long, long time," he said.

Dow Chemical announced last week Hockstra will become the company's vice president of manufacturing, engineering and environmental health and safety for the Dow Advanced Materials Division in Philadelphia.

Earl Shipp, the current vice president and site director of Dow Michigan Operations, will take over Texas Operations.

Hockstra told the audience the luncheon likely would be his last public speech before leaving for Philadelphia.

He said he regrets leaving Texas Operations as the site is on the cusp of new projects and expansions.

"It's a great place to be and it's a sad time to leave," Hockstra said.

Masica said BASF's sales improved significantly, by 26 percent from 2009 to 2010, and the company's North American Operations' sales increased by 41 percent in the same time frame.

"Freeport operations was a big chunk of that," Masica said.

The demand for BASF's products has grown and that has kept the Freeport site busy, he said.

"All of our plants have been pretty much running full on," he said.

While there are concerns about the debt issues in the United States and Europe and air quality regulations, the company's sales have grown 19 percent so far this year, Masica told the audience.

The Freeport location is about to see an expansion with a \$50 million dispersion plant projected to begin operating in 2013, he said. The new plant would create 20 permanent jobs.

"That project is on track," he said. "We see all signs for growth."

*John Tompkins is senior reporter for The Facts. Contact him at 979-237-0154.*