FMBusinessDaily

Kimberly-Clark Announces First Tissue Manufacturing Site on Path to 100% Renewable Energy

1 year ago

Kimberly-Clark (K-C), one of the world's leading manufacturers of personal care and hygiene products, has announced that its manufacturing site in Koblenz, Germany has become the company's first tissue manufacturing facility globally with a pathway to transition its operations to 100% renewable energy. The site will electrify its heating needs as well as source its electricity demand via a portfolio of European power purchase agreements of offsite renewables. The transition is intended to be completed by 2029 latest.

The move has been made possible by a Carbon Contract for Difference (CCFD) grant from Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK), combined with K-C's recently announced multi-country European purchase power agreements. As a result, toilet paper, hand towels and wipers under brands Kleenex, Scottex, Scott, WypAll, Page & Hakle, manufactured at the Koblenz facility, will be produced with significantly less carbon emissions.

The CCFD is a financial mechanism to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels. Improvements at the Koblenz site supported by the grant will include switching a natural gas boiler, hood heaters and related infrastructure to electric. These updates will achieve an energy efficiency of almost 99% and remove over 13,000 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide (MTCO2e) annually at the Koblenz facility.

In addition, Kimberly-Clark will source the electricity demand for its Koblenz facility via a portfolio of European power purchase agreements of offsite renewables. The company recently announced the launch of three virtual solar power purchase agreements in Italy and Spain, which will generate enough renewable electricity to cover the total needs of its Koblenz facility, while the European power grid increases its renewable energy capacity. Sourcing offsite renewable electricity to match the site's electricity needs will

achieve a further estimated reduction of approximately 36,000 MTCO2e per year[2].

“Announcing our first Kimberly-Clark tissue manufacturing site globally with a pathway to 100% renewable energy is an incredible milestone that demonstrates how we continue to progress on our decarbonization journey, through innovative cross-sector collaboration” said Lisa Morden, Chief Sustainability Officer at Kimberly-Clark. “We are proud to execute this decarbonization project that will unlock new technologies for Kimberly-Clark, enabling us to tackle the challenge of reducing direct greenhouse emissions, which represent 60% of our total emissions.”

“We are very proud that Koblenz is setting a new standard for sustainable manufacturing at Kimberly-Clark globally” added Paul Sokol, Mill Manager, Koblenz. “We always strive to offer more sustainable products to our consumers and to support our customers’ sustainability goals, and this is a great example of how we can do this.”

K-C’s Koblenz facility also plays a key part in Kimberly-Clark Professional’s RightCycle™ Programme [3], through which used hand towels collected in Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland are sent to Koblenz and recycled into new tissue products. The program allows Kimberly Clark Professional to manage the final destination of this waste, keeping it out of landfill and incinerators. Used hand towels go through a closed-loop system where customers’ source-segregated waste towels are recycled into new tissue products.

This announcement represents a milestone in K-C’s ambitious drive towards green energy and its global goal to reduce its scope 1 & 2 emissions by 50% against a 2015 baseline. Other recent achievements include:

· Installing one of the largest rooftop solar photovoltaic systems at K-C’s manufacturing site at Salamanca facility in Spain, completed in January 2025 (6,500 MWh per year).

· Installing rooftop solar photovoltaic systems at K-C’s manufacturing site in Cape Town, South Africa in 2024 (3,700 MWh per year);

· Opening a new £75 million onshore wind farm in Scotland, UK in 2023 (160,000 MWh per year).