



Hercules Incorporated was established in 1912 and manufactures a wide range of chemical products for the industry, the home and the office. The company employs over 4.600 of staff worldwide. Hercules is part of a global enterprise operating in the paper and water technology, with an annual USD 2 billion turnover. Hercules' two main divisions are the Aqualon Group and the Paper Technologies & Ventures Group, including the Beringen-based subsidiary. The Hercules Paper Technologies & Ventures group is the world's largest supplier of chemicals for the pulp and paper industry. Products manufactured in Beringen contribute to improved end product quality as well as productivity.

Task for Asset Recovery

Dismantling of the idle plant for the production of dicumyl peroxide at the Hercules site In Beringen, Belgium.

"Our aim is zero harm in any project."

Safety first. Hercules fully embraces the vision of the Responsible Care® Security Code program. The high safety standards laid down in the Security Code by the American Chemistry Council do play an important part in the company's overall management. Hercules' ideas on corporate responsibility inspired them to select Asset Recovery for the dismantling of the dicumyl peroxide production unit in Beringen.

The dynamic market in which Hercules Beringen began its development in 1976 has changed completely since then. In that year the large-scale production of polypropylene had begun, which was later sold to Borealis. In that same period Hercules set up the production unit for dicumyl peroxide, an additive used in the cable industry. Competition, mainly from the Far East, caused production to be less profitable and in the end the production unit was made idle. In 2007 it was decided to dismantle the plant.

Danger of Explosion

The dismantling should not jeopardize the zero harm objectives. The entire site had been in operation to zero harm standards for almost nine years. No one is more aware of the risks than Plant Engineer and Safety Coordinator Julien Wouters, who has worked at the Hercules Beringen plant since 1976. "Dicumyl peroxide is a substance with a high risk of explosion, turning the dismantling into a critical project. With respect to safety, Hercules is topping the chemical industry charts. Our zero harm score greatly influenced the choice of a partner for the execution of this project. A number of companies had been invited to present their working methods,

their risk assessment methods and how they schedule activities. Asset Recovery conclusively displayed the required expertise. We also considered it very important to be closely involved in the work process and the safety control. Our own safety inspectors were involved during the execution of the entire project."

Smooth Execution

"Prior to the dismantling all pipes were cleaned and physically disconnected. But one is never 100% certain that no traces of dangerous substances are left behind," Production Supervisor Ivo Vleugels says. "I was really worried about this, considering that quite a lot of contractors apply grinding discs and cutting torches in projects like these. Asset Recovery and its subcontractors proved that there are other ways. As often as possible pipes and cables were cut without using heat. If anything had to be cut by torch, this was done under well-insulated conditions. The entire operation was carried out exactly according to the arrangements made for the project."

Optimum Recovery

Maintenance Foreman Jos Gielis is very happy about the execution of the entire project. "In spite of the high risks of the operation, it was executed perfectly according to plan. The entire work had been done in a tight time frame and we ended up one week ahead of schedule, and all this without a single incident! We mainly owe this success to the open and free communication with Asset Recovery during the entire project. Planning and safety results are very important, but these are not

the only profits the cooperation between Hercules and Asset Recovery yielded. Julien Wouters says: "Of course, we lack the required expertise for projects like these. Asset Recovery carried out the project under its own responsibility and at a guaranteed price, thus creating optimum financial recovery for us."

Julien Wouters

"Asset Recovery conclusively displayed the required expertise."

Summary:

- Asset Recovery successfully completed the dismantling of the dicumyl peroxide plant at the Hercules site in Beringen, Belgium
- The site has been in zero incidents operation for 9 years
- Hercules' zero harm objectives weren't in jeopardy and the work was concluded without any incidents

