

AUTOMOTIVE SUPPLIER HELLA IS EXPANDING IN NORTH AMERICA

PLYMOUTH, Mich. – Hella is expanding its operations in the NAFTA trade region with fuel-saving electronic components, increased production volumes in Mexico and a line of non-automotive products.

Dr. Martin Fischer, president of Hella Electronics Corporation and the head of the company's Corporate Center USA in Plymouth Township, Mich., told editors covering the annual SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) World Congress in Detroit that Hella expects to increase its electronics business in North America at an annual rate of 20 percent over the next three years.

Demand for more fuel-efficient cars and light trucks will spark additional sales for electronic components, Fischer predicted.

“Conventional engine and hybrid vehicles require various electrical and electronics components to meet new government mileage requirements,” he said. “We currently offer automakers a variety of fuel-saving technologies, including start-stop controls, battery sensors, accelerator pedal sensors, engine actuators for turbochargers and intake manifolds, demand-driven fuel pumps and electric vacuum pumps.”

On sound financial footing, the German automotive supplier of lighting and electronic equipment, secured long-term financing for its global operations in the midst of the world's financial crisis and further solidified its position with a bond offering during the fourth quarter of 2009.

Hella recently began production of electronics components for U.S., Mexican and Brazilian customers at a new manufacturing facility in San Jose Iturbide, 155 miles north of Mexico City. The plant currently is operating at more than 90 percent capacity with room for further expansion.

The company also produces lighting components at two plants in Guadalajara and another in Mexico City. Hella supplies automotive-assembly operations for Chrysler, Ford, General Motors, Nissan, Volkswagen and others in Mexico.

Fischer added that the company now plans to diversify into a multi-billion-dollar non-automotive market with the introduction of LED street-lighting systems in the United States later this year.

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Hella recently completed successful pilot programs for its new LED line of Eco StreetLine products in several European cities, including Lippstadt where the company is headquartered. Fischer hopes to have similar pilot projects up and running in the United States before yearend.

“Hella has been a leader in the development of LED lighting for cars and light trucks,” said Steve Lietaert, product group director. “It’s only natural for us to apply that expertise to other markets on a global basis.”

Lietaert noted that more than 1,000 Hella LED street lights already have been installed in Germany with more to follow this year. The company also is looking for partnerships with suppliers of street-lighting components and fixtures.

About Hella: Hella KGaA Hueck & Co. develops and manufactures lighting and electronics components and systems for the automotive industry. Its joint venture companies also produce complete vehicle modules, air-conditioning systems and vehicle electric systems. In addition, Hella has one of the largest automotive aftermarket organizations in the world, with its own sales companies and partners in more than 100 countries.

Hella Group sales were \$4.68 billion in fiscal year 2008-2009. Hella is one of the top 50 automotive parts suppliers in the world and one of the 100 largest industrial companies in Germany. Nearly 23,000 people work at 70 locations in more than 30 countries, including more than 3,200 research-and-development engineers and technicians. Additional information is available at www.hella.com

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Note to Editors: Photos and additional information are available from Hella’s press database at www.hella-press.de.

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