



Press Release



New QC laboratory at Zeller+Gmelin

Quality control: Eislingen-based lubricant experts convert a high-tech quality control laboratory

Quality and quality assurance have always played a central role in Zeller+Gmelin's product strategy. For this purpose, the lubricant experts have set up a new testing laboratory on their historical factory premises. In the future, as many parameters as possible will be carried out at the high-tech facility on the basis of current test instructions, thus significantly accelerating the testing and release process.

When it comes to application-specific lubricants for industry, vehicles and machines, as well as printing inks and chemical products, companies all over the world rely on Zeller+Gmelin. Since 1866, the Eislingen-based company has been developing and manufacturing product and process solutions that set new standards in terms of performance, reliability and economy. In order to maintain its high level of product quality, all products are subjected to stringent testing criteria.

The decision to invest in a new laboratory building and convert an existing building was made in autumn 2018. The LC quality control (formerly the MC company laboratory) was previously located in one of the oldest buildings on the factory premises, built in 1898. "The working conditions in this old building no longer met the requirements of a modern QC laboratory," explains Dr. Roland von der Recke, Head of Quality Control LC at Zeller+Gmelin. "We see the new laboratory building as a future-oriented and trend-setting project that will provide new inspiration for our quality strategy."

Relocation in stages during Corona

The move to the new QC laboratory was initially scheduled for the end of April 2020, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, relocation took place in stages. However, some quality control staff were able to begin work in the new laboratory, where they have been carrying out some release-relevant assessments since early April. In addition to the laboratory rooms for LC quality control, a separate QC laboratory for lubricating greases is currently being set up in the immediate vicinity of 'Lubricating Grease Development.' "Our laboratory represents the cutting edge of technology," says Daniel Knospe, Head of Plant Technology at Zeller+Gmelin. For example, premises are equipped with a generous number of fume cupboards so that work with chemicals that are hazardous to health or have a strong smell can be carried out under optimum conditions. All workstations also have exhaust slots that continuously extract air from the laboratory benches, in addition to various connections for technical gases, ensuring that the extension of analytical determinations can be carried out at any time. In addition, there is sufficient space for release relevant QC tests, although the measuring instruments still have to be moved.

Process optimisation in the transport of samples

When the location of the new QC laboratory was selected, the process of transporting samples from production to the laboratory was also taken into consideration: almost 10,000 samples a year have to be transferred from the various production lines to the QC laboratory. Accordingly, the construction of a pneumatic tube system was carried out in parallel, which will ensure the future transport of samples from production facilities and within laboratory building 24/3. "This contributes to a further increase in production



efficiency as well as the efficiency of the QC laboratory by significantly minimising transport times for the samples," explains Dr. Roland von der Recke, Head of QC.

Record construction time

Construction began in autumn 2019 with the demolition of a tank farm for transmission oils and was completed shortly before Christmas. At the beginning of 2020, the electrical installation and the installation of the ventilation system on the roof were being carried out simultaneous to the installation of the sanitary, heating and technical gas supply. Installation of the pneumatic tube system followed. With the commissioning of the ventilation system and approval of the laboratory furniture, the laboratory was finally ready for use at the end of March 2020. Thanks to the department's spatial separation, Zeller+Gmelin has ensured that quality controls can still be carried out even if a team is absent.



Image 1: Dr Roland von der Recke, Head of Quality Control LC at Zeller+Gmelin, in the new QC laboratory: "We see the new laboratory building as a future-oriented and trend-setting project that will provide new inspiration to our quality strategy."



Figure 2-3: Air supply through textile air distribution systems: The new premises are equipped with a generous number of fume cupboards so that work with chemicals that are hazardous to health or have a strong smell can be carried out under optimum conditions.



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Figure 4: Test laboratory in accordance with the most modern standards: All workstations are also equipped with fume cupboards and exhaust slots, which continuously extract air from the laboratory benches. Zeller+Gmelin's new QC laboratory is also equipped with various connections for technical gases, so that an extension of analytical determinations can be realised at any time.

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Figure 5-6: Old and new building

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