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Air Liquide Electronics acquires Edwards Chemical Management Division

press release

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Air Liquide Electronics

With **3,000 employees** and **€44 million** sales in 2007, Air Liquide Electronics has activities in **ultra-pure and specialty gases, new molecules, related equipment and customized services.**

The Electronics division management is based in Tokyo to enhance its proximity to the booming semiconductor market in Asia.

Air Liquide Electronics U.S. LP has signed an agreement to **purchase the major part of the assets of the Chemical Management Division** of Edwards Vacuum, Inc.

The acquisition is expected to close **before the end of June, 2008**, pending regulatory approval and pending the satisfaction of certain closing conditions set forth in the agreement.

Edwards' Chemical Management Division, a major player in chemical equipment, is focused on designing, manufacturing, and selling chemical and slurry dispensing equipment, installations and services to leading **semiconductors as well as Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) worldwide.** With production based in Chanhassen, Minnesota, in the United States, it employs **about 120 people (including 20% in Asia and Europe)** and has annual sales of approximately 50 million USD.

This acquisition will complement **Air Liquide Electronics' position in the high purity fluid equipment and installation sector, particularly in the U.S. and in Asia.** It will reaffirm Air Liquide Electronics' strategy to be a **global supplier** to the semiconductor, flat panel display and photovoltaics industries around the world.

Christophe Fontaine, Vice-President Electronics, Air Liquide Group, said: ***"This acquisition will bring key complements to our current portfolio, especially allowing us to cover the whole equipment and installation spectrum for ultra-pure fluids with the key players of the electronics industry."***

Nigel Hunton, CEO of Edwards, commented: ***"I'm very happy to continue the strategic re-alignment of Edwards to focus on its core vacuum equipment and abatement business. In reaching an agreement with Air Liquide for our Chemical Management Division, we ensure a smooth transition of ownership for the benefit of our employees and customers."***

Edwards is a leading global supplier of integrated vacuum and abatement solutions for the manufacture of semiconductors, flat panel displays, LEDs and solar cells and a leader in vacuum technology for industrial, scientific, process and R&D applications. The company employs around 3,600 people worldwide in the design, manufacture and support of high technology vacuum and exhaust management equipment.

Air Liquide Electronics U.S. LP is the subsidiary of American Air Liquide Holdings, Inc. responsible for serving the semiconductor industry in the U.S. **American Air Liquide Holdings, Inc.** is the subsidiary of Air Liquide Group responsible for its North American operations.

With more than **40,000 employees** in **75 countries**, Air Liquide is the **world leader** in industrial and medical gases and related services. The Group offers **innovative solutions** based on constantly enhanced **technologies** and produces **air gases (oxygen, nitrogen, argon, rare gases...)** and **many other gases including hydrogen**. The Group contributes to the manufacturing of **many everyday products**: bubbles in sparkling beverages, protective atmosphere for packed foods, oxygen for hospitals and homecare patients, ultra-pure gases for the semiconductor industry, hydrogen to desulfurize fuels...

Air Liquide is committed to **sustainable development** and helps to **protect life**. Founded in 1902, Air Liquide has successfully developed a long-term relationship with its shareholders built on **trust** and **transparency** and guided by the principles of **corporate governance**. Since the publication of its first consolidated financial statements in 1971, Air Liquide has posted **strong and steady earnings growth**. Sales in 2007 totaled **11,801 million euros**, with sales outside France accounting for almost 80%. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris stock exchange and is a component of the CAC 40 and Eurostoxx 50 indices (ISIN code FR 0000120073).