

Leclanché launches environmentally-friendly production of large format lithium-ion cells

- **Innovative production process and patented technology allows solvent-free water-based manufacturing of electrodes**
- **Increased lifespan of Leclanché cells reduces cost of stored kWh**
- **Reduced need for chemical solvents**

Yverdon-les-Bains, 12 October 2011 - Leclanché S.A. (SIX Swiss Exchange : LECN), specialized in the production of large-format lithium ion cells and energy storage solutions, today announces the launch of environmentally-friendly production of lithium-ion cells based on a new and innovative manufacturing process which uses water instead of solvents in the production of electrodes required for the production of cells. This process, for which Leclanché has filed a patent application and which can be applied to all types of Lithium-Ion batteries, including state-of-the-art Titanate cells, represent a significant environmental improvement as it eliminates organic solvents in the production process of electrodes while also allowing for higher stability and longer life span of Lithium-Ion cells.

“This new environmentally-friendly production process represents a real achievement for our industry,” said Dr. Ulrich Ehmes, CEO of Leclanché. “It is also very timely as energy storage solutions will play an increasing role in the effective use of renewable energies such as wind and solar. Following several years of research and significant investments, we are particularly proud of being among the first companies to offer this additional benefit to our customers, especially as Leclanché stores green energy in its Lithium-Ion cells and storage solutions. In addition, solvent free electrodes increase the lifespan of our cells which reduces the cost per stored kWh for our customers.”

Contrary to the solvent-free water-based manufacturing of electrodes developed by Leclanché, conventional industrial coating processes use substantial amounts of solvents, which must subsequently be recycled or burnt. In Leclanché’s new water-based technique, only water is still used. Equally, the use of binders will be significantly reduced.

“Our water based process, which allows Leclanché to eliminate the use of chemical solvents in the production process of its electrodes, is not insignificant at all when producing several thousand or millions of cells. The benefit for the environment and for our customers is obvious. In addition, our cells enjoy a higher stability and longer life span due to the reduced degradation effects of the active materials linked to the binders in the cells. This development was the logical next step after having brought the number of full charging and discharging cycles of our cells above 15.000 cycles over their lifetime,” added Pierre Blanc, CTO of Leclanché S.A. “Once introduced throughout the entire production process in the next few months, this new process will give us an additional unique selling point in the marketplace.”

Leclanché began developing solvent-free electrode manufacture three years ago. The conversion of the entire manufacturing process to the water-based technique should coincide with the commissioning of Leclanché's new cell production line in Willstätt with an installed annual capacity of approximately 1 million cells, scheduled to be operational at the end of the second quarter 2012.

About Leclanché

Leclanché specializes in the production of tailor-made energy storage solutions and is a leading manufacturer of large-format lithium ion cells in Europe. Through a unique, licensed separator technology, the core element of lithium ion cells, Leclanché is capable of manufacturing cells with above-average safety features and a significantly increased life in an automated production process. The company's core markets are industries which have highest demands on energy storage systems. They include energy storage solutions, which allow better utilization of the power supply system, large hybrid diesel engines and electric vehicles.

Leclanché has an installed annual production capacity of 100,000 large format lithium-ion cells. To prepare for the increasing demand for this technology, the company has decided to install an additional production unit with a capacity of 1 million cells per year as of 2012.

Leclanché was founded in 1909 in Yverdon-les-Bains. Through the integration of a spin-off from the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft in 2006, the company developed from being a traditional battery manufacturer to becoming a leading developer and manufacturer of lithium ion cells in Europe. Leclanché currently employs 110 staff and recorded revenues of CHF 15.05 million in 2010. The company has its headquarters in Yverdon-les-Bains (Switzerland) and has production facilities in Willstätt (Germany). Leclanché is listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange (LECN).

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