

Press Release

Kassel/Philippsthal (Germany), December 23, 2021

Werra-Fulda potash district

Authority grants discharge permit until the end of 2027

By granting the permit under water law today, the Kassel Regional Council has provided further security for the production of mineral fertilizers and high-purity salt products at the K+S Werra and Neuhofer-Ellers sites. The previous permit expires at the end of the year.

“The new permit is great news for our employees at the Werra and Neuhofer-Ellers plants,” says Dr. Burkhard Lohr, Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of K+S Aktiengesellschaft. “This also demonstrates that our extensive investments and measures to further reduce environmental impact and implement an environmentally friendly conversion of the waste management concept at the Werra plant have been recognized.”

The new permit follows the target values set in mid-November by the Weser River Basin Community (FGG Weser) for the river management period from 2022 to 2027 and is therefore limited until the end of this period. Besides the further reduction of the limit values, it stipulates a discharge of a maximum of 5 million cubic meters of saline wastewater per year (2021: 6.7 million cubic meters per year).

Under the new discharge permit, a limit value for chloride of 2,000 milligrams/liter (2021: 2,400 mg/l) will apply at the Gerstungen gauging station from January 1, 2022. In 2023, the limit drops to 1,820 and for the years 2024 to 2027, the maximum permitted salt concentration is 1,700 mg/l.



Long-term disposal security

The target values recently set by the FGG Weser for the entire river management period are ambitious. K+S will, of course, take all necessary measures to comply with them. The goal of no longer discharging process water from potash production into the Werra river from 2028 onwards remains unchanged. In particular, K+S sees storage and tailings pile covering as the two key components for ensuring environmentally compatible disposal in the Werra-Fulda potash district in the long term and for continuously contributing to an improvement in the water quality of the Werra and Weser rivers.

About K+S, the Werra plant and the Neuhof-Ellers plant

We make an important contribution to society: We enable farmers securing the world's food supply. Our products keep numerous industries running. We enrich consumers' daily lives and ensure safety in winter. With around 11,000 employees, production sites on two continents, and a global distribution network, we are a reliable partner for our customers. At the same time, we are realigning ourselves: We are focusing even more strongly than before on fertilizers and specialties. We are becoming leaner, more cost-efficient, more digital, and more performance-oriented. On a solid financial basis, we are tapping into new markets and business models. We are committed to our responsibility towards society and the environment in all regions in which we operate. Learn more about K+S at www.kpluss.com.

The Werra integrated potash plant, with its sites at Hattorf and Wintershall in Hesse as well as Unterbreizbach and Merkers in Thuringia, is the largest site of K+S Minerals and Agriculture GmbH. The Werra potash plant produces not only fertilizers but also intermediate products for a wide range of technical and industrial applications as well as for the pharmaceutical, food, and animal feed industries. It employs almost 4400 people, including 300 trainees. It is therefore an important employer and training company in the triangle of towns between Bad Hersfeld, Bad Salzungen, and Eisenach. The plant is also an important customer for local small and medium-sized businesses and significantly contributes to value creation in the region. This makes it a key component in the economic and demographic development of the East Hesse/West Thuringia region.



With around 750 employees, including about 45 trainees, the Neuhof-Ellers potash plant is one of the most important regional employers in the greater Fulda area. Neuhof-Ellers is the southernmost K+S production site in Germany. Due to its unique deposit, it can produce fertilizer specialties on the basis of the extracted crude salts containing potassium and magnesium. With its central location, the site has a major advantage for supplying the most important European agricultural markets, among others.

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