



Cabot Aerogel Selected to Insulate 60 km Subsea Pipeline in Gulf of Mexico

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Helix Energy Resource project sets new record for longest aerogel-insulated oil pipeline

BOSTON and HOUSTON, May 20 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Cabot Aerogel, a business of Cabot Corporation (NYSE: CBT), today announced its patented and patent-pending Nanogel(R) aerogel Compression Pack(TM) product has been selected to insulate a 60 km subsea pipeline in the deepwater Gulf of Mexico. Energy Resource Technology (ERT), a wholly owned subsidiary of Helix Energy Solutions Group (NYSE: HLX), is the operator of the pipeline located in Danny field development, Garden Banks block 506.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20000323/CABOTLOGO>)

The 8 inch-in-12 inch pipe-in-pipe tieback will be the longest aerogel- insulated pipeline ever constructed and the first time that aerogel has been used in an S-lay application. It will also be the first pipe-in-pipe system to be installed by Helix's new state-of-the-art 480-foot long DP S-lay pipeline installation vessel, Caesar, that is under construction. The Caesar can lay pipe from 6-inch to 42-inch OD and with its 400-ton tension capacity, the vessel can install pipe in water depths in excess of 6,500 feet, and install large diameter trunk lines in shallow water.

The ultra-low conductivity of Nanogel aerogel is a key enabler of ERT's pipe-in-pipe system design, which has a low U-value of 0.15 BTU/hr.ft2-degrees Fahrenheit (0.85 W/m2-K) while maintaining a 12- inch outer jacket pipe. Additionally, the rugged design of the Nanogel Compression Pack packaging system makes it well-suited for pipe-in-pipe applications where weld slag, scale, and other factors can pose significant challenges or create delays for systems using less durable products.

The Nanogel Compression Packs that will insulate the ERT Danny pipe-in- pipe system consist of packs of compressed Nanogel aerogel with an integrated protective outer layer of high-density polyethylene. These packs are applied to 40-foot sections of inner pipe and expanded to their precise final forms prior to insertion of the insulated inner pipe into an outer pipe. The completed pipe units will then be transported offshore where they will be welded together aboard the Caesar.

"We are delighted to be working with Cabot on ERT's first aerogel project and consider this technology to be a critical component in achieving the performance that is required in today's deepwater environment. The mechanical strength of Nanogel combined with the durable form of Cabot's Compression Pack system provide added benefits during pipeline fabrication and installation," says Majid Al-Sharif, ERT subsea manager for the Danny field development project.

"Helix is a worldwide leader in deepwater technology innovation, making them a perfect fit for projects with Nanogel aerogel," said Aaron Johnson, global oil and gas business development manager for Cabot. "We are very excited to be supporting Helix on this project and look forward to more collaboration with them in the immediate future in the Gulf of Mexico and other basins around the world.

What is Nanogel(R) aerogel?

Sometimes called "frozen smoke", aerogel is the lightest and best insulating solid in the world. Nanogel, Cabot's branded aerogel, is a hydrophobic aerogel produced as particles. Each particle consists largely of air (~95%) contained in nano-sized pores that severely inhibit heat transfer through the material. Nanogel particles can be contained in various ways to facilitate incorporation into a wide range of systems including pipe-in-pipe systems, LNG & cryogenic gas transportation and storage systems, insulative coatings, daylighting panels, sporting equipment, clothing, and others. Cabot produces Nanogel in a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility located near Frankfurt, Germany where it began commercial production in 2003.

About Cabot Corporation

Cabot Aerogel is a unit of the Cabot Corporation. Cabot Corporation is a global specialty chemicals and materials company headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Cabot's major products are carbon black, fumed silica, inkjet colorants, capacitor materials, aerogel, and cesium formate drilling fluids. The website address is: www.cabot-corp.com.

About Helix Energy Solutions Group

Helix provides life-of-field services and development solutions to offshore energy producers worldwide. Helix actively reduces finding and development costs through a unique mix of offshore production assets, service methodologies, and highly skilled personnel. Customers include growth-focused national and independent oil companies, as well as internal prospect generation, exploration, development and production units. For more information visit www.helixesg.com.

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CONTACT:

Karen Morrissey, Vice President, Corporate Affairs
1-617-342-6254, karen_morrissey@cabot-corp.com
or
Susannah Robinson, Director, Investor Relations
1-617-342-6129
both of Cabot Corporation

Web site: <http://www.cabot-corp.com>
<http://www.helixesg.com>