

ZEON to Build Manufacturing Plant for Carbon Nanotubes

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ZEON CORPORATION (President: Kimiaki Tanaka) will construct a plant within the Tokuyama facility to manufacture high-grade carbon nanotubes using the Super-Growth Method.

ZEON has been participating in projects* sponsored by the Incorporated Administrative Agency New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO). Under these projects, ZEON has been developing mass production technology for carbon nanotubes using the innovative Super-Growth Method. This method, discovered in 2004 by a team led by Dr. Kenji Hata at the Incorporated Administrative Agency National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), is used to synthesize single-walled carbon nanotubes. In 2011, ZEON and AIST built a demonstration plant for mass production funded by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry's supplementary budget for fiscal 2009, and have been operating the plant and disseminating technology by providing samples.

Carbon nanotubes produced with the Super Growth Method demonstrate unique properties, including a high aspect ratio, high purity and highly specific surface area, and they hold promise for applications such as new specialty materials with non-conventional functionality and characteristics, and next-generation devices. The NEDO project has already devised potential ways of incorporating carbon nanotubes into innovative materials and devices such as high-performance capacitors, highly functional rubber materials and materials with high thermal conductivity, and demand for these products is expected to grow.

In response to this demand, ZEON will build a plant to manufacture high-grade single-walled carbon nanotubes using the Super Growth Method and will leverage technology developed for the construction of the AIST demonstration plant for mass production. The company will also invest in its Tokuyama Plant in Shunan City, Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan, and plans to begin mass production there in the latter half of fiscal 2015.

*Carbon Nanotube Capacitor Development Project (fiscal 2006 to fiscal 2010) and Development of Innovative Carbon Nanotube Composite Materials for a Low Carbon Emission Society (fiscal 2010 to fiscal 2013)

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