

Houston, Texas – April 25, 2012

Air Liquide announces start up of new Steam Methane Reformer in La Porte, Texas

press release

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Photo caption

Public officials and Air Liquide customers participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony for Air Liquide's new hydrogen production unit in La Porte, Texas. From left: **State Senator Mike Jackson** (R-Texas); **David Yeary**, Valero Energy Corp.; **Stacey Osborne**, Development Director, City of La Porte; **Roger Perreault**, President, Air Liquide Large Industries U.S. LP; **Josh Daniels**, representing U.S. Rep. Pete Olson (R-Texas); **Michael Graff**, President and CEO, American Air Liquide Holdings, Inc.; **Jay Guerrero**, representing U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-Texas); **Johnnye Wozniak**, Sr. Vice President, Hydrogen/Syngas, Air Liquide Large Industries U.S. LP; **Cameron Mason**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Air Liquide Process & Construction, Inc.

Note to editors: A high-resolution photo is available upon request.

Air Liquide in the U.S.

Air Liquide companies in the U.S. employ about **5,000** employees in over **200** **locations**, and offer industrial gases, equipment and related services to customers in the large industries, industrial merchant, electronics and healthcare markets.

Air Liquide Large Industries U.S. LP ("Air Liquide") today held a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the formal start up of a new **Steam Methane Reformer (SMR)** in **La Porte, Texas**, just east of Houston.

The **120 million standard cubic feet per day of gaseous hydrogen** produced by the SMR will feed into the company's pipeline system along the Texas Gulf Coast, including the **recently built 85 mile pipeline expansion** to supply refineries in Port Arthur, Texas. **Hydrogen is used in the oil refining process to convert heavy crude oil into clean burning transportation fuels and petrochemical feed stocks.**



In remarks at today's ceremony, **Michael Graff, President and Chief Executive Officer of American Air Liquide Holdings, Inc.**, expressed appreciation to employees and all construction personnel for **more than 1.2 million safe, injury free work hours on the project.**

Added Graff: ***"In 2009, in the midst of one of the most difficult economic downturns our country has faced, Air Liquide made the strategic decision to move forward with this major investment, utilizing Air Liquide's proprietary technology, recognizing the long term need for hydrogen to promote and enable continued growth along the Gulf***

Air Liquide Large Industries U.S. LP serves large industry in the U.S. by offering gas and energy solutions to optimize process efficiencies and help meet environmental responsibilities. In the U.S., the Air Liquide Large Industries business serves the refining, natural gas, chemistry and metals industries. It operates an extensive 1,800 mile pipeline system along the Gulf Coast and the Mississippi River as well as providing its customers with on-site gas production capabilities.

Coast. And it is this type of vision – for growth – for innovation – that sets Air Liquide apart.”

In addition to the benefits of hydrogen in manufacturing cleaner gasoline, the gas **increasingly is being used with fuel cells for transit buses and fork lift trucks for materials handling.** Earlier this month, Air Liquide Industrial U.S. LP (ALIUS) announced a demonstration project for a hydrogen-powered fuel cell transit bus in Birmingham, AL. And last January, ALIUS began supplying hydrogen to a fleet of 37 hydrogen-powered fuel cell fork lifts at a leading soft drink maker's bottling and distribution facility in California.

Joining Air Liquide in today's ceremony were **Texas State Senator Mike Jackson** and representatives from the offices of **U.S. Senator John Cornyn** and **Representative Pete Olson**, as well as the **City of La Porte's Economic Development Department.**

***Air Liquide is the world leader in gases for industry, health and the environment, and is present in 80 countries with 46,200 employees.** Oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen and rare gases have been at the core of Air Liquide's activities since its creation in 1902. Using these molecules, Air Liquide continuously reinvents its business, anticipating the needs of current and future markets. The Group innovates to enable progress, to achieve dynamic growth and a consistent performance.*

***Innovative technologies** that curb polluting emissions, lower industry's energy use, recover and reuse natural resources or develop the energies of tomorrow, such as hydrogen, biofuels or photovoltaic energy... Oxygen for hospitals, homecare, fighting nosocomial infections...Air Liquide combines many products and technologies to develop valuable applications and services not only for its customers but also for society.*

***A partner for the long term,** Air Liquide relies on employee commitment, customer trust and shareholder support to pursue its vision of sustainable, competitive growth. The **diversity** of Air Liquide's teams, businesses, markets and geographic presence provides a solid and sustainable base for its development and strengthens its ability to push back its own limits, conquer new territories and build its future.*

***Air Liquide explores the best that air can offer to preserve life, staying true to its Corporate Social Responsibility and sustainable development approach.** In 2011, the Group's revenues amounted to **€14.5 billion**, of which more than 80% were generated outside France. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris Euronext stock exchange (compartment A) and is a member of the CAC 40 and Dow Jones Euro Stoxx 50 indexes.*