Air Products Dedicates World's Largest Hydrogen Plant and Pipeline System

October 23, 2012 at 3:27 PM EDT

LEHIGH VALLEY, Pa., Oct. 23, 2012 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ --Stretching from the Houston Ship Channel in Texas to New Orleans, Louisiana, Air Products (NYSE: APD), the leading global hydrogen provider, today held a dedication ceremony for what is the world's largest hydrogen plant and pipeline supply network. Air Products had operated two hydrogen pipeline systems in Texas and Louisiana before joining them with a new 180-mile segment. Air Products' Gulf Coast Connection Pipeline (GCCP) is now able to provide hydrogen to customers along the 600-mile pipeline span from over 20 hydrogen production facilities.

"Product supply and reliability are the top priorities to the refinery and petrochemical industries. This completed pipeline project increases the reliable and flexible supply of hydrogen, critically important to the sustainability of these industries, and allows them to continue to expand and thrive. We are proud of what this successful project offers customers that are as important to Air Products as they are to the states of Louisiana and Texas," Jeff Byrne, vice president and general manager, Tonnage Gases, said to the audience gathered for the dedication event at Air Products' Plaquemine, La. facility.

The company announced the pipeline project in 2010 and placed it onstream in August 2012 to begin supply of over 1.2 billion cubic feet of hydrogen per day to Louisiana and Texas customers. Thus, the pipeline was onstream prior to recent Hurricane Isaac, and Byrne said customers experienced its benefits immediately.

"The positive implications of our hydrogen pipeline's capabilities were already evident to customers impacted by Isaac. The ability to move product along the pipeline, and to be able to source hydrogen for customers in Louisiana from production facilities hundreds of miles away in Texas, was outstanding, recognized, and appreciated by our customers. When a customer notified us that they needed additional hydrogen, and needed it now, it was there," said Byrne.

"Additionally, customers with operations in both Texas and Louisiana who are connected to the pipeline in both states have also realized they have yet another added benefit. We've already signed and announced agreements with customers for new and increased product supply that allow for some of the hydrogen allotment to be directed to multiple customer locations in the two states. We are able to offer enhanced supply capability to our customers because of our vast hydrogen pipeline system," Byrne said.

Air Products had established a new website specifically tracking the progress on the GCCP project from its inception. The website detailed several metrics on the project and challenges faced. Some of this information included:

- Designing and developing a feasible route minimizing impacts to local governments, communities, the environment, and strictly adhering to Air Products' critical safety requirements.
- Securing 1,085 permanent landowner right-of-ways, and over 300 temporary agreements.
- Obtaining numerous environmental permits and hundreds of non-environmental permits.
- Overcoming numerous construction challenges including three U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood protection levees within the Atchafalaya Basin Swamp, and rivers, streams and highway crossings, as well as managing the multiple changes to the design route and securing permit addendums as a result.
- Completing over 100,000 feet of directional drilling.
- Conducting more than 25,000 welds.
- Installing more than 24,000 pipe sections that were each 40 feet in length.

Globally, Air Products' hydrogen pipeline operational expertise is evidenced by the 40 year safe operation of its network of systems. Pipelines offer a safe, robust and reliable supply of hydrogen to the refinery and petrochemical industry around the world. In addition to the Gulf Coast hydrogen pipeline system, Air Products also has hydrogen pipeline networks operating around the world in the U.S. in Southern California; in Canada in Sarnia, Ontario, and Edmonton, Alberta; and in The Netherlands in Rotterdam.

Hydrogen is widely used in petroleum refining processes to remove impurities found in crude oil such as sulfur, olefins and aromatics to meet the product fuels specifications. Removing these components allows gasoline and diesel to burn cleaner and thus makes hydrogen a critical component in the production of cleaner fuels needed by modern, efficient internal combustion engines.

About Air Products

Air Products (NYSE: APD) provides atmospheric, process and specialty gases; performance materials; equipment; and technology. For over 70 years, the company has enabled customers to become more productive, energy efficient and sustainable. More than 20,000 employees in over 50 countries supply innovative solutions to the energy, environment and emerging markets. These include semiconductor materials, refinery hydrogen, coal gasification, natural gas liquefaction, and advanced coatings and adhesives. In fiscal 2012, Air Products had sales approaching $10 billion. For more information, visit www.airproducts.com.

NOTE: This release may contain forward-looking statements within the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements are based on management's reasonable expectations and assumptions as of the date of this release regarding important risk factors. Actual performance and financial results may differ materially from projections and estimates expressed in the forward-looking statements because of many factors not anticipated by management, including risk factors described in the Company's Form 10K for its fiscal year ended September 30, 2011.