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BASF AG: Innovative technology adapts shoes to weather conditions

Ludwigshafen, Germany, Apr 04, 2008 (M2 PRESSWIRE via COMTEX) --

Hamburg-based company IQTEX has developed an innovative system which could revolutionize shoe comfort. The system relies on BASFs superabsorbent fabric Luquafleece

Wet feet never again: IQTEX and BASF have jointly developed a unique, intelligent system which adapts shoes to suit weather conditions. To make this possible, IQTEX has processed a special superabsorbing fleece from BASF into an innovative ventilation element known as Vayu Verde .

In contrast to conventional functional clothing, shoes made with Vayu Verde technology are not only breathable but, depending on the weather, can be as air-permeable as a cotton T-shirt or as watertight as rain boots, says Michael Dehn, managing director of IQTEX.

Vayu Verde functions like a flower that closes up in the rain and re-opens when it is dry. When the material gets wet, for example if the wearer steps in a puddle, the superabsorbing fleece in the ventilation element immediately expands and self-seals the system. It even stays watertight under high pressure. Then, as soon as the material integrated into the sole of the shoe dries, it regains its breathability within minutes and the wearer feels a cool and pleasant sensation.

Whether rain or sunshine feet will always stay dry.

Vayu Verde is protected by international patents. IQTEX managing director Michael Dehn and his business partner Christian Wiedemann have already received several prizes for its development including the Brand New Award during the worlds largest young entrepreneur competition at the ISPO Sport & Style trade fair in Munich in July 2007.

The fleece in Vayu Verde contains superabsorbent polymers and is marketed by BASF as Luquafleece . This functional material can absorb large amounts of aqueous liquids and thanks to its reversible moisture binding system is capable of absorbing and releasing large amounts of moisture and humidity. It is already being used for increased climate comfort in office chairs and protective clothing, for example.

Luquafleece is one of the specialties in our portfolio of superabsorbents for industrial applications, says Ralf Spettmann, Group Vice President of the Global Business Unit Acrylics & Superabsorbents at BASF. With Vayu Verde we have successfully developed a further, innovative application for this superabsorbing fleece. Our cooperation with IQTEX is another good example of how BASF, together with its customers, can achieve successful solutions. BASF will be presenting Luquafleece and products manufactured with Luquafleece at the nonwovens exhibition INDEX 2008 (April 15-18, 2008) in Geneva.

The first shoes with Vayu Verde technology are to be launched on the market this year. IQTEX has already developed the first prototypes together with partners such as safety shoe producer Baak and the Deichmann group (childrens shoes Elefanten). The Vayu Verde technology is not only suitable for shoes but could also be used to manufacture jackets, gloves, tents, safety helmets, textiles and sports accessories to achieve optimum ventilation. This innovative technology could also be deployed in electronic devices or medical products.

IQTEX was founded by Michael Dehn and Christian Wiedemann in 2005 to market several patents and patent-pending inventions.

IQTEX utilizes cutting edge technologies and advanced production methods to develop innovative products. Since it was founded, IQTEX has focused on developing marketable products as well as continuously enhancing and improving existing innovations. IQTEX is available on the Internet at www.iqtex.com.

Superabsorbents are crosslinked polyacrylates that can absorb and bind huge amounts of

liquid: up to 500 times their weight.

Their main area of application is in the manufacture of hygiene products. They are also used in many industrial applications, such as for thickening or absorbing liquid waste or as waterblocking coatings for cables. Superabsorbents do not release absorbed liquids under pressure; plant roots, on the other hand, can absorb the water stored in superabsorbents slowly and evenly, which is why superabsorbents are increasingly being used for water storage purposes in the earth or in special plant soil. Superabsorbents are marketed worldwide by the BASF Acrylics & Dispersions division.

About BASF BASF is the worlds leading chemical company: The Chemical Company. Its portfolio ranges from oil and gas to chemicals, plastics, performance products, agricultural products and fine chemicals. As a reliable partner BASF helps its customers in virtually all industries to be more successful. With its high-value products and intelligent solutions, BASF plays an important role in finding answers to global challenges such as climate protection, energy efficiency, nutrition and mobility.

BASF has more than 95,000 employees and posted sales of almost 58 billion in 2007. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchanges in Frankfurt (BAS), London (BFA) and Zurich (AN).

CONTACT: BASF WWW: <http://www.basf.com>

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