

## **Aventine Renewable Energy Upgrades Pekin, Ill., Plant to Natural Gas**

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PEKIN, Ill.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aventine Renewable Energy, a leading producer, marketer and end-to-end supplier of ethanol, has announced completion of a \$13.2 million project to upgrade its wet mill ethanol plant in Pekin, Illinois, by replacing 70-year-old coal boiler technology with two newly installed Indeck® high-pressure natural gas boilers. The boiler installation is part of the more than \$30 million investment Aventine is making to restore its two plants in Pekin.

The new boilers at the 160-million-gallon wet mill improve efficiency while also reducing annual emissions of sulfur dioxide by more than 13,000 tons and emissions of ash by 215 tons. As a cogeneration facility, the plant makes high-pressure steam that is run through turbines, generating 8 megawatts of electricity and using low-pressure steam in the process of corn wet milling. Three old coal boilers, including two vintage 1944 stoker boilers and a 1955 vintage steam boiler, will be permanently retired in early September.

“Ag processing plants must be rebuilt every 20 years, so we are rebuilding the Pekin wet mill to be productive for another 20 years,” explained Mark Beemer, president and CEO of Aventine, during an Aug. 15 ribbon-cutting ceremony. “In October 2013 we broke Aventine’s historical maximum production record, and we’ve broken our own records twice since then.”

To date \$20 million invested in the plant complex includes \$13.2 for the boilers, retubing a 1975 boiler, \$1 million to fix a fermentation problem, \$1.4 million to install a new starch separator and replace six old separators, installing a new \$750,000 centrifuge at the yeast plant, and installing two backflow preventers for the Pekin city water system. More than 80 seal pots have been installed to prevent pump failure while reducing well water use by 70,000 gallons per day.

Aventine is also building a new truck and rail dump, which will allow the Pekin complex to unload 60,000 bushels of corn per hour or unload 110 BNSF shuttle trains in less than 15 hours. A new CompuWeigh system is being installed across the 200-acre complex that will enable seamless electronic metering of all ethanol

and specialty liquids plus electronic weighing of all inbound grain and outbound grain products. The system will directly interface with Aventine's accounting systems.

“The investments we have made in our Pekin plant will give us the competitive advantage to continue to provide clean, renewable energy for years to come,” said John Valenti, Aventine’s vice president of operations. “It’s a significant improvement to one of the most robust and diverse bio-refineries in the industry.”

Aventine has also invested more than \$2 million in the Fagen dry mill in Pekin, including replacing conveyors, economizers, dryers, rebuilding centrifuges, thermal oxidizer and agitation motors.

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