

Ecolab completes \$4.5-million investment



PHOTOS BY HEATHER COX / Huntington Herald-Press

TALK: Ecolab Engineer, Margo Blake, answers questions on the tour of Ecolab's production lines. At one point during the tour, Blake noted that some of the soap they distribute is sent to Epcot at Disney World in Florida.

Ribbon cutting ceremony celebrates new production line, reductions in water usage

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A \$4.5-million investment into Ecolab's Huntington plant has brought a few new changes to production machinery recently, bringing members of the Huntington Economic Development team, leaders from the city and county and Ecolab team leaders together for a commissioning of the new operations.

Ecolab, a global company that has been operational in one form or another in Huntington since 1919, announced plans of working toward two projects in April 2018. Eric Bricker,

Huntington plant manager, explained that the first one was a new system to wash out equipment in a way that reduces the amount of water used.

Bricker said with this new system, they are able to reduce the amount of water used by 25 percent.

"Typically our goal in an average year is 3, 4, 5 percent to get better every year as far as sustainability. This is huge leap forward with about a 25 percent total reduction in the water usage for this plant and for the community," Bricker said.

Secondly, the plant was able to install a new bag



CUT: The ribbon is cut, commissioning new machinery at the Huntington Ecolab plant. The machinery pictured behind the group that helped make it happen, now bags soap for Walmart and Sam's Club.

line which fills bagged soap. Bricker said they targeted a specific business to pick it up and ended up attracting two realtors – Walmart and Sam's Club.

"One of the exciting

things about this is with the Walmart contract, we now make all of the soap for every single Walmart in the United States that

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goes into their restrooms," Bricker said. "So whether it's Maine or Texas or Florida or Indiana – every time you use a restroom in Walmart, it's Huntington soap, which is pretty cool."

In a past press release, Indiana Secretary of Commerce Jim Schellinger explained that through this upgrade and continued investment in new machinery, Ecolab will be able to expand its manufacturing presence, which will in turn continue to support jobs in the community.

Though the equipment has been up and running,

Bricker explained that yesterday was the commissioning of the additional operations and will now be running full scale – something he said he considers a big milestone for the plant.

Mayor Brooks Fetters told those present that the community is appreciative of Bricker and Ecolab's efforts.

"We are so pleased to be able to have Ecolab have this experience and happen in our community. What Eric has been able to do in the last several years and setting this particular location up for great success not only here at this plant, but with the distribution center out to the north, we are so proud of what Ecolab has

been able to do to make life better here in Huntington," Fetters said.

Fetters also went on to give Bricker a City of Huntington leadership medalion to show appreciation for Bricker's hard work and leadership within the community.

Following the presentation, a ribbon cutting ceremony took place in front of the line that now bags soap for Walmart and Sam's Club as well as produces stronger cleaners such as peroxide.

After the ribbon was cut, those in attendance were then taken on a tour of Ecolab's facilities among the hustle and bustle of production.