



## News Release

### For Immediate Release

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### **Columbian Chemicals Co. Realigns Production at the Marshall Plant**

**MARIETTA, Ga. April 20, 2006** - After extensive analysis, Columbian Chemicals Co. announced today that the company will realign its production activities at its Marshall Plant in Proctor, W. Va., by decommissioning two of the facility's four production units. Columbian, an employer in Proctor since 1972, is committed to the long-term viability and profitability of the Marshall Plant and regrets that the decommissioning of these two units will require a reduction in headcount, impacting 15 of the site's 74 employees.

The two units will be shut down separately, with the first unit scheduled for May 1 and the second for July 1. The 15 effected employees will be offered severance and company-paid benefits, as well as outplacement assistance.

"We will remain proactive in identifying ways of becoming more efficient operators," said James P. Berresse, president and CEO. "Decisions like these are never easy, but this decision will help us to better meet our customers' needs in light of the overall market drivers for our products and will ensure that we remain both a competitive supplier and a competitive employer for the long-term in Marshall County."

The company's decision was based on its ability to increase production at another of its U.S. carbon black facilities to make up for some of the lost production capacity, as well as the need to improve the overall cost structure of the facility. The carbon black industry continues to be negatively impacted by the unprecedented rise in raw materials and energy costs, and, while there is growth in overall tire demand in North America, increased imported tires are limiting the overall growth rate for carbon black products. The company anticipates that these changes will transform the Marshall Plant into a leaner, more efficient carbon black facility that will enable Columbian to continue offering a high level of service to its customers.

Columbian Chemicals Co. is one of the world's leading producers of carbon black – an engineered material that improves the strength, durability and overall performance of a range of products including tires and other mechanical rubber goods, as well as inks, paints, plastics and coatings. The company is the only major global carbon black manufacturer to have earned the ISO 14001 certification, an internationally recognized standard for environmental management, at all of its manufacturing facilities.

Based in Marietta, Georgia, Columbian Chemicals Co. owns and operates 12 carbon black manufacturing facilities in Brazil, Canada, England, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Korea, Spain and the United States, employing about 1,300 people worldwide.

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