

PRESS RELEASE

TUESDAY MAY 5, 2015

Grand Opening of Mineral Sand Plant in Pierce County

Offerman, Georgia, USA
May 5, 2015

Southern Ionics CEO and owner Milton Sundbeck cut the ribbon to open Southern Ionics Minerals' new Mineral Sand Plant in Offerman, Pierce County, Georgia on Tuesday. Before the ribbon cutting, U.S. Representative Buddy Carter applauded Southern Ionics for their investment in industry in southeast Georgia and strong environmental commitment. A crowd of 150 people including neighbors, government officials, economic development leaders, environmentalists, customers, and suppliers attended the opening ceremony.

Southern Ionics Minerals is a subsidiary of Southern Ionics Inc., a Mississippi-based chemical manufacturer. The mineral sand plant is the keystone of the company's \$100+ million investment in southeast Georgia, which includes the sand plant, a mine in Charlton County, and a second mine to be constructed later this year in Brantley County. Southern Ionics Minerals' corporate office is nearby in Jacksonville, Florida. The mineral sand plant will employ 40 people in the office, laboratory, and mineral separation circuits. Southern Ionics Minerals will have a total of 140 employees at all of its facilities in the region.

Last year Southern Ionics Minerals began extracting mineral sands from its Mission South Mine in Charlton County. The heavier zirconium and titanium mineral sand grains are separated from quartz sand at the mine and then trucked to the new mineral sand plant in Pierce County. The plant will use advanced technologies including electrostatic and magnetic rollers, spirals, and shaker tables to separate the mineral sands into four products: zircon (zirconium silicate), rutile (titanium oxide), ilmenite (iron-titanium oxide), and leucoxene (weathered iron-titanium oxide). The mineral sand products will be distributed by rail, truck, and ship to manufacturers across the country and overseas.

Zircon sand is used in a wide variety of applications, including ceramics and to make the molds for casting special metal alloy parts, such as jet turbine blades. The titanium minerals have many industrial uses, as well. Rutile, Ilmenite and leucoxene are mainly used to produce titanium dioxide – a bright white pigment used in paints. Rutile is also used to manufacture titanium metal and is a component of welding electrodes.

The ribbon cutting ceremony on Tuesday marked the final stage of construction of the mineral sand plant. It will begin operating in June. Welcoming remarks were made by Ron Rose, President of Southern Ionics Minerals; Milton Sundbeck, CEO and owner of Southern Ionics Inc.; former U.S. Congressman and Pierce County native Lindsay Thomas; Georgia legislator Chad Nimmer; U.S. Congressman Buddy Carter; and Tim McKeon, the mineral sand plant manager. All the speakers thanked the local community for the tremendous welcome extended to the company and for the support received from Pierce County, the City of Offerman, local contractors, and suppliers.

COMPANY INFORMATION

Southern Ionics Inc. is a southeast regional manufacturer of sulfur chemicals, aluminum chemicals, aqua-ammonia, and other specialty chemicals. The company was founded in 1980 by Milton Sundbeck. Headquartered in West Point, Mississippi, Southern Ionics has production and transloading facilities at twelve locations in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia, and Maryland.

Southern Ionics Minerals, LLC. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Southern Ionics Inc. Southern Ionics Minerals mines an ancient sand ridge in southeast Georgia to produce premium-grade zirconium and titanium mineral sands. The mineral sands will be sold to manufacturers in the United States and throughout the world.



Milton Sundbeck, CEO and owner of Southern Ionics Inc., cuts the ribbon on the new Mineral Sand Plant in Pierce County, Georgia as Southern Ionics Minerals managers look on. (photo: Ben Galland, H2O Creative Group)



Environmental advocates, government officials, customers, suppliers, and local residents listen to welcoming remarks at the grand opening of the Southern Ionics Mineral Sand Plant. (photo: Ben Galland, H2O Creative Group)



The new Mineral Sand Plant employs advanced technologies to produce premium-grade zircon and titanium sand products. (photo: Ben Galland, H2O Creative Group)