

LyondellBasell close to completing restart of expanded Texas cracker: sources

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US olefins producer LyondellBasell is very close to completing the restart of its steam cracker in Corpus Christi, Texas, after a planned turnaround, sources said Friday.

The 1.7 billion lb/year (771,000 mt/year) olefins plant is very close to completing restart and "could even be on specification today," a source with knowledge of operations said.

The startup process began early November and was expected to last through December 7, LyondellBasell said in a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The turnaround included a 800 million lb/year (363,000 mt/year) expansion that is estimated to have cost \$600 million, sources said.

A trader had said LyondellBasell will first bring the plant to original operating rates before ramping up to the new nameplate capacity.

The Corpus Christi plant was taken offline for a planned 120-day shutdown in mid-April and was initially due to be completed by mid-August. The restart was first delayed from mid-August to the end of September, and then to early November, before it was moved up to October, and then delayed again to early November, sources said.

During an earnings call last week, CEO Bob Patel said LyondellBasell had completed commissioning at the Corpus Christi cracker and would restart it in November.

In spot markets Friday, December ethylene was seen at a bid-offer range of 24.75-25.125 cents/lb MtB Wms along with another offer at 25.5 cents/lb MtB Wms, according to Houston Mercantile Exchange.

S&P Global Platts last assessed spot ethylene Thursday at 25-25.5 cents/lb FD USG for December deliveries and at 25.75-26.25 cents/lb FD USG for January deliveries.