

Mexico's Braskem-Idesa to start second HDPE line tonight, LDPE line in May

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Mexico's Braskem-Idesa will begin operations Friday on its second high-density polyethylene line at the Etileno XXI petrochemical complex, and the low-density line will ramp up the second week of May, a company spokeswoman said Friday.

"The first HDPE plant ramped up April 8, the second one tonight and the third will start in the next 10 days," spokeswoman Yeraseth Bello said.

The cracker feeding the PE plants is said to be operating at 50-60% but is expected to increase to 80-90% by mid-May.

A source with knowledge of business operations said this week that the second HDPE line had been delayed due to some problems related to the supply of ethane, which has since been corrected.

Pemex won the bid in 2010 to provide ethane feedstock on a 20-year contract for the complex.

Braskem-Idesa is a joint venture between Brazil's Braskem (75%) and Mexico's Grupo Idesa (25%). Etileno XXI PE production was expected to begin with HDPE injection resin, followed by blow molding and finally low-density PE.

Etileno XXI will focus on meeting Mexico's growing PE demand, with remaining output available for export, including to the US and South America.

Etileno XXI will include 1 million mt/year of polyethylene capacity.