

Ecotherm

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case study



environmental technology sector

INVEST Essex case studies highlighting Essex companies who are leaders in their fields



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David Marsh,
UK Operations Director

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Essex County Council

EcoTherm

world-leading insulation products for the construction industry



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David Marsh, UK Operations Director

EcoTherm is a world leader in the production of rigid thermal insulation boards which are widely used in the construction industry. It is a subsidiary of CRH, the world's third largest construction consortium, and has production facilities at Basildon, Essex and Holland, with sales offices in Poland and Germany.

EcoTherm products are recognised for their excellent thermal properties compared to all other types of insulation; they are much thinner than traditional insulation materials and yet achieve a better thermal performance. They also have excellent compressive strength and dimensional stability which make them ideally suited for use in flat and pitched roof construction, cavity wall and under floor insulation. Rigid boards are also used extensively throughout Europe for refrigeration and freezer room applications as well as for livestock housing and storage depots for agricultural products.

“The UK is a major market for EcoTherm products and that makes Essex an ideal base,” says EcoTherm Insulation UK Operations Director David Marsh. “Around 50% of the UK population lives

within 100 miles of our site and this makes a significant contribution to reducing our distribution costs. Rigid insulation boards are very light, a full load weighing less than 5 tonnes, however transport forms a large part of our total costs. The Essex road network makes it easy to supply the large London market, with access to the rest of the country via the national motorway network. Good transport links are also important for our technical support staff who work closely with customers on site. The convenience of travel from Essex makes it easy to provide the right level of service anywhere in the country.”

Proximity to Essex international seaports is also important to the company, according to David Marsh.

“We import most of our raw materials from mainland Europe. Having Purfleet and Tilbury docks close by helps to simplify the supply chain.”

As a key member of a multinational group, EcoTherm Insulation (UK) Ltd recognises the value

of collaboration between countries. “It would not be practical to export products from Basildon because of the high distribution costs,” says David Marsh. “Mainland European production takes place in the Netherlands. However, we find it important to share best practice in manufacturing and technical issues. We have at least one member of staff travelling to the Netherlands every week, so it's convenient to have London Stansted Airport only 40 minutes from our site.”

Although EcoTherm is a comparative newcomer to the county - relocating to Basildon in 2004 following an earlier acquisition in 2000 - the company recognises the strategic importance of its Essex base and made an investment of some £10 million in 2008 to increase capacity and reduce costs at its Basildon factory. “Essex has proved a good choice,” says David Marsh. “It gives us the logistics channel that is critical to running a cost-effective business in the UK and access to a good source of skilled labour.”

INVEST Essex provides confidential advice and practical support to companies wanting to establish a presence or expand in the UK. We promote Essex as an outstanding business destination and help existing and potential investors make the most of our strategic location, thriving business environment, and quality of life.

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