

**For immediate release**

**An era comes to an end: Last piece of coal fired at Oberkirch combined heat and power plant**

- **Last piece of coal burns at Koehler power plant after 38 years**
- **Power plant stops right on schedule; backup power system is activated**
- **Conversion to biomass slated for completion by September 2024**

**Oberkirch, 06/11/2024** – At its Oberkirch site, the Koehler Group is investing in the expansion and conversion of its power plant in order to use environmentally friendly biomass as fuel. And now that the last piece of coal has burned at the plant, the large-scale project has reached another milestone. More than 150,000 metric tons of direct fossil CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will be cut per year at the Oberkirch site as a result of the switch to biomass.

**Koehler power plant scheduled to be decarbonized**

Converting the combined heat and power plant from hard coal to biomass requires extensive conversion work. Now that Biomass Receiving Area 1 and four new silos have been completed, the material handling equipment and the conveying path from the silos to the power plant are being worked on. In addition, building services are being installed at Biomass Receiving Area 2. This new material handling equipment will be used to transfer biomass to the boiler inside the power plant in the future.

**Coal is now a thing of the past in Oberkirch**

The large-scale project hit another milestone in the beginning of June: After 38 years, the last piece of coal was burned at the Oberkirch combined heat and power plant. The power plant is now stopped, and extensive overhauling and conversion work for switching over to biomass fuel has been going full speed ahead since June 10th.

Now that the gas supply system has been completed and the cold reserve has been successfully switched over to dual-fuel burning, the new emergency generator has been put into operation as well. This ensures that the Koehler plant in Oberkirch will continue to be powered until the conversion work at the combined heat and power plant is done.

The commissioning and testing phase will start in mid-August, and the power plant should run on environmentally friendly biomass starting in October. Koehler Group CEO Kai Furler explains: “For us, decarbonization of our coal-fired power plant in Oberkirch is another crucial step in our efforts to achieve our climate goals and produce more renewable energy than we need for our paper production operations starting in 2030.”

**Koehler Holding SE & Co. KG**

Hauptstraße 2 · 77704 Oberkirch · Germany · Phone +49 7802 81-0 · Fax +49 7802 81-4330 · [www.koehler.com](http://www.koehler.com)  
Sitz: D-77704 Oberkirch · Amtsgericht Freiburg i. Br. · HRA 490392



*Figure: Hartmut Felsch (Mill Director Koehler Paper Oberkirch), Theo Maier (Head of the Oberkirch combined heat and power plant) and Josef Hofer (Project Manager, Central Plant Technology division) with the last piece of coal fired at the Oberkirch combined heat and power plant. Source: Koehler Group*

**Koehler Holding SE & Co. KG**

Hauptstraße 2 · 77704 Oberkirch · Germany · Phone +49 7802 81-0 · Fax +49 7802 81-4330 · [www.koehler.com](http://www.koehler.com)  
Sitz: D-77704 Oberkirch · Amtsgericht Freiburg i. Br. · HRA 490392



*Figure 2: The conversion work on the heating plant continues to progress. Quelle: Koehler-Gruppe*

**Koehler Holding SE & Co. KG**

Hauptstraße 2 · 77704 Oberkirch · Germany · Phone +49 7802 81-0 · Fax +49 7802 81-4330 · [www.koehler.com](http://www.koehler.com)  
Sitz: D-77704 Oberkirch · Amtsgericht Freiburg i. Br. · HRA 490392

## About the Koehler Group

The Koehler Group was founded in 1807 and has been family-run from that moment to the present day. The group's core business activity lies in the development and production of high-quality specialty paper. This includes—among others—thermal paper, playing card board, beverage coasters, fine paper, carbon-less paper, recycled paper, decor paper, wood pulp board, sublimation paper, and also innovative specialty paper for the packaging industry since 2019. In Germany, the Koehler Group employs around 2,500 people across five production sites, with three additional sites in the USA. The group operates internationally, with an export share of around 67% in 2022, and brings in an annual turnover of around 1.3 billion euros.

As an energy-intensive company, Koehler invests in renewable energy projects such as wind energy, hydropower, photovoltaics, and biomass with its Koehler Renewable Energy business unit. The Koehler Group has set a goal of producing more energy from renewable sources by 2030 than is required for its paper production operations.

With its Koehler Innovative Solutions division, Koehler is collaborating with start-ups to promote innovations in the core business segments “paper” and “renewable energy”.

Find more information at: <https://www.koehler.com>

## Your contact person:

Alexander M. Stöckle

Koehler Group press contact

Phone: +49 7802 81-4749

E-mail: [alexander.stoeckle@koehler.com](mailto:alexander.stoeckle@koehler.com)

---

**Koehler Holding SE & Co. KG**

Hauptstraße 2 · 77704 Oberkirch · Germany · Phone +49 7802 81-0 · Fax +49 7802 81-4330 · [www.koehler.com](http://www.koehler.com)  
Sitz: D-77704 Oberkirch · Amtsgericht Freiburg i. Br. · HRA 490392