

As reported by the Virginia-Pilot

## Chesapeake plant ready to increase material's output

By **PHILIP WALZER**, The Virginian-Pilot  
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CHESAPEAKE -- After a \$10 million retooling, Mitsubishi Chemical FP America Inc. is ready to manufacture a larger quantity and a higher grade of Alpolic, its president said Tuesday.

Alpolic is short for aluminum composite material. It is found on the exteriors of offices and buildings and the canopies of gas stations.

The Mitsubishi plant, on Volvo Parkway, opened in 1991. It was closed from December 2006 through February to install upgraded equipment. The upgrade will allow the plant to produce a higher-grade, "fire-rated" Alpolic, its president, Masafumi Ryu, said.

The Mitsubishi plant reopened in March and held a ceremony Tuesday to celebrate its modernization.

The plant, the company's only one in North America, produces 1.2 million square meters of the substance per year, Ryu said. With its added capabilities, he hopes to more than double that to 2.5 million square meters.

That also will help expand its reach beyond North and South America to Europe and the Middle East, he said.

The plant employs 70 people, Ryu said, and may expand its work force starting in the fall.

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