

Answers
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Earlier this month, *Spirit of Jefferson* reporter Tim Cook sat down for an extensive interview with Rockwool engineering representatives Bjorn Rici Andersen and Marco Boi, with *Spirit* publisher Rob Snyder asking questions as well.

During the 90-minute question and answer session, Andersen and Boi detailed the company's commitment to Jefferson County, the amount of water and water treatment that will be required at the 460,000-square-foot facility and how employees will be treated once the factory opens in 2020.

"We do not make children wear gas masks, we do not negatively influence agriculture, farm animals, insects and the like," Andersen said. "We can co-exist with an environmentally conscious local community and ensure industry, agriculture, tourism and trade."

An abridged version of the interview appears in this week's edition and the interview will continue in next week's edition of the *Spirit*.

Cook: What are the things you've heard in the public debate that you think need to be corrected?

Andersen: First of all, I think it's important for people to understand we have been in this business for 80 years. We have 80 years anniversary last year, so we started in 1937. Today, we operate 45 plants around the world. We have two in Norway. We have two in Denmark. We have three in Germany, two in Poland, one in Holland and the list goes on. Many of these in exceptionally close proximity to residential areas, like you can literally throw a stone.

We are a clean company. We take our environmental footprint very seriously. We take sustainability very seriously. We are not a company that puts profit first, we are a com-



Tim Cook



Rob Snyder



Bjorn Rici Andersen



Marco Boi

pany with high ethics, values and we are in it for the long run. We want to work as an active and valued part of the local community. If a company does not behave correctly these days it can't survive. We do not make people sick, we do not make children wear gas masks, we do not negatively influence agriculture, farm animals, insects and the like. We can co-exist with an environmentally conscious local community and ensure industry, agriculture, tourism and trade. And by the way we can operate in Europe without problems as we do successfully today in almost all EU countries.

Cook: Can you sympathize with the residents who just don't trust the ability of government to adequately regulate this? Can you at least put yourself in the residents' place?

Andersen: I'm an engineer by nature and that also means I understand quite technical stuff. I can easily understand why people are concerned. Easily. And I can also understand those who say I simply don't like to live close to a big factory. I can understand that fully well and I have a lot of respect for that, and whatever I can do to help them understand that there is no need to be concerned is important. I'm willing to do everything I can to help. I also have respect for the fact that we have learned scientifically a lot over the last hundred years. Clearly, what was

acceptable a hundred years ago is not acceptable today and we should be happy about that. We should be happy that we continue to learn more and more about how we can protect the planet and we can protect the human race, in particular, that the planet will actually survive after we are gone.

But, what I cannot understand is the necessity to invent alternative facts to prove that you don't want it here. I have little or no respect for all those that are scaremongering. I must say that. I don't think that's a fair way to do it and they are. Even though all the evidence is presented factually, they continue not to use it.

Cook: Is it worth maybe explaining how the community air monitoring program might work? Is that up to the citizens to really define what they want?

Andersen: What we have said is this that we will sponsor the air monitoring equipment and that we will work with the local communities as to where those monitors should be put. But they would be operated independently of us so we just sponsor it, because we don't want to be accused of the fox guarding the hen house or the wolf guarding the sheep, so we will ensure it is to be monitored independently.

Cook: One question that came up from the [Jefferson County] Commission is how will the self-monitoring pro-

cess work for Rockwool, for its air emissions and its environmental permits?

Boi: This is very clearly regulated in the air permit. It is not our decision even if its called "self." It's not our decision; it's a decision of whoever is giving us the permit. We have a device that is in the stack controlling an emission on a constant level, a continuous level.

The target for the other section of the plant requires sampling and measuring. The frequency of that depends by how low what is measured compares to the standards. We start from one year assembling and then it can be more or less, according if we are, for example 40 percent of the standard, 20 percent, 80 percent. Of course, the more you're near to the standard more frequent you have to evaluate it.

Cook: How can the citizens rely that the self-reporting data that you'd be providing in the monitoring is accurate?

Andersen: The people who calibrate and sample have to be authorized to do so. It is not us doing it. You bring in for instance someone called Eurofins or similar accredited companies.

Boi: Accredited companies need to do it. We're not doing the sampling and the measurement by ourselves. ... Twice a year we transmit all the results to West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and,

of course, if they want to do it a little bit more often or they come from an inspection they have everything they want to work, but twice per year we transfer everything.

Cook: What materials are going to be stored in large quantities on the site? I'm hearing the resin, right, is going to be trucked in.

Andersen: Resin is trucked in, yes. But very few, if any, of the chemicals are hazardous — that is important to say. Actually, I hate to call them chemicals because none of them are reacting anymore. What is important to understand is that in some of the European plants we actually make the resin ourselves. There you have a chemical reaction. But here, we buy all the resins and that reduces any hazard dramatically. Especially if you look at the risk assessment. So, we buy the resin, we keep that on site.

We will store ammonia solution, I think it is, which is kept at 19 percent concentration. It's also called ammonia water because then when it is diluted so much, it is also not hazardous. Then we keep ammonium sulfate, I think that is normal fertilizer grade. Then we store some de-dusting oil, which is a mineral oil that we use for making our products water repellent. It is a mineral oil but it's a special one with a very high flashpoint, so it takes a lot to ignite it. And then we have two diesel tanks on site.

One for moving equipment like forklifts and other things, and then we have another one that is powering our emergency fire pump. So in the event we have a fire and the electricity fails we still have a backup pump, pumps supply water to the plant.

Cook: There will be liquid oxygen tanks? And that's non-flammable liquid oxygen, is that correct?

Andersen: It is the same liquid oxygen as you have here. I walked downtown yesterday, and there was liquid oxygen tank storage just down the corner. When I walked down here yesterday from the hotel, I walked past the casino [on Fifth Avenue in Ranson], and then I turned left and there was a building on the corner, a big building, it looked like a hospital or something like that. And then in the parking lot, there is a oxygen plant. I actually took a picture of it. (Shows photograph from mobile phone)

Snyder: Oh, that is the hospital.

Andersen: Those are operated by the liquid oxygen supplier. So we don't operate it.

Cook: It has been said the reason that you have that is to stoke up the intensity in the furnace. Just to raise the temperature in the furnace.

Andersen: Yes, get a more efficient combustion.

Cook: How much water is the plant planning to use per day? You're saying a maximum of 125 gallons per day, maximum.

Andersen: Yes. And that is also what we have presented at the open house.

Cook: The memorandum of understanding between Rockwool and the Jefferson County Development Authority says that Rockwool wants a guarantee of a minimum of a half a million gallons per day. That's

(See ANSWERS Page A5)

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