

Valuable contribution to the heating transition

The pipeline and civil engineering work on Essen's eastern line district heating expansion project has been completed.

Essen. STEAG Fernwärme Essen GmbH & Co. KG, a joint venture of Stadtwerke Essen AG and STEAG Fernwärme GmbH, has successfully completed work on Essen's eastern line district heating expansion project. The pipeline and civil engineering work has been completed in all three construction sections. In the coming weeks, remaining work such as the restoration of surfaces and carriageways and replacement planting will follow. The most recent delay in the implementation of the project was due in particular to the necessary rerouting and difficulties caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The last weld on the district heating pipeline in the 'Osttrasse' (eastern line) project was completed on March 24, 2022. "We have now brought the core work on a major urban development project to a successful conclusion, and in the coming years it will make a significant contribution to reducing emissions from heating consumption and thus to the success of the heating transition in our city," as Dr. Peter Schäfer, Managing Director of STEAG Fernwärme Essen, and also Chairman of the Management Board of Stadtwerke Essen, is pleased to report.

That was the view of Essen's Mayor Thomas Kufen right from the start of the project: "With the expansion of the district heating system we are ensuring a better quality of life, because the use of climate-friendly district heating significantly improves the carbon footprint of our city. In the spirit of this jointly pursued objective, we are supporting the costly construction phase."

ERDF funding

And because the expansion of the district heating network in Essen is in this respect a significant contribution to the heating transition and climate protection in North Rhine-Westphalia, the construction of the eastern line is also being supported with eight million euros from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), awarded by the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia as part of the progres.nrw funding.

In keeping with these commitments and considering the impact of the work on residents and traffic, all those involved in the project are now pleased with the smooth progress overall, which is an achievement in itself, particularly given the dimensions of the project.

Successful team performance

Matthias Ohl, Technical Director of STEAG Fernwärme, puts it in a nutshell: “In terms of planning and implementation, the eastern line as an infrastructure project was as demanding as it was worthwhile for climate protection. In this respect, the investors, construction companies, authorities and agencies involved, as well as our colleagues, deserve a great amount of thanks.” All the more so, as the delay in completion was due to unforeseeable changes in the routing of the line and to the coronavirus pandemic.

Remaining work in May and June

Since the beginning of April, the second and third construction sections of the new pipeline network have also been gradually filled with district heating water and vented. “We then gradually ran these sections of the eastern line in trial operation before the final measures were taken to integrate them into the existing network,” says STEAG’s Project Manager Georg Röttgers, explaining the current status of the final work.

The remaining work is scheduled to take place in the coming weeks. The last construction trenches will be backfilled, and the remaining surfaces and carriageways will be restored. Finally, at the very end of the project, replacement planting will take place for trees that had to give way to the construction work over the past 30 months or so. “Only when the last tree has been planted will the project be truly complete for us. The customers we supply will, of course, be able to receive their climate-friendly district heating at an earlier date,” says Matthias Ohl.

Aldi Campus and TÜV Nord Campus milestones

Parts of the new district heating network had already recently gone into operation in connection with commissioning of the first construction phase of the eastern line, when the food discounter Aldi Nord, which is based in Essen and operates worldwide, inaugurated the Aldi Campus which is also supplied by STEAG Fernwärme Essen.

TÜV Nord also relies on climate-friendly district heating from STEAG. In the autumn of 2021, the TÜV NORD CAMPUS ESSEN was officially opened directly at the new Frillendorf slip road to the A40 motorway. The extensive technology site, where 1,800 people will work in the future, brings together a wide range of competencies. Other buildings in the TÜV Nord portfolio will also be supplied with district heating from STEAG Fernwärme Essen, starting in autumn 2022.

Further expansion beyond the A 52 firmly planned

At the same time, Michael Straus, Managing Director of STEAG Fernwärme, confirms that the expansion of the network will continue: “With the successful completion of the Oststrasse project, the foundation stone has been laid for the further expansion of district heating in and for Essen and connection to further parts

of the city. With the crossing below the A52 motorway already completed last year, for the first time in the more than 60-year history of district heating in Essen we have created the conditions for connecting districts located south-east of the A52 to the district heating network in the long term.” In this respect, the potential of district heating for local emission reduction is far from exhausted, he said, and work is under way to further improve the carbon footprint of Essen.

This project is sponsored by the European Union and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia.

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About STEAG Fernwärme Essen

STEAG Fernwärme Essen GmbH & Co. KG is a company jointly owned by STEAG Fernwärme GmbH and Stadtwerke Essen AG (50% each). STEAG Fernwärme Essen GmbH & Co. KG was founded in 2017 to expedite the supply of district heating to 19 urban districts in Essen.

About STEAG Fernwärme

As a regional energy service provider, STEAG supplies private households, public buildings, hospitals, industrial and commercial enterprises and real estate companies in the Ruhr region with environmentally friendly district heating, mainly from highly efficient cogeneration plants. Each year, STEAG makes around 1.6 billion kilowatt hours of thermal available to its customers – equivalent to the needs of over 275,000 households. This makes STEAG the largest district heating company in North Rhine-Westphalia. More than 90 percent of our heat is generated using the combined heat and power (CHP) process and distributed to the inner-city district heating networks in Bottrop, Essen and Gelsenkirchen through the Fernwärmeschiene Ruhr, the first supraregional district heating network in Germany. By means of this extensive supply network with a total length of more than 700 kilometers, STEAG ensures the supply of “turnkey” heat to residential units, public buildings, swimming pools, hospitals and industrial and commercial enterprises. The reduction in CO₂ emissions achieved through the use of district heating makes a significant contribution to relieving the burden on the environment. District heating is safe, clean and convenient – a friendly form of energy. Since 2018, MEAG - MUNICH ERGO AssetManagement GmbH has held a 49 percent stake in STEAG Fernwärme. Find out more at www.steag-fernwaerme.de

About STEAG

For over 80 years, STEAG has stood for efficient and reliable power generation, both in Germany and abroad. As an experienced partner, we support our customers comprehensively in all phases of power supply. We design, develop, implement, operate and market highly efficient energy solutions – from distributed generation facilities and those based on renewable sources to large central power plants. Together with customized solutions in the field of electricity and heat supply, we also provide a wide range of energy services – increasingly on the basis of renewables. Successfully so: Since 1990, STEAG has permanently reduced its own CO₂ emissions in Germany by approximately 85 percent.

About Stadtwerke Essen

Stadtwerke Essen is a municipal network operator, supplier and service provider established over 150 years ago. It supplies the city of Essen with natural gas, drinking water and electricity. In the areas of natural gas and drinking water, Stadtwerke Essen is not only a supplier but also a network operator. Electricity has been a separate sales division and part of the company’s portfolio since 2009. In addition, the municipal utilities grouped in Stadtwerke Essen provide supplementary services such as full-service contracting. The maintenance and upkeep of the wastewater network and the operation of Essen’s port are also among the many functions of Stadtwerke Essen.

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