



## **Oilguard - new nonwoven technology launched helping to protect beaches from oil spills.**

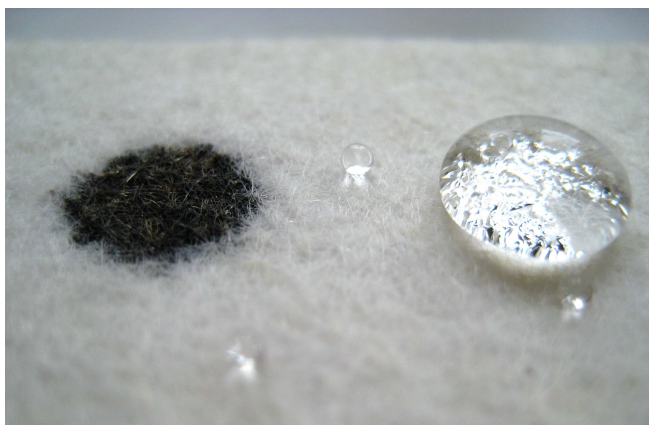
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**Bad Zurzach, Switzerland, Emsdetten Germany, June 14, 2010**—A new nonwoven fabric for beach protection against oil spills has been developed by European high-tech companies. It can be deployed short-term in large quantities to for example the affected US coastal regions.

The current oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is causing major damage to the open waters and coastal regions. This acute problem will at the very least persist for several months.

Given the magnitude of the oil release, no existing technique alone is able to grant full protection against the oil which will eventually end up on beaches, rocks and land. Once oil is on land the contamination can be severe, and the cost and effort associated with the clean-up tremendous.

The vast coastal eco-system impact of the oil-spill was the driving force for HeiQ Materials AG - a Swiss high-performance textile effects company and TWE - a world leading German manufacturer of nonwoven fabrics, to develop, produce and launch an oil absorbing nonwoven fabric called *Oilguard*. Rolled out on beaches, *Oilguard* specifically contributes to the beach protection due to its built-in capability to absorb oil while repelling water at the same time.



“Based on our previous product development work on super hydrophobic technologies for textiles, we have a unique know-how and understanding which we have now been able to rapidly turn into a product, *Oilguard*, that can play a role in helping to mitigate the serious problem in the Gulf of Mexico”, says Carlo Centonze, CEO of HeiQ. “We are pleased to be able to assist with our know-how and technologies for a crucial cause like this.”

*Photo: Oilguard fabric selectively absorbing oil and repelling water.*

*Oilguard* was developed by HeiQ under extreme time constraints in a joint effort with Swiss partner company, Beyond Surface Technologies, and the TWE Group in Germany. The *Oilguard* nonwoven fabric can be up to 6 yards wide and hundreds of yards long. The companies' current production capacity corresponds to 20 miles of new beach protection every day.

“We are in the unique position that we are set-up to deliver large quantities of the *Oilguard* nonwoven fabric in virtually no time to any region in need for it” says Jörg Ortmeier, CEO of TWE. “Currently we are in the process of organizing live testing in collaboration with US authorities and will then be able to rapidly contribute to help mitigate the oil contamination of the coastline.”

Large scale deployment tests of the *Oilguard* fabric are planned to take place in the coming weeks aiming at providing guidance to the relief workers who will ultimately use the product. Carlo Centonze explains: “We have received significant interest and support from US federal and political channels and we also seek to engage state authorities, local groups and NGOs to participate in this challenging beach rescue project.”

Further *Oilguard* information is available on [www.oilguard.org](http://www.oilguard.org) .

For inquiries on the *Oilguard* fabric, contact:

Kristofer Skantze  
Head of Sales and Marketing

HeiQ Materials AG  
Zürcherstrasse 42  
CH-5330 Bad Zurzach  
Switzerland  
Phone +41(0)56 250 68 50  
Email: [info@heiq.com](mailto:info@heiq.com)

Carsten Otte  
Sales & Marketing Director

TWE Vliesstoffwerke GmbH & Co. KG  
Hollefeldstr. 46  
48282 Emsdetten  
Germany  
Tel.: +49-2572-205-15  
Fax: +492572-205-51  
Email: [otte@twe.de](mailto:otte@twe.de)

**About HeiQ:** HeiQ Materials AG is a Swiss high-tech company researching, developing and manufacturing sustainable textile effects for the most demanding customer areas. Focusing on both textile and medical markets, the company seeks to build nature-inspired innovation into products, making them naturally performing. HeiQ’s products are characterized by high efficiency coupled with long-lasting performance, yet with a minimum impact on the environment. HeiQ is a fast-growing internationally active company, with a palette of award winning state-of-the-art textile effects technologies like Pure by HeiQ® and Barrier by HeiQ®. [www.heiqmaterials.com](http://www.heiqmaterials.com) , [www.heiq.com](http://www.heiq.com)

**About TWE:**

The TWE GROUP is one of the world’s leading producer of non-wovens. Developing and making its mark in this field for decades TWE is able to offer customers new products and ideas based on a large set of different technologies. Being an international group of companies, each manufacturing site concentrates on specific technologies offering centres of excellence. Since TWE only uses quality raw materials and state of the art production processes leading global companies have long decided to rely on “Made by the TWE” quality label. [www.twe.de](http://www.twe.de)

**About Beyond Surface Technologies:**

Beyond Surface Technologies AG is a Swiss based company that has created a global network of partner companies, technology providers and textile experts. BST is researching, developing and producing a unique range of quality effects based on sustainable technologies for textile surfaces. <http://www.beyondst.com>