

# Chattanooga Times-Free Press

Saturday, February 28, 2009

## Wacker Chemical Finds a New Home

The announcement Thursday that Wacker Chemical Corp. will build a \$1 billion plant near the Hiwassee Industrial Park in Charleston in northern Bradley County is wonderful news for the county, the region and the state. It is the third \$1 billion industrial investment announced in Tennessee in the past eight months and the second by a German firm in Southeast Tennessee in the same period.

Contractors for Volkswagen, the German automaker, already have started work on the site of VW's \$1 billion manufacturing facility at Chattanooga's Enterprise South Industrial Park. Hemlock Semiconductors, a Michigan-based company, announced in December that it would build a \$1.2 billion facility in Clarksville, Tenn.

Officials of Wacker Chemical, headquartered in Munich, were joined by Gov. Phil Bredesen and other state, county and local officials for Thursday's announcement. The new plant will manufacture hyperpure polycrystalline silicon, used to make solar panels and semiconductors. The Bradley County facility will be Wacker Chemical's first solar cell plant outside Germany.

Plant construction, which ultimately will provide 500 well-paying jobs to highly skilled workers, could take at least two or three years, officials says, but the selection of the Bradley County site for a 21<sup>st</sup> century industry validates hard work by state and local officials.