

Press announcement

Arctic Conditions at the RAVENOL Production Site in Lubmin



Nowhere in Germany is the ice currently as thick as along the Baltic Sea coast near Lubmin. The Greifswalder Bodden – also known as the Bay of Greifswald – has been covered for several weeks by a continuous sheet of ice measuring up to 30 centimeters. Since 2013, one of Europe's most modern lubricant production facilities has been located directly along this coastline: Deutsche Ölwerke Lubmin GmbH, a company of the RAVENOL Group.

Across the more than 50,000-square-meter production site, ice thicknesses of up to ten centimeters have been recorded in certain areas. Winter maintenance teams operate around the clock – up to three times a day – clearing walkways, access roads, and loading zones to ensure uninterrupted production and logistics operations. Comparable weather conditions were last experienced approximately 25 years ago.



Icy arrival: A cargo ship makes its way through densely packed ice floes | Photo: Zweckverband "Energie- und Technologiestandort Freesendorf" Lubmin industrial port

The extreme temperatures – with wind chill values dropping to minus 20 degrees Celsius – present not only logistical but also operational challenges. As temperatures fall, the viscosity of liquids increases: base oils become more viscous and their flowability decreases. This reduces pumping speeds when transferring oils into storage tanks, requiring continuous monitoring and precise process adjustments. Modern plant systems and advanced temperature control technologies ensure that product quality remains consistently at the highest level, even under arctic conditions.

A significant portion of base oil supplies arrives by sea. However, when the bay is covered with solid ice, even large cargo vessels reach their limits. In the Greifswalder Bodden, ships may become immobilized during heavy ice drift. In such cases, the state-of-the-art icebreaker Arkona is deployed. This multi-purpose vessel can break ice layers up to one meter thick and is equipped with a towing winch with a holding force of 1,000 kN. In addition to keeping navigation channels open, the Arkona is also used for oil-spill response, buoy-laying, and emergency assistance during maritime incidents. Once the fairway has been reopened, the smaller harbor icebreaker Robin Hood takes over, escorting cargo ships safely to the pier.

Despite ice, frost, and demanding logistical conditions, the Lubmin production site remains fully operational. These arctic conditions highlight not only the geographical uniqueness of the location but also the technical capability and supply reliability of the RAVENOL Group – even in the face of extreme winter challenges.

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