Olin Mathieson Chemical Co.—area’s oldest industry

$25-million expansion plans are told by Olin Mathieson

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An expansion program totaling about $25 million at its Lake Charles facilities was announced today by Olin Mathieson Chemical Corp.

N. Harvey Collignon, president, announced in New York that the corporation will build an ammonia plant and a new urea (fertilizer) plant at the local site. The local expansion program is part of more than $40 million the corporation will spend on new facilities and expansions to make the corporation one of the country’s biggest producers of ammonia and high analysis fertilizers.

The local expenditure represents the largest industrial construction program in the Lake Charles area since World War II. The oil and petrochemical facilities here represent a total investment of about a half million dollars. Basis of the overall expansion program is the ammonia plant to be built here. The plant will have a greater capacity than any reported ammonia plant in the United States. John O. Logan, corporate vice president and general manager of the chemical division, said the Lake Charles unit is being designed to have a capacity of more than 1,400 tons a day, or 480,000 tons a year. The new urea plant here will have a capacity of more than 140,000 tons a year. Olin now operates a urea plant in joint ownership with Sun Oil company at Clayton, Del. The Sun-Olin plant has a rated capacity of 75,000 tons a year and is operating beyond that capacity.

Plans call for construction to start at the local site in the third quarter of 1964 for ammonia and urea.

Details of employment at the new facilities have not been worked out, but the number of employees at the two new plants is not expected to be substantial.

However, a large number of persons are expected to be employed during the construction phase of the local expansion.

Ammonia is composed of nitrogen and hydrogen and its chief use is in fertilizer, either by direct application to the soil or as an ingredient of mixed fertilizer.

Urea is also used as a fertilizer because of its high nitrogen content (46 per cent). In addition, it can be used as a source of protein in animal feed and it has a wide variety of industrial uses. Raw materials for urea are ammonia and carbon dioxide.

G. J. Hendrich, local works manager, said:

"In selecting Lake Charles as the focal point for this expansion program, I would like to acknowledge the assistance given us by the two industrial development groups, namely the office of Industrial Development for the Port of Lake Charles and the Calcasieu Industrial Development office."