PPG plans to add new $37-million complex


Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. today disclosed plans for the construction of a new $37 million mercury cell - chlorine caustic, power complex at its Lake Charles chemical plant.

A local company official indicated that between 50 and 100 permanent jobs will be created.

Construction jobs at the complex are expected to increase from the present level of around 400 to between 700 and 800 in late 1967 and early 1968.

In making the announcement, J. E. Burrell, vice president and general manager of the Chemical Division, said existing chlorine facilities are being expanded at Lake Charles and Natrium, W. Va., and power generating capacity is being substantially increased at the Lake Charles plant.

He said that when these units are completed and the new mercury cell plant at Lake Charles goes into production in early 1968, PPG’s chlorine production will be increased by more than 275,000 tons a year.

Caustic soda, a co-product in the manufacturing of chlorine, will be increased by over 300,000 tons annually, according to the company official.

The new mercury cell plant will be one of the largest capacity single circuit chlorine units in the world, according to Burrell. The circuit design reflects the joint effort of PPG, Monsanto - Leonard and DeNor of Italy.

Chlorine is widely used by the chemical, pulp and paper, plastics and textile industries. It is also used in water purification. Principal uses of caustic soda are in the production of textiles, soaps, petroleum refining and paper.

PPG’s Lake Charles plant, which has been undergoing almost continuous expansion for the last several years, recently announced plans to construct a $10,000,000 silica pigments production unit. Other units under construction are an ethyl chloride plant and a vinyl chloride monomer plant, both of which will require substantial amounts of chlorine as a raw material.

Today’s announcement increases the total amount approved for new projects and expansions at the Lake Charles plant in the past year to more than $60 million.