

The best of Kimberly-Clark Professional's global quality and innovation is now proudly made in South Africa!

Issued by [Stone](#)

14 Sep 2022

Kimberly-Clark Professional™ will now manufacture the brands that users trust sustainably in South Africa, illustrating its firm commitment to SA's future through its investment while growing local business capacity.



Global manufacturer Kimberly-Clark Professional™ is expanding its local manufacturing capacity in South Africa. The global leader invests in a new state-of-the-art production line in their Enstra Mill in Springs, Gauteng. It is a considerable investment in growing the South African business and a vote of confidence from the corporation in the country.

"As Kimberly-Clark grew in South Africa, so did our passion for turning ideas into sustainable beneficial realities for our customers, stakeholders and local communities. This passion has propelled us to combine our local insights with global quality and innovative technology," states general manager Ahmad Abublan. "Such an expansion will ensure we continue to invest in the latest equipment, meet the highest modern safety standards, and build our local team's technical capability," he adds.



Ahmad Abublan, general manager of Kimberly-Clark Professional, and Viren Sanpersad, production manager

Kimberly-Clark entered the South African market in 1936 and appointed agents to import and sell Kotex® napkins from the USA. In 1948, they progressed to manufacture toilet tissue locally, and in 1950, feminine care products. Kimberly-Clark Professional™ is a trusted supplier in the commercial space and partners with businesses to create Exceptional Workplaces through various solutions, including hand towels, bath tissue and surface wipers. According to Kimberly-Clark, the insights gained from customers, partners, and users drove them to explore new ways to manufacture their innovative product solutions, with the aim to:

1. Deliver real business benefits – by increasing speed to market and improving stock availability
2. Maintain world-class quality through investment in advanced technology
3. Improve sustainability of their portfolio

World-class quality, locally produced

"Since 1936, we've constantly been innovating our products and practices to serve and care for the ever-changing needs of the people in South Africa. This foresight is developed by bringing together and combining the passion of our people with the insights of our local partners, end-users, and global best practices," states production manager Viren Sanpersad.

Kimberly-Clark wants to remain an indispensable business partner, delivering leading-edge solutions that provide tangible value. "We've been voted best in all user test categories: Best looking, best drying, softest, strongest and highest quality," he adds. The new portfolio combines local insights with global expertise and innovative technology.

"We are confident in South Africa as a growing market. By combining local insights with global best practices, we aim to deliver real business benefit," states Sanpersad. "The state-of-the-art production line will significantly improve product quality and tailored solutions to meet local market needs. We are grateful for ongoing customer feedback and support, enabling us to respond with sustainable solutions for our market," he adds.

This asset brings about a new era of product design and capability. It adds a new dimension to a local product that can rival, challenge and exceed expectations of the imports.

The sustainability aspect

Kimberly-Clark's new 2030 sustainability strategy and goals aim to address the social and environmental challenges of the next decade with commitments to improve the lives and well-being of our local communities worldwide. Embedding sustainable considerations into our decisions and manufacturing strategies go without saying. "We are proud that the new local portfolio will, on average, consist of 96% recycled fibre and packing material made from 30% recycled material,"

explains Kristel Dreyer, customer marketing manager.

"Our sustainable practices support a healthy planet and build stronger communities to ensure our business thrives for decades. We are building a legacy of positive impact in all that we do. Kimberly-Clark weaves supplier stewardship into the fabric of our business by monitoring sustainable choices. We know that consumers will be loyal to companies that are transparent with their practices. We continue our commitment to transparency about our source materials supply chain," she adds.

Expanding the local manufacturing capacity and building the local team's technical capability will improve stock availability and speed to market. This development will also minimise Kimberly-Clark's reliance on imported goods, reduce the overall gas emissions and enhance the firm's carbon footprint score.

Kimberly-Clark's Enstra Mill, in particular, boasts the following achievements:

- *GHG Emissions reduction:* In 2020, they switched from Coal-fired Boilers to Gas Boilers which reduced our Green House Gases emitted by 27% compared to the 2015 baseline and a 29% reduction versus 2019.
- *Landfill elimination:* Their goal for zero waste to landfill currently sits at 96.92%. Initiatives have been implemented to eliminate general waste, such as composting of food waste and issuing lunch boxes to employees to discontinue using polystyrene takeaway containers in the canteen.
- *Fresh water usage reduction:* Using the 2015 baseline, freshwater usage has reduced from 17.43kl/ton to 13.78kl/ton in 2021, and YTD is 11.3kl/ton. The mill has an Effluent treatment plant using Primary Clarifier to treat process water for re-use – in 2021, a total of 116882KL were re-used.

A Proudly South African story

As a member of Proudly South African, Kimberly-Clark adheres to its prescribed environmental standards: 'The Business/enterprise must comply with the ecological legislature and adhere to production processes that are environmentally friendly and acceptable. It shall include recycling methods, waste management, carbon footprint reduction, etc., meeting local content thresholds and demonstrating high-quality standards.'

Proudly South African chief executive Eustace Mashimbye says: "Kimberly-Clark represents the very best of local manufacturing as it invests in the empowerment of communities and seeks to preserve the environment in which it operates. Its commitment to increasing local content and making South Africa's local manufacturing more competitive is extremely gratifying. It aligns perfectly with the buy local movement's work and the economic prosperity we aim to create. We are proud to have them as members."

"Kimberly-Clark believes that the new converting asset holds much potential for growth in South Africa. We have a strong business case to unlock further business and drive us to be leaders in our category. Our products will now be differentiated in the market and will be able to leverage our brands. Our products, developed on rich customer feedback and insights, drive the highest quality and are designed to deliver an exceptional user experience. One can describe our new asset in three words: Future, Innovative, Exciting," concludes Abublan.

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