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San Francisco energy company about to open Houston office and La Porte site



Siluria's modular demonstration unit is under construction at Zeton Inc. in Canada. The modular unit will be shipped and re-assembled in September in La Porte.



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Reporter- *Houston Business Journal*

San Francisco-based **Siluria Technologies Inc.** has a new influx of cash from Saudi Arabia as it is on the verge of opening a Houston office and its **La Porte** demonstration site.

A subsidiary of the state-owned Saudi Arabian Oil Co. is leading a new **\$30 million** investment into Siluria, said CEO Edward Dineen, who was hired last year to turn the venture capital startup

into a commercial enterprise. Dineen, who still has a home in The Woodlands, previously worked in Houston as COO of the chemical giant LyondellBasell Industries NV (NYSE: LYB).

Siluria is a gas-to-liquids and chemicals company that wants to increase the use of natural gas as a feedstock by creating ethylene from methane and then to turn ethylene into fuels, as well.

Dineen said its La Porte demonstration site is being completed through modular construction in Canada and will be shipped to **La Porte** in September. The \$17 million demo site will be operational by the end of the year as a means to show off the technology's commercialization potential. Siluria is building the facility with Brazil-based **Braskem SA** (NYSE: BAK).

Dineen said he is in the process — possibly by the end of August — of finalizing the terms of a downtown Houston office for Siluria, which will initially house about 25 employees and grow from there. There will be roughly 15 people in La Porte.

"We see it as a long-term development site for the technological development," Dineen said of La Porte.

Dineen said Siluria uses "nano-wire catalysts" and an oxidative coupling process to make the gas-to-liquids processes much cheaper and efficient while using much less heat.

As for the Saudi subsidiary, Saudi Aramco Energy Ventures, Dineen said the company is a strategic partner, as well as a financial partner. "They are very interested in commercialization of the technology," he said.

Siluria also has a new partnership with The Linde Group, a German industrial gases and engineering company, which has significant La Porte operations.

Saudi Aramco also will have a spot on the Siluria board, Dineen said. Karl Kurz, a former Anadarko Petroleum Corp. (NYSE: APC) COO, is the new Siluria chairman.

Also, Jeffrey Wood recently left Houston-based Eagle Rock Energy Partners LP (Nasdaq: EROC) to become Siluria's CFO.

Apart from the new cash influx, Dineen said Siluria plans to raise at least another \$20 million by year's end.