

Press release from von Gasunie und STORAG ETZEL

Right on Track: Impressive Transport Marks Milestone for H2CAST Installation

Friedeburg-Etzel, 18.12.2025 – In recent days, a logistical feat captured attention: two enormous components for the H2CAST above ground facility began an impressive journey by water and road transport from Rotterdam, with Wilhelmshaven as an intermediate stop and Etzel as the final destination. This journey was not only a logistical highlight but also represents a symbolic milestone for the H2CAST pilot project. With the arrival of these components, important building blocks of the above ground hydrogen purification plant are now in place for final assembly on site with commissioning scheduled for Q1 2026.

The H2CAST project plays a key role in developing the future hydrogen infrastructure in Northwest Europe. In Etzel, STORAG ETZEL and Gasunie are establishing an innovative test site to investigate the safe and energy-optimized storage and purification of hydrogen in two salt caverns. Modular systems will soon be available for this purpose, which will dry, purify and compress the hydrogen using various processes. State of the art measurement and control technology ensures continuous quality monitoring and balancing.

Planning and Outlook

So far, all work has been carried out according to schedule. After commissioning in early 2026, an intensive testing phase will follow, with initial results expected by the end of that year. This pilot will provide valuable insights for large-scale hydrogen storage and contribute to the energy transition by increasing flexibility and security of supply.

Strategic Importance

H2CAST is a joint initiative of leading partners in the energy (storage) sector (from Germany and the Netherlands) and forms an important building block for the future hydrogen economy. Gasunie and STORAG ETZEL are the main players in H2CAST Etzel. After jointly filling the caverns with around 90 tonnes of H₂, they are now working on the construction of the above-ground facilities. The project, which is funded by the state of Lower Saxony and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE), supports the goal of making hydrogen available as a sustainable energy source on large-scale and strengthens the position of North-West Germany and Wilhelmshaven as a hydrogen hub in Europe.

For further information, please visit www.h2cast.com, www.storag-etzel.de and www.gasunie.nl.

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Fig.: The larger of the two components is unloaded at the H2CAST cavern site using a heavy-duty crane (Source: STORAG ETZEL / Gasunie)

About STORAG ETZEL:

STORAG ETZEL GmbH are the biggest independent provider of cavern storage capacity in Germany. We are proud to make our contribution to the safety of energy supply and gas grid stability in Germany and Northwestern Europe. At Etzel, East Frisia, we are constructing, operating and leasing caverns for the purpose of bulk storage of crude oil and natural gas since 1971. We want to position the site for the future and make it H₂-ready as part of the H2CAST project. The cavern site Etzel is situated on the North German energy hub near Wilhelmshaven, with a connection to the deep water port.

Our customers are well known energy trading companies as well as Europeans stockpiling organizations. A part of the German oil stockpiling obligation is stored in our caverns here at Etzel. Beyond the currently existing 75 caverns, further storage cavities within the Etzel salt dome can be created in total. There is an expansion potential up to 99 cavern locations.

www.storag-etzel.de.

About Gasunie:

Gasunie is a European energy-infrastructure company. Gasunie's network is one of the largest high-pressure pipeline networks in Europe, comprising over 17,000 kilometres of pipeline in the Netherlands and northern Germany. Gasunie provides natural and green gas transport services through its subsidiaries, Gasunie Transport Services B.V. (GTS) in the Netherlands and Gasunie Deutschland in Germany. With its cross-border gas infrastructure and services, Gasunie facilitates TTF, which has become the leading European gas trading point. Gasunie also provides other gas infrastructure services, including gas storage and LNG.

Gasunie wants to help accelerate the transition to a CO₂-neutral energy supply and believes that gas-related innovations, for instance in the form of renewable gases such as hydrogen and green gas, can make an important contribution. Both existing and new gas infrastructure play a key role here. Gasunie also plays an active part in the development of other energy infrastructure to support the energy transition.

www.gasunie.nl.

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