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The company DZ Dražice, the largest domestic manufacturer of water heaters and seller of NIBE heat pumps, will start building a production hall at the plant in Luštěnice next year. It plans to increase the annual production of heaters by 150,000 to 400,000. The investment of CZK 300 million also includes the expansion of the storage hall. The company expects a turnover of CZK 2.5 billion this year, and could increase it to five billion crowns by 2030. This year, it opened a new division for photovoltaics, DZD Solar. The CEO of the company, Karel Pacourek, told journalists today.

"Three years ago, we planned to produce electric heaters in the new hall, but times have fundamentally changed, and the new production will be a combination of everything that is of interest now, reservoirs for pumps, for solar systems, for boilers," Pacourek said. According to him, people are starting to massively solve the energy demand of buildings, they are interested in heat pumps and photovoltaics.

According to technical director Lukáš Formánek, the production of DZ Dražice is very demanding in terms of energy. Energy costs have increased threefold year-on-year, and they have been buying electricity and gas on the stock exchange for several years. "Even before the war, we started an extensive savings program, for example, we use heat pumps in all administrative buildings, we are gradually introducing them to production as well, but this is not possible everywhere," said Formánek. The company is currently building two photovoltaic power plants on the roofs of production plants with a total output of 450 kW, they should be operational in the spring.

According to Pacourt, reducing dependence on gas is a long-term process. "And of course it will be reflected in the price of the final product, for example the new furnace in Luštěnice will be hybrid, i.e. electricity and gas, but it will be ten million more expensive and operation will be twice as expensive," he said.

According to Pacourk, the new production hall in Luštěnice is supposed to solve the significant increase in demand. "We're running at 120 percent, we're running three shifts six days a week, yet we're not taking orders until the end of the year," he said.

In the past four years, the company has installed several robots in the Luštěnice production plant. According to Formánek, the press shop with seven robots is the furthest, the most expensive costing around six million crowns. "In the beginning, the biggest problem was the resistance of the employees who were afraid of the new technology, but during the year everyone learned to work with it and today they praise it," he said. Robots most often replace hard physical work and welding. "One robot replaces 12 people, we could use them for other activities," added Formánek. The company wants to continue with automation and robotization in the new hall as well.

Last year, the company increased sales by 22 percent to CZK 2.3 billion. Sales of water heaters and storage tanks increased by 20 percent, with a total of 264,000 sold. The company also recorded an increase in sales of NIBE heat pumps, 3,800 of them were sold, which is six percent more.

DZ Dražice owns a production plant with several lines in Dražice and Luštěnice near Benátek nad Jizerou. The company's tradition dates back to the beginning of the 20th century. Since 2006, the plant has been a member of the Swedish NIBE group. The company exports to 25 countries and employs over 450 people. Two years ago, the company opened a new, fully automated warehouse.

Source: DZ Dražice and CTK

Photo: DZ Dražice

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