

## PRESS RELEASE

### **GROHE Invests in Innovation: Celebrating the Laboratory Opening at the Hemer Site**

- Investment in new technologies and infrastructure
- More efficient development processes to increase innovation
- Research laboratory brings all areas of expertise together at one site

**Hemer, Germany, 21 September 2018.** Today GROHE, the world's leading provider of sanitary fittings, celebrated the official opening of the extension to its research laboratory at the Hemer site in Germany. Investing EUR 1.1 million, GROHE is consolidating all of the previously decentralised activities of its research laboratory in Hemer, facilitating an even closer connection between the central areas of research and development. In the past few months, GROHE has increased the laboratory space by 590 square metres for a total of 1,510 square metres to create the necessary infrastructure for more efficient development processes and new testing procedures.

#### **New Demands on Research and Development**

In addition to the traditional fittings, more and more high-tech products are finding their way into the sanitary fittings manufacturer's portfolio. As a result, innovations such as the digital water security system GROHE Sense Guard and the GROHE Blue and Red water systems are now part of the GROHE product portfolio. The requirements for product developers are increasing, not only due to the growing mechanisation of products but also because around the world, customer and testing requirements are increasing while development times are getting shorter and shorter. This is leading to considerably more complex development processes. The central research laboratory is becoming an important part of the global competence centre at the Hemer site. This allows GROHE to specifically invest in the most modern technologies for effective product innovation and to live up to intensifying market requirements. "Products and innovations developed in Hemer represent technology and quality that is 'Made in Germany'.

We will become even more dynamic thanks to the laboratory extension, enabling us to think outside of the box on a more intensive basis when it comes to product categories. This also helps us to tap into new market segments, as is demonstrated by GROHE Sense Guard as an example of the digitalisation of water. The laboratory extension not only strengthens our Hemer site as a whole, but above all it also increases our attractiveness as an employer in the region," states Thomas Fuhr, Executive Director Operations at GROHE AG.

### **Hemer, the Site for High-tech Research and Development**

The laboratory's connection to the Research and Development Department fosters decision-making processes and boosts the transfer of knowledge. The laboratory plays a key role in gaining such insights, starting with the initial idea and culminating in the first prototypes. Prototype manufacturers have already been working with 3D printing processes for many years. As Torsten Meier, Vice President Research & Development at GROHE AG, sums up: "For us in the field of development, 3D printing offers much better opportunities for managing our innovation process in a more dynamic way. The laboratory expansion means we can now support the development process even more closely and intensively and manage it in a meaningful way using test analyses. This means that we are faster and can carry out experiments at a greater volume with lower costs, leading to an increase in the degree of innovation, which is measured by the number of innovative projects we carry out." In the current year, the number of ongoing innovative projects has already exceeded the total number of similar projects in 2017 by 50 per cent.

### **Product Tests of the Highest Standard**

As part of the laboratory extension, GROHE has also made investments in new test stations to expand on existing testing capacities. Product tests take from two to twelve weeks – for components that are built into the wall, testing can even last up to six months. The life cycle of a product can therefore be simulated within a few weeks. Observations focus on factors such as age-based degradation of the product, precision of use, product security and quality, comfort of use and industry norms.

- **Product lifespan:** Thermostats, for example, are subjected to 50,000 alternations between warm and cold temperatures in the space of two weeks, which simulates a useful life of ten years. Potential weaknesses in the surface and the interior of the faucet are ruled out in the early stages of development by carrying out a number of different temperature testing processes. During these testing processes, the products must endure corrosion, condensation and salt spray without sustaining damage.
- **Product security:** Alongside the lifespan of the products, product security is scrutinised thoroughly. In leaching tests, water that has flowed through a GROHE faucet is tested for two-thirds of the elements in the periodic table. This ensures that there is no leaching of unwanted substances into the tap water when using the faucet. The precision of this test is 1 to 10.000.000.000 (or  $10^{10}$ ). This is the equivalent of a three-gram sugar cube that has been dissolved in Lake Kemnade which corresponds to 3 million cubic metres of water.
- **Comfort and sustainability:** Improving customer comfort and optimizing sustainability are also core development goals. Research is therefore being carried out, for example, on reducing the water consumption of a shower head without reducing the comfort of the user while showering. The shampoo rinse test was developed for this purpose in partnership with consumer goods manufacturer Henkel. The role of the shower head is to rinse out shampoo as efficiently as possible, i.e. with as little water as necessary. With the customer's comfort in mind, acoustic product features are also tested and guarantee as quiet a water enjoyment as possible.

All test results produced by the research laboratory are fed directly into the development process and ensure reliable GROHE technology and innovation that is "Made in Germany".

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More information at:

[www.grohe.com](http://www.grohe.com)

Press pictures and a factsheet of the Hemer site can be found [here](#).

### Captions:

1. Ribbon cutting at the research laboratory in Hemer, Germany (from left to right: Markus Ebner-Maibaum, Werksleiter, Torsten Meier, Vice President Research & Development, Thomas Fuhr, Executive Director Operations)
2. Thermostat life duration test in the research laboratory in Hemer, Germany
3. Salt spray test in the research laboratory in Hemer, Germany
4. Acoustic tests of fittings in the research laboratory in Hemer
5. Leaching test in the research laboratory in Hemer, Germany
6. Shampoo rinse test images
7. GROHE employees in front of the research laboratory in Hemer, Germany

### Photo Credits:

Shampoo rinse test images: Ramon Haindl

All other images: GROHE AG

### About GROHE

GROHE is the world's leading provider of sanitary fittings and has a total of over 6,000 employees, 2,400 of which are based in Germany. GROHE has been part of the LIXIL Group Corporation since 2014. As an international brand, GROHE pursues the brand values of technology, quality, design and sustainability, seeking to offer the "Pure joy of water". GROHE has been developing new product categories since its inception. This includes the GROHE Blue and Red water systems and the recently-introduced GROHE Sense water security system, which is an innovative component in the growth market of smart home technology. Innovation, design and development are closely aligned with one another and are enshrined in the German site as an integrated process. As a result, GROHE products carry the seal of quality "Made in Germany". In the past ten years alone, more than 300 design and innovation awards as well as several top rankings at the German Sustainability Award have confirmed GROHE's success. GROHE was the first in its industry to win the German government's CSR prize and was also featured in the renowned Fortune® magazine's ranking of Top 50 that are "Changing the World".

### About LIXIL

LIXIL makes pioneering water and housing products that solve every day, real-life challenges, making better homes a reality for everyone, everywhere. Drawing on our Japanese heritage, we create world-leading technology and innovate to make high quality products that transform homes. But the LIXIL difference is how we do this; through meaningful design, an entrepreneurial spirit,

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a dedication to improving accessibility for all and responsible business growth. Our approach comes to life through industry leading brands, including INAX, GROHE, American Standard and TOSTEM. Over 70,000 colleagues operating in more than 150 countries are proud to make products that touch the lives of more than a billion people every day. Learn more at [www.lixil.com](http://www.lixil.com)

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