

Press release

## Better together: ACO Group plans to acquire drainage specialist BIRCO

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The drainage specialists BIRCO, and the ACO Group, are merging, subject to the approval of the German Federal Cartel Office. The transaction is expected to be completed in the course of 2021. ACO Severin Ahlmann GmbH & Co KG will acquire BIRCO GmbH as a shareholder with 100% of the shares.

As an expert in the field of drainage technology, and manufacturer of drainage products, BIRCO has been developing and designing innovative products for the building materials industry for over 90 years. Just like the ACO Group, BIRCO is a family-run business, now in its 4th generation.

The companies have many other things in common, for example a fierce loyalty to the building materials trade as a proven factor for successful business. ACO will definitely continue to uphold these values even after the planned merger. Both, the ACO Group and BIRCO, have always stood for partnership-based cooperation, and a service-orientated strategy, and both offer direct, rapid contact to the in-house and field sales forces. All business activities continue under the well-established and reliable brands, ACO and BIRCO, with particular emphasis on a future oriented approach to the specialist needs on the customer side. The companies thus share essential corporate values.

For BIRCO, the merger means placing the company's future success in the hands of an experienced, reliable successor company. The proven BIRCO culture and customer focus will remain unchanged, and will continue as an important part of the ACO Group.

The merger of the companies creates synergy effects through important additions to the existing product ranges, including strengthening the foundations for innovative breakthroughs, also in the development of new product systems.

Thomas Bendixen, Managing Director of ACO Severin Ahlmann GmbH & Co KG and Francesco Vitale, Managing Director of ACO Tiefbau Vertrieb GmbH, declare:

*"By combining the know-how of both sides, we expect to be able to offer to our existing ACO-customers as well as to our new BIRCO-customers an even broader product portfolio in the building material trade, in water management and in the landscape gardening sector, and also more individual system solutions from a single source. This will bring noticeable effects in the area of rainwater management, for example. We therefore very much look forward to the successful completion of the merger, and for excellent cooperation with the new colleagues from BIRCO, as soon-to-be new family members of the ACO Group!"*

Frank Wagner, CEO / President of BIRCO GmbH, comments:

*"I am very glad to have found a partner in ACO, who shares the values and traditions of our BIRCO family business. After more than 34 years as a managing-shareholder of BIRCO, I particularly focused on maintaining the brand BIRCO, and I feel invested in keeping our production in Baden-Baden as well as our logistics center in Sinzheim in operation. For our employees this will now mean interesting new perspectives and opportunities as members of the ACO group as a globally operating company. This way I know that we place BIRCO into good hands for the future! Overall, the merger opens new, exciting opportunities for both partners and – in extension – to our customers in the building material trade, the civil engineering branch and the garden- and landscaping business."*

Frank Wagner will take up a new role at BIRCO after the merger with ACO: as a valued senior consultant, he will offer business advice based on his veteran experience at BIRCO. Christian Merkel, managing director at BIRCO over many years, will also stay on after the merger. He will continue as managing director and as such be a trusted member of the executive management of BIRCO in Baden-Baden.