



Company owner Hanspeter Tschamber and authorized signatory Claudia Dolzer in the hall near the burned-down plant. It was possible to save the forklift, now standing in front of the temporary accommodation. PHOTOS: ANNEMARIE RÖSCH

## The Tschamber company is back at work

After the fire incident two weeks ago, the Tschamber company in Wehr has returned to business. The Office of the Public Prosecutor cannot provide any information about the cause of the fire yet.

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**WEHR** The smell of charred plastic still lingers in the air, which was so penetrating on the day of the fire on December 30, 2022. Huge black puddles of water cover the area where the hall of the Tschamber company stood until two weeks ago. There are also piles of charred beams and bent metal together with a few gas cylinders on the heap of ruins. When they exploded, the fire, fought by 200 firefighters, was ignited again and again. The building was completely wrecked. The damage runs into the millions.

It looks so much different, so much neater, just a few meters away. The Tschamber company, which manufactures large industrial agitators and mechanical seals for the industry, is temporarily accommodated in a hall not far from the former company. There, men and women are handling things and pushing machines back and forth on lift trucks. Neatly lined up are other pieces of equipment in the hall. Not everything was destroyed. Some of the machines were stored outside the building when it caught fire. The computer server was also saved.

"According to current investigations, the fire originated in the area of one of the smaller side halls on the southern side of the main hall," writes the Office of the Public Prosecutor in Waldshut, Germany, thus confirming rumours already circulating on the day of the fire. The investigations into the cause of the fire are well underway. For this reason, reliable information on the cause of the fire cannot be given at the time being.

"We have gone back to business as far as possible," says authorized signatory Claudia Dolzer. "Purchasing and sales are working at full speed." Orders are also being accepted again, she adds. "You can even say we're on the way to almost normal business operations," she says. "However, there will be delays in deliveries, but our customers have been signalling that they are staying with us." Two agitators destined for a flue gas desulfurization plant in India are scheduled for delivery soon. They were outside the hall as well. "The customer is putting a little pressure on us. But we first have to double-check that they have not suffered any damage." Claudia Dolzer and her boss Hanspeter Tschamber are in negotiations with banks to organize the rebuilding of the company.

"There are positive signals from the insurers," says the authorized signatory. In order for the company to be able to operate normally again as soon as possible, Hanspeter Tschamber is looking for another hall. In addition, there are business negotiations to restore the machinery. "My boss is incredibly dynamic, a man of action," says Claudia Dolzer. Until everything is settled, competitors have offered to let Tschamber produce on their machines. In the middle of the week, there was an information meeting for the employees. By and by, all 40 employees are to be reactivated.

"We are incredibly grateful for the huge wave of help we experienced after the major fire," says Claudia Dolzer. "The support from Mayor Michael Thater and the fire department was also great." The firefighters found a kind word and a smile for her every now and then on the day of the fire and afterwards, she says. "That made us feel a little better in a very sad and difficult situation," says Claudia Dolzer.



On the day of the fire the flames rise high.