

DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/
Form 424B3
February 19, 2010
Table of Contents

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3)
Registration No. 333-164985

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(To Prospectus dated February 19, 2010)

THE DOW CHEMICAL COMPANY

Dow InterNotes®

We may offer to sell our Dow InterNotes® from time to time. The specific terms of the notes will be set prior to the time of sale and described in a pricing supplement. You should read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the applicable pricing supplement carefully before you invest.

We may offer the notes to or through agents for resale. The applicable pricing supplement will specify the purchase price, agent discounts and net proceeds of any particular offering of notes. The agents are not required to sell any specific amount of note but will use their reasonable best efforts to sell the notes. We also may offer the notes directly. We have not set a date for termination of our offering.

The agents have advised us that from time to time they may purchase and sell notes in the secondary market, but they are not obligated to make a market in the notes and may suspend or completely stop that activity at any time. Unless otherwise specified in the applicable pricing supplement, we do not intend to list the notes on any stock exchange.

Investing in the notes involves certain risks, including those described in the Risk Factors section beginning on page S-3.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these notes or passed on the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or any pricing supplement. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

Joint Lead Managers and Lead Agents

BofA Merrill Lynch

Charles Schwab & Co. Inc.
Morgan Stanley

Agents

Incapital LLC

Citi
UBS Investment Bank

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC
Prospectus Supplement dated February 19, 2010.

®InterNotes is a registered trademark of Incapital Holdings LLC

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus Supplement

<u>Summary</u>	S-1
<u>Risk Factors</u>	S-3
<u>About Dow</u>	S-3
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	S-4
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	S-4
<u>Description of Notes</u>	S-4
<u>Payment of Principal and Interest</u>	S-5
<u>Interest and Interest Rates</u>	S-5
<u>Payment of Interest</u>	S-6
<u>Redemption and Repayment</u>	S-6
<u>Survivor's Option</u>	S-7
<u>Registration and Settlement</u>	S-9
<u>The Depository Trust Company</u>	S-9
<u>Registration, Transfer and Payment of Certificated Notes</u>	S-11
<u>Material U.S. Federal Income</u>	
<u>Tax Considerations</u>	S-12
<u>Payments of Interest</u>	S-13
<u>Short-Term Notes</u>	S-13
<u>Market Discount</u>	S-13
<u>Premium</u>	S-14
<u>Disposition of a Note</u>	S-14
<u>Backup Withholding</u>	S-14
<u>Non-U.S. Holders</u>	S-15
<u>Information Reporting and Backup Withholding</u>	S-16
<u>Certain Considerations Applicable to ERISA, Governmental and Other Plan Investors</u>	S-16
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	S-17
<u>Legal Matters</u>	S-18

Prospectus

<u>About This Prospectus</u>	3
<u>The Dow Chemical Company</u>	3
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	3
<u>Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	3
<u>Description of Capital Stock</u>	4
<u>Description of Depository Shares</u>	11
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	13

<u>Description of Warrants</u>	24
<u>Description of Stock Purchase Contracts and Stock Purchase Units</u>	26
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	27
<u>Validity of Securities</u>	28
<u>Experts</u>	28
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	28

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any pricing supplement. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different or additional information. If anyone provides you with different or additional information, you should not rely on it. We are not making an offer to sell these securities or soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any pricing supplement, as well as information filed by us with the Securities and Exchange Commission and incorporated by reference in these documents, is accurate as of their dates. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since then.

Unless otherwise indicated or the context require otherwise, references in this prospectus supplement to we, us, our and Dow are to The Dow Chemical Company and its subsidiaries.

Table of Contents

SUMMARY

This section summarizes the legal and financial terms of the notes that are described in more detail in Description of Notes beginning on page S-4. Final terms of any particular notes will be determined at the time of sale and will be contained in the pricing supplement relating to those notes. The terms in that pricing supplement may vary from and supersede the terms contained in this summary and in Description of Notes. In addition, you should read the more detailed information appearing elsewhere in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and in that pricing supplement.

Issuer	The Dow Chemical Company
Purchasing Agent	Incapital LLC
Joint Lead Managers and Lead Agents	Banc of America Securities LLC and Incapital LLC
Agents Citigroup Global Markets Inc. Morgan Stanley & Co. Incorporated UBS Securities LLC Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC	Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.
Title of Notes	Dow InterNotes®
Amount	We may issue notes from time to time in various offerings up to the aggregate principal amount authorized by our board of directors. There are no limitations on our ability to issue additional indebtedness in the form of InterNotes® or otherwise.
Denominations	The notes will be issued and sold in denominations of \$1,000 and multiples of \$1,000 (unless otherwise stated in the pricing supplement).
Status	The notes will be our direct unsecured senior obligations and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured senior indebtedness from time to time outstanding.
Maturities	Each note will mature six months or more from its date of original issuance.
Interest	Each note will bear interest from its date of original issuance at a fixed rate per year. Interest on each note will be payable either monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually on each interest payment date and on the stated maturity date. Interest also will be paid on the date of redemption or repayment if a note is redeemed or repurchased prior to its stated maturity in accordance with its terms.

Interest on the notes will be computed on the basis of a 360-day year of twelve 30-day months.

S-1

Table of Contents

Principal	The principal amount of each note will be payable on its stated maturity date at the corporate trust office of the paying agent or at any other place we may designate.
Redemption and Repayment	Unless otherwise stated in the applicable pricing supplement, a note will not be redeemable at our option or be repayable at the option of the holder prior to its stated maturity date. The notes will not be subject to any sinking fund.
Survivor's Option	Specific notes may contain a provision permitting the optional repayment of those notes prior to stated maturity, if requested by the authorized representative of the beneficial owner of those notes, following the death of the beneficial owner of the notes, so long as the notes were owned by the beneficial owner or his or her estate at least six months prior to the request. This feature is referred to as a Survivor's Option. Your notes will not be repaid in this manner unless the pricing supplement for your notes provides for the Survivor's Option. The right to exercise the Survivor's Option is subject to limits set by us on (1) the permitted dollar amount of total exercises by all holders of notes in any calendar year, and (2) the permitted dollar amount of an individual exercise by a holder of a note in any calendar year. Additional details on the Survivor's Option are described in the section entitled Description of Notes Survivor's Option on page S-7.
Sale and Clearance	We will sell notes in the United States only. Notes will be issued in book-entry only form and will clear through The Depository Trust Company. We do not intend to issue notes in certificated form.
Trustee	The trustee for the notes is The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A., under an indenture dated as of May 1, 2008.
Selling Group	The agents and dealers comprising the selling group are broker-dealers and securities firms. The agents, including the Purchasing Agent, have entered into a Selling Agent Agreement with us dated February 19, 2010. Dealers who are members of the selling group have executed a Master Selected Dealer Agreement with the Purchasing Agent. The agents and the dealers have agreed to market and sell the notes in accordance with the terms of those respective agreements and all other applicable laws and regulations. You may contact the Purchasing Agent at info@incapital.com for a list of selling group members.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

Your investment in the notes will involve certain risks. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do not describe all of those risks.

You should, in consultation with your own financial and legal advisors, carefully consider the following discussion of risks before deciding whether an investment in the notes is suitable for you. The notes will not be an appropriate investment for you if you are not knowledgeable about significant features of the notes or financial matters in general. You should not purchase the notes unless you understand, and know that you can bear, these investment risks.

The market value of the notes may be affected by factors in addition to credit ratings

Any credit ratings that are assigned to the notes may not reflect the potential impact of all risks on the market value of the notes.

We may choose to redeem notes when prevailing interest rates are relatively low

If your notes will be redeemable at our option, we may choose to redeem your notes from time to time, especially when prevailing interest rates are lower than the rate borne by the notes. If prevailing rates are lower at the time of redemption, you would not be able to reinvest the redemption proceeds in a comparable security at an effective interest rate as high as the interest rate on the notes being redeemed. Our redemption right also may adversely impact your ability to sell your notes as the optional redemption date or period approaches.

Survivor's Option may be limited in amount

We will have a discretionary right to limit the aggregate principal amount of notes subject to the Survivor's Option that may be exercised in any calendar year to an amount equal to the greater of \$2,000,000 or 2% of the outstanding principal amount of all notes outstanding as of the end of the most recent calendar year. We also have the discretionary right to limit to \$250,000 in any

calendar year the aggregate principal amount of notes subject to the Survivor's Option that may be exercised in such calendar year on behalf of any individual deceased beneficial owner of notes. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that exercise of the Survivor's Option for the desired amount will be permitted in any single calendar year.

We cannot assure that a trading market for your notes will ever develop or be maintained

In evaluating the notes, you should assume that you will be holding the notes until their stated maturity. The notes are a new issue of securities. We cannot assure you that a trading market for your notes will ever develop, be liquid or be maintained. Many factors independent of our creditworthiness affect the trading market for and market value of your notes. Those factors include, without limitation:

- the method of calculating the principal and interest for the notes;
- the time remaining to the stated maturity of the notes;
- the outstanding amount of the notes;
- the redemption or repayment features of the notes; and
- the level, direction and volatility of interest rates generally.

There may be a limited number of buyers when you decide to sell your notes. This may affect the price you receive for your notes or your ability to sell your notes at all.

ABOUT DOW

Dow combines the power of science and technology with the Human Element to passionately innovate what is essential to human progress. Dow connects chemistry and innovation with the principles of sustainability to help address many of the world's most challenging problems such as the need for clean water, renewable energy generation and conservation, and increasing agricultural productivity. Dow's diversified industry-leading portfolio of specialty chemical, advanced materials, agrosiences and plastics businesses deliver a broad range of technology-based products

S-3

Table of Contents

and solutions to customers in approximately 160 countries and in high growth sectors such as electronics, water, energy, coatings and agriculture. In 2009, Dow had annual sales of \$44.9 billion and employed approximately 52,000 people worldwide. Dow's more than 5,000 products are manufactured at 214 sites in 37 countries across the globe.

Dow's corporate offices are located at 2030 Dow Center, Midland, Michigan 48674, and Dow's telephone number is (989) 636-1000.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise indicated in a pricing supplement for the notes, we will use the net proceeds from the sale of the notes for general corporate purposes, which may include the repayment of debt.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

	For the year ended December 31,				
	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges	1.3x	2.3x	5.3x	6.0x	7.1x
Ratio of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Share Dividends	1.0x	2.3x	5.3x	6.0x	7.1x

For the purposes of these ratios, earnings consist of income from continuing operations before income taxes, noncontrolling interests and equity in earnings of nonconsolidated affiliates; plus fixed charges, amortization of capitalized interest and distributed income of nonconsolidated affiliates; minus capitalized interest and preferred security dividends. Fixed charges consist of interest expense and amortization of debt discount, capitalized interest, preferred security dividends, and a portion of rentals deemed to represent an interest factor.

DESCRIPTION OF NOTES

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

The following description of the particular terms of the notes being offered supplements and, to the extent inconsistent with or to the extent otherwise specified in an applicable pricing supplement, replaces the description of the general terms and provisions of the debt securities set forth under the heading "Description of Debt Securities" in the accompanying prospectus. Unless otherwise specified in an applicable pricing supplement, the notes will have the terms described below. Capitalized terms used but not defined below have the meanings given to them in the accompanying prospectus and in the indenture relating to the notes.

The notes being offered by this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the applicable pricing supplement will be issued under an indenture, dated as of May 1, 2008, between us and The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A., as trustee. The indenture is more fully described in the accompanying prospectus. The indenture does not limit the aggregate amount of debt securities that may be issued under it and provides that the debt securities may be issued under it from time to time in one or more series. The following statements are summaries of the material provisions of the indenture and the notes. These summaries do not purport to be complete and are qualified in their entirety by reference to the indenture, including for the definitions of certain terms.

The notes constitute a single series of debt securities for purposes of the indenture and are unlimited in aggregate principal amount.

Notes issued in accordance with this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the applicable pricing supplement will have the following general characteristics:

the notes will be our direct unsecured senior obligations and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured senior indebtedness from time to time outstanding;

Table of Contents

the notes may be offered from time to time by us through the Purchasing Agent and each note will mature on a day that is at least six months from its date of original issuance;
each note will bear interest from its date of original issuance at a fixed rate per year;
the notes will not be subject to any sinking fund; and
the minimum denomination of the notes will be \$1,000 (unless otherwise stated in the pricing supplement).

In addition, the pricing supplement relating to each offering of notes will describe specific terms of the notes, including:

the price, which may be expressed as a percentage of the aggregate initial public offering price of the notes, at which the notes will be issued to the public;
the date on which the notes will be issued to the public;
the stated maturity date of the notes;
the rate per year at which the notes will bear interest;
the interest payment frequency;
the purchase price, Purchasing Agent's discount and net proceeds to us;
whether the authorized representative of the holder of a beneficial interest in the notes will have the right to seek repayment upon the death of the holder as described under "Survivor's Option" on page S-7;
if the notes may be redeemed at our option or repaid at the option of the holder prior to its stated maturity date, the provisions relating to any such redemption or repayment;
any special U.S. Federal income tax consequences of the purchase, ownership and disposition of the notes; and
any other significant terms of the notes not inconsistent with the provisions of the indenture.

We may at any time purchase notes at any price or prices in the open market or otherwise. Notes so purchased by us may, at our discretion, be held, resold or surrendered to the trustee for cancellation.

Payment of Principal and Interest

Principal of and interest on beneficial interests in the notes will be made in accordance with the arrangements then in place between the paying agent and The Depository Trust Company (referred to as "DTC") and its participants as described under "Registration and Settlement - The Depository Trust Company" on page S-9. Payments in respect of any notes in certificated form will be made as described under "Registration and Settlement - Registration, Transfer and Payment of Certificated Notes" on page S-11.

Interest on each note will be payable either monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually on each interest payment date and at the note's stated maturity or on the date of redemption or repayment if a note is redeemed or repaid prior to maturity. Interest is payable to the person in whose name a note is registered at the close of business on the regular record date before each interest payment date. Interest due at a note's stated maturity or on a date of redemption or repayment will be payable to the person to whom principal is payable.

We will pay any administrative costs imposed by banks in connection with making payments in immediately available funds, but any tax, assessment or governmental charge imposed upon any payments on a note, including, without limitation, any withholding tax, is the responsibility of the holders of beneficial interests in the note in respect of which such payments are made.

Interest and Interest Rates

Each note will accrue interest from its date of original issuance until its stated maturity or earlier redemption or repayment. The applicable pricing supplement will specify a fixed interest rate per year payable monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually. Interest on the notes will be computed on the basis of a 360-day year of twelve 30-day months. If the stated maturity date, date of earlier redemption or repayment or interest payment date for any note is not a business day, principal and interest for that note will be paid on the next business day, and no interest will accrue on the amount payable from, and after, the stated maturity date, date of earlier redemption or repayment or interest payment date.

Table of Contents**Payment of Interest**

Interest on the notes will be paid as follows:

<i>Interest Payment Frequency</i>	<i>Interest Payment Dates</i>
Monthly	Fifteenth day of each calendar month, beginning in the first calendar month following the month the note was issued.
Quarterly	Fifteenth day of every third month, beginning in the third calendar month following the month the note was issued.
Semi-annually	Fifteenth day of every sixth month, beginning in the sixth calendar month following the month the note was issued.
Annually	Fifteenth day of every twelfth month, beginning in the twelfth calendar month following the month the note was issued.

The regular record date for any interest payment date will be the first day of the calendar month in which the interest payment date occurs, except that the regular record date for interest due on the notes stated maturity date or date of earlier redemption or repayment will be that particular date.

Interest on a note will be payable beginning on the first interest payment date after its date of original issuance to holders of record on the corresponding regular record date.

Business day means any day, other than a Saturday or Sunday, that is neither a legal holiday nor a day on which banking institutions are authorized or required by law or regulation to close in The City of New York.

Redemption and Repayment

Unless we otherwise provide in the applicable pricing supplement, a note will not be redeemable or repayable prior to its stated maturity date.

If the pricing supplement states that the note will be redeemable at our option prior to its stated maturity date, then on such date or dates specified in the pricing supplement, we may redeem those notes at our option either in whole or from time to time in part, upon not less than 30 nor more than 60 days written notice to the holder of those notes.

If the pricing supplement states that your note will be repayable at your option prior to its stated maturity date, we will require receipt of notice of the request for repayment at least 30 but not more than 60 days prior to the date or dates specified in the pricing supplement. We also must receive the completed form entitled **Option to Elect Repayment**. Exercise of the repayment option by the holder of a note is irrevocable.

Since the notes will be represented by a global note, DTC or its nominee will be treated as the holder of the notes; therefore DTC or its nominee will be the only entity that receives notices of redemption of notes from us, in the case of our redemption of notes, and will be the only entity that can exercise the right to repayment of notes, in the case of optional repayment. See **Registration and Settlement** on page S-9.

To ensure that DTC or its nominee will timely exercise a right to repayment with respect to a particular beneficial interest in a note, the beneficial owner of the interest in that note must instruct the broker or other direct or indirect participant through which it holds the beneficial interest to notify DTC or its nominee of its desire to exercise a right to repayment. Because different firms have different cut-off times for accepting instructions from their customers, each beneficial owner should consult the broker or other direct or indirect participant through which it holds an interest in a note to determine the cut-off time by which the instruction must be given for timely notice to be delivered to DTC or its nominee. Conveyance of notices and other communications by DTC or its nominee to participants, by participants to indirect participants and by participants and indirect participants to beneficial owners of the notes will be governed by agreements among them and any applicable statutory or regulatory requirements.

S-6

Table of Contents

The redemption or repayment of a note normally will occur on the interest payment date or dates following receipt of a valid notice. Unless otherwise specified in the pricing supplement, the redemption or repayment price will equal 100% of the principal amount of the note plus unpaid interest accrued to the date or dates of redemption or repayment.

We may at any time purchase notes at any price or prices in the open market or otherwise. We may also purchase notes otherwise tendered for repayment by a holder or tendered by a holder's duly authorized representative through exercise of the Survivor's Option described below. If we purchase the notes in this manner, we have the discretion to either hold, resell or surrender the notes to the trustee for cancellation.

Survivor's Option

The Survivor's Option is a provision in a note pursuant to which we agree to repay that note, if requested by the authorized representative of the beneficial owner of that note, following the death of the beneficial owner of the note, so long as the note was owned by that beneficial owner or the estate of that beneficial owner at least six months prior to the request. The pricing supplement relating to each offering of notes will state whether the Survivor's Option applies to those notes.

If a note is entitled to a Survivor's Option, upon the valid exercise of the Survivor's Option and the proper tender of that note for repayment, we will, at our option, repay or repurchase that note, in whole or in part, at a price equal to 100% of the principal amount of the deceased beneficial owner's interest in that note plus unpaid interest accrued to the date of repayment.

To be valid, the Survivor's Option must be exercised by or on behalf of the person who has authority to act on behalf of the deceased beneficial owner of the note (including, without limitation, the personal representative or executor of the deceased beneficial owner or the surviving joint owner with the deceased beneficial owner) under the laws of the applicable jurisdiction.

The death of a person holding a beneficial ownership interest in a note as a joint tenant or tenant

by the entirety with another person, or as a tenant in common with the deceased holder's spouse, will be deemed the death of a beneficial owner of that note, and the entire principal amount of the note so held will be subject to repayment by us upon request. However, the death of a person holding a beneficial ownership interest in a note as tenant in common with a person other than such deceased holder's spouse will be deemed the death of a beneficial owner only with respect to such deceased person's interest in the note.

The death of a person who, during his or her lifetime, was entitled to substantially all of the beneficial ownership interests in a note will be deemed the death of the beneficial owner of that note for purposes of the Survivor's Option, regardless of whether that beneficial owner was the registered holder of that note, if entitlement to those interests can be established to the satisfaction of the trustee. A beneficial ownership interest will be deemed to exist in typical cases of nominee ownership, ownership under the Uniform Transfers to Minors Act or Uniform Gifts to Minors Act, community property or other joint ownership arrangements between a husband and wife. In addition, a beneficial ownership interest will be deemed to exist in custodial and trust arrangements where one person has all of the beneficial ownership interests in the applicable note during his or her lifetime.

We have the discretionary right to limit the aggregate principal amount of notes as to which exercises of the Survivor's Option shall be accepted by us from authorized representatives of all deceased beneficial owners in any calendar year to an amount equal to the greater of \$2,000,000 or 2% of the principal amount of all notes outstanding as of the end of the most recent calendar year. We also have the discretionary right to limit to \$250,000 in any calendar year the aggregate principal amount of notes as to which exercises of the Survivor's Option shall be accepted by us from the authorized representative of any individual deceased beneficial owner of notes in such calendar year. In addition, we will not permit the exercise of the Survivor's Option except in principal amounts of \$1,000 and multiples of \$1,000.

An otherwise valid election to exercise the Survivor's Option may not be withdrawn. Each election to exercise the Survivor's Option will be accepted in the order that elections are received by

Table of Contents

the trustee, except for any note the acceptance of which would contravene any of the limitations described in the preceding paragraph. Notes accepted for repayment through the exercise of the Survivor's Option normally will be repaid on the first interest payment date that occurs 20 or more calendar days after the date of the acceptance. For example, if the acceptance date of a note tendered through a valid exercise of the Survivor's Option is July 1, 2010, and interest on that note is paid monthly, we would normally, at our option, repay that note on the interest payment date occurring on August 15, 2010, because the July 15, 2010 interest payment date would occur less than 20 days from the date of acceptance. Each tendered note that is not accepted in any calendar year due to the application of any of the limitations described in the preceding paragraph will be deemed to be tendered in the following calendar year in the order in which all such notes were originally tendered. If a note tendered through a valid exercise of the Survivor's Option is not accepted, the trustee will deliver a notice by first-class mail to the registered holder, at that holder's last known address as indicated in the note register, that states the reason that note has not been accepted for repayment.

With respect to notes represented by a global note, DTC or its nominee is treated as the holder of the notes and will be the only entity that can exercise the Survivor's Option for such notes. To obtain repayment pursuant to exercise of the Survivor's Option for a note, the deceased beneficial owner's authorized representative must provide the following items to the broker or other entity through which the beneficial interest in the note is held by the deceased beneficial owner:

- a written instruction to such broker or other entity to notify DTC of the authorized representative's desire to obtain repayment pursuant to exercise of the Survivor's Option;
- appropriate evidence satisfactory to the trustee (a) that the deceased was the beneficial owner of the note at the time of death and his or her interest in the note was owned by the deceased beneficial owner or his or her estate at least six months prior to the request for repayment, (b) that the death of the beneficial owner has occurred, (c) of the date of death of the beneficial owner, and (d) that the representative has authority to act on behalf of the beneficial owner;
- if the interest in the note is held by a nominee of the deceased beneficial owner, a certificate satisfactory to the trustee from the nominee attesting to the deceased's beneficial ownership of such note;
- written request for repayment signed by the authorized representative of the deceased beneficial owner with the signature guaranteed by a member firm of a registered national securities exchange or of the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. or a commercial bank or trust company having an office or correspondent in the United States;
- if applicable, a properly executed assignment or endorsement;
- tax waivers and any other instruments or documents that the trustee reasonably requires in order to establish the validity of the beneficial ownership of the note and the claimant's entitlement to payment; and
- any additional information the trustee reasonably requires to evidence satisfaction of any conditions to the exercise of the Survivor's Option or to document beneficial ownership or authority to make the election and to cause the repayment of the note.

In turn, the broker or other entity will deliver each of these items to the trustee, together with evidence satisfactory to the trustee from the broker or other entity stating that it represents the deceased beneficial owner.

We retain the right to limit the aggregate principal amount of notes as to which exercises of the Survivor's Option applicable to the notes will be accepted in any one calendar year as described above. All other questions regarding the eligibility or validity of any exercise of the Survivor's Option will be determined by the trustee, in its sole discretion, which determination will be final and binding on all parties.

The broker or other entity will be responsible for disbursing payments received from the trustee to the authorized representative. See Registration and Settlement on page S-9.

Table of Contents

Forms for the exercise of the Survivor's Option may be obtained from the Trustee at 2 North LaSalle Street, Suite 1020, Chicago, Illinois, Attention: Corporate Trust, Medita A. Vucic.

If applicable, we will comply with the requirements of Section 14(e) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, and the rules promulgated thereunder, and any other securities laws or regulations in connection with any repayment of notes at the option of the registered holders or beneficial owners thereof.

REGISTRATION AND SETTLEMENT

The Depository Trust Company

All of the notes we offer will be issued in book-entry only form. This means that we will not issue certificates for notes, except in the limited case described below. Instead, we will issue global notes in registered form. Each global note will be held through DTC and will be registered in the name of Cede & Co., as nominee of DTC. Accordingly, Cede & Co. will be the holder of record of the notes. Each note represented by a global note evidences a beneficial interest in that global note.

Beneficial interests in a global note will be shown on, and transfers are effected through, records maintained by DTC or its participants. In order to own a beneficial interest in a note, you must be an institution that has an account with DTC or have a direct or indirect account with such an institution. Transfers of ownership interests in the notes will be accomplished by making entries in DTC participants' books acting on behalf of beneficial owners.

So long as DTC or its nominee is the registered holder of a global note, DTC or its nominee, as the case may be, will be the sole holder and owner of the notes represented thereby for all purposes, including payment of principal and interest, under the indenture. Except as otherwise provided below, you will not be entitled to receive physical delivery of certificated notes and will not be considered the holder of the notes for any purpose under the indenture. Accordingly, you must rely on the procedures of DTC and the procedures of the DTC participant through which you own your note in order to exercise any rights of a holder of a note

under the indenture. The laws of some jurisdictions require that certain purchasers of notes take physical delivery of such notes in certificated form. Those limits and laws may impair the ability to transfer beneficial interests in the notes.

Each global note representing notes will be exchangeable for certificated notes of like tenor and terms and of differing authorized denominations in a like aggregate principal amount, only if (1) DTC notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depository for the global notes or we become aware that DTC has ceased to be a clearing agency registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and, in any such case we fail to appoint a successor to DTC within 60 calendar days, (2) we, in our sole discretion, determine that the global notes shall be exchangeable for certificated notes or (3) an event of default has occurred and is continuing with respect to the notes under the indenture. Upon any such exchange, the certificated notes shall be registered in the names of the beneficial owners of the global note representing the notes.

The following is based on information furnished by DTC:

DTC will act as securities depository for the notes. The notes will be issued as fully-registered notes registered in the name of Cede & Co. (DTC's partnership nominee) or such other name as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. Generally, one fully registered global note will be issued for all of the principal amount of the notes.

DTC is a limited-purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law, a banking organization within the meaning of the New York Banking Law, a member of the Federal Reserve System, a clearing corporation within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code, and a clearing agency registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. DTC holds and

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

provides asset servicing for over 2 million issues of U.S. and non-U.S. equity issues, corporate and municipal debt issues and money market instruments from over 85 countries that DTC's direct participants deposit with DTC.

DTC also facilitates the post-trade settlement among direct participants of sales and

S-9

Table of Contents

other securities transactions in deposited securities, through electronic computerized book-entry transfers and pledges between direct participants accounts. This eliminates the need for physical movement of securities certificates. Direct participants include both U.S. and non U.S. securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations, and certain other organizations. DTC is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation (DTCC). DTCC, in turn, is owned by a number of direct participants of DTC and members of the National Securities Clearing Corporation, Government Securities Clearing Corporation, MBS Clearing Corporation, and Emerging Markets Clearing Corporation, as well as by The New York Stock Exchange, Inc., the American Stock Exchange LLC, and the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. Access to the DTC system is also available to others such as both U.S. and non-U.S. securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies and clearing corporations that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a direct participant, either directly or indirectly. DTC has Standard & Poor's highest rating: AAA. The DTC rules applicable to its participants are on file with the SEC. More information about DTC can be found at www.dtcc.com.

Purchases of the notes under the DTC system must be made by or through direct participants, which will receive a credit for the notes on DTC's records. The beneficial interest of each actual purchaser of each note is in turn to be recorded on the direct and indirect participants' records. Beneficial owners will not receive written confirmation from DTC of their purchase. Beneficial owners are, however, expected to receive written confirmations providing details of the transaction, as well as periodic statements of their holdings, from the direct or indirect participant through which the beneficial owner entered into the transaction. Transfers of beneficial interests in the notes are to be accomplished by entries made on the books of direct and indirect participants acting on behalf of beneficial owners. Beneficial owners will not receive certificates representing their beneficial interests in notes, except in the event that use of the book-entry system for the notes is discontinued.

To facilitate subsequent transfers, all notes deposited by direct participants with DTC will be registered in the name of DTC's partnership

nominee, Cede & Co. or such other name as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. The deposit of the notes with DTC and their registration in the name of Cede & Co. or such other nominee do not effect any change in beneficial ownership. DTC has no knowledge of the actual beneficial owners of the notes; DTC's records reflect only the identity of the direct participants to whose accounts such notes will be credited, which may or may not be the beneficial owners. The direct and indirect participants will remain responsible for keeping account of their holdings on behalf of their customers.

Conveyance of notices and other communications by DTC to direct participants, by direct participants to indirect participants, and by direct participants and indirect participants to beneficial owners will be governed by arrangements among them, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements as may be in effect from time to time. Beneficial owners of the notes may wish to take certain steps to augment the transmission to them of notices of significant events with respect to the notes, such as redemption, tenders, defaults, and proposed amendments to the security documents. For example, beneficial owners of the notes may wish to ascertain that the nominee holding the notes for their benefit has agreed to obtain and transmit notices to beneficial owners. In the alternative, beneficial owners may wish to provide their names and addresses to the registrar of the notes and request that copies of the notices be provided to them directly. Any such request may or may not be successful.

Neither DTC nor Cede & Co. (nor any other DTC nominee) will consent or vote with respect to the notes unless authorized by a direct participant in accordance with DTC's procedures. Under its usual procedures, DTC mails an Omnibus Proxy to us as soon as possible after the regular record date. The Omnibus Proxy assigns Cede & Co.'s consenting or voting rights to those direct participants to whose accounts the notes are credited on the record date (identified in a listing attached to the Omnibus Proxy).

We will pay principal and or interest payments on the notes in same-day funds directly to Cede & Co., or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. DTC's practice is to credit direct participants

Table of Contents

accounts on the applicable payment date in accordance with their respective holdings shown on DTC's records upon DTC's receipt of funds and corresponding detail information. Payments by participants to beneficial owners will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is the case with securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in street name, and will be the responsibility of these participants and not of DTC or any other party, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements that may be in effect from time to time. Payment of principal and interest to Cede & Co., or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC, is our responsibility, disbursement of such payments to direct participants is the responsibility of DTC, and disbursement of such payments to the beneficial owners is the responsibility of the direct or indirect participant.

We will send any redemption notices to DTC. If less than all of the notes are being redeemed, DTC's practice is to determine by lot the amount of the interest of each direct participant in such issue to be redeemed.

A beneficial owner, or its authorized representative, shall give notice to elect to have its notes repaid by us, through its direct or indirect participant, to the trustee, and shall effect delivery of such notes by causing the direct participant to transfer that participant's interest in the global note representing such notes, on DTC's records, to the trustee. The requirement for physical delivery of notes in connection with a demand for repayment will be deemed satisfied when the ownership rights in the global note representing such notes are transferred by the direct participants on DTC's records.

DTC may discontinue providing its services as securities depository for the notes at any time by giving us reasonable notice. Under such circumstances, if a successor securities depository is not obtained, we will print and deliver certificated notes. We may decide to discontinue use of the system of book-entry transfers through DTC (or a successor securities depository). In that event, we will print and deliver certificated notes.

The information in this section concerning DTC and DTC's system has been obtained from

sources that we believe to be reliable, but neither we, the Purchasing Agent nor any agent takes any responsibility for its accuracy.

Registration, Transfer and Payment of Certificated Notes

If we ever issue notes in certificated form, those notes may be presented for registration, transfer and payment at the office of the registrar or at the office of any transfer agent designated and maintained by us. We have originally designated The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. to act in those capacities for the notes. The registrar or transfer agent will make the transfer or registration only if it is satisfied with the documents of title and identity of the person making the request. There will not be a service charge for any exchange or registration of transfer of the notes, but we may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge that may be imposed in connection with the exchange. At any time, we may change transfer agents or approve a change in the location through which any transfer agent acts. We also may designate additional transfer agents for any notes at any time.

We will not be required to: (1) issue, exchange or register the transfer of any note to be redeemed for a period of 15 days after the selection of the notes to be redeemed; (2) exchange or register the transfer of any note that was selected, called or is being called for redemption, except the unredeemed portion of any note being redeemed in part; or (3) exchange or register the transfer of any note as to which an election for repayment by the holder has been made, except the unrepaid portion of any note being repaid in part.

We will pay principal of and interest on any certificated notes at the offices of the paying agents we may designate from time to time. Generally, we will pay interest on a note by check on any interest payment date other than at stated maturity or upon earlier redemption or repayment to the person in whose name the note is registered at the close of business on the regular record date for that payment. We will pay principal and interest at stated maturity or upon earlier redemption or repayment in same-day funds against presentation and surrender of the applicable notes.

Table of Contents

MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS

The following is a general summary of certain U.S. federal income tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of the notes by a holder who purchases the notes upon their original issuance at their initial offering price (except where otherwise specifically noted). This description applies only to notes held as capital assets within the meaning of Section 1221 and does not address, except as set forth below, aspects of U.S. federal income taxation that may be applicable to holders that are subject to special tax rules, such as: financial institutions; insurance companies; real estate investment trusts; regulated investment companies; grantor trusts; tax-exempt organizations; persons that will own notes through partnerships or other pass-through entities; dealers or traders in securities or currencies; certain former citizens or long-term residents of the United States; holders that will hold a note as part of a position in a straddle or as part of a hedging, conversion or integrated transaction for U.S. federal income tax purposes; or holders that have a functional currency other than the U.S. dollar.

Moreover, this summary does not address the U.S. federal estate and gift tax or alternative minimum tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership or disposition of notes and does not address the U.S. federal income tax treatment of holders that do not acquire notes as part of the initial distribution at their initial issue price (except where otherwise specifically noted). Each prospective purchaser should consult its tax advisor with respect to the U.S. federal, state, local and foreign tax consequences of acquiring, owning and disposing of notes.

This summary is based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code), existing and proposed U.S. Treasury Regulations, administrative pronouncements and judicial decisions, each as available and as of the date hereof. All of the foregoing are subject to change, possibly with retroactive effect, or differing interpretations which could affect the tax consequences described herein.

Internal Revenue Service Circular 230 Disclosure

Pursuant to Internal Revenue Service Circular 230, we hereby inform you that the description set out herein with respect to U.S. federal tax issues was not intended or written to be used, and such description cannot be used, by any taxpayer for the purpose of avoiding any penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer under the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. Such description was written in connection with the marketing of the notes. Taxpayers should seek advice based on the taxpayer's particular circumstances from an independent tax advisor.

As used herein, the term "U.S. Holder" means a beneficial owner of a note that is for U.S. federal income tax purposes (1) an individual citizen or resident of the United States, (2) a corporation (including an entity treated as a corporation for U.S. Federal income tax purposes) created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any state thereof or the District of Columbia, (3) an estate whose income is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source, or (4) a trust if a court within the U.S. is able to exercise primary supervision over the administration of the trust and one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust. Notwithstanding the preceding clause (4), to the extent provided in regulations, certain trusts in existence on August 20, 1996 and treated as U.S. persons prior to such date that elect to continue to be so treated also shall be considered U.S. Holders. An individual will be deemed to be a resident of the United States by reason of being a lawful permanent resident or, subject to certain exceptions, present in the United States for at least 31 days in the calendar year and for an aggregate of at least 183 days during a three-year period including the current calendar year (counting for such purposes all of the days present in the current year, one-third of the days present in the immediately preceding year, and one-sixth of the days present in the second preceding year).

A non-U.S. Holder means a beneficial owner of a note that, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, is an individual, corporation (including for this purpose any other entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes), trust or estate that is not a U.S. Holder.

Table of Contents

If a partnership (or any other entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) holds the notes, the tax treatment of the partnership and a partner in such partnership generally will depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. Such partner or partnership should consult its own tax advisor regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the purchase, ownership and disposition of the notes.

Payments of Interest

Payments of interest on a note generally will be taxable to a U.S. Holder as ordinary interest income at the time such payments are accrued or are received (in accordance with the U.S. Holder's regular method of tax accounting).

Short-Term Notes

Notes that have a fixed maturity of one year or less (short-term notes) will be treated as having been issued with acquisition discount. In general, an individual or other cash-method U.S. Holder is not required to accrue such acquisition discount unless the U.S. Holder elects to do so. If such an election is not made, any gain recognized by the U.S. Holder on the sale, exchange or maturity of the short-term note will be ordinary income to the extent of the acquisition discount accrued on a straight-line basis, or upon election under the constant yield method (based on daily compounding), through the date of sale or stated maturity, and a portion of the deductions otherwise allowable to the U.S. Holder for interest on borrowings allocable to the short-term note will be deferred until a corresponding amount of income is realized. U.S. Holders who report income for U.S. federal income tax purposes under the accrual method, and certain other holders including banks and dealers in securities, are required to accrue acquisition discount on a short-term note on a straight-line basis unless an election is made to accrue the acquisition discount under a constant yield method (based on daily compounding).

Market Discount

If a U.S. Holder purchases a note for an amount that is less than its issue price (or, in the case of a subsequent purchaser, its stated redemption price at maturity), such U.S. Holder will be treated as

having purchased such note at a market discount, unless such market discount is less than a specified de minimis amount. The issue price of each note in an issue of notes equals the first price at which a substantial amount of such notes has been sold (ignoring sales to bond houses, brokers, or similar persons or organizations acting in the capacity of underwriters, placement agents, or wholesalers).

Under the market discount rules, a U.S. Holder will be required to treat any partial principal payment on, or any gain realized on the sale, exchange, retirement or other disposition of, a note as ordinary income to the extent of the lesser of (1) the amount of such payment or realized gain or (2) the market discount which has not previously been included in income and that is treated as having accrued on such note at the time of such payment or disposition. Market discount will be considered to accrue ratably during the period from the date of acquisition to the stated maturity date of the note, unless the U.S. Holder elects (as described below) to accrue market discount on the basis of semiannual compounding. Such an election shall apply only to the notes with respect to which it is made, and may not be revoked.

A U.S. Holder may be required to defer the deduction of all or a portion of the interest paid or accrued on any indebtedness incurred or maintained to purchase or carry a note with market discount until the stated maturity of the note or certain earlier dispositions.

A U.S. Holder may elect to include market discount in income currently as it accrues (on either a ratable or semiannual compounding basis), in which case the rules described above regarding the treatment as ordinary income of gain upon the disposition of the note and upon the receipt of certain cash payments and regarding the deferral of interest deductions will not apply. Generally, such currently included market discount is treated as ordinary interest for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Such an election will apply to all debt instruments acquired by the U.S. Holder on or after the first day of the first taxable year to which such election applies and may be revoked only with the consent of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Table of Contents**Premium**

Generally, if a U.S. Holder purchases a note for an amount that is greater than the sum of all amounts payable on the note after the purchase date, such U.S. Holder may be considered to have purchased the note with amortizable bond premium equal in amount to such excess. A U.S. Holder may elect to amortize such premium using a constant yield method over the remaining term of the note and may offset interest otherwise required to be included in respect of the note during any taxable year by the amortized amount of such excess for the taxable year. If a U.S. Holder elects to amortize bond premium, such holder generally must reduce its tax basis in the notes by the amount of bond premium used to offset interest income. However, if the note may be optionally redeemed after the U.S. Holder acquires it at a price in excess of its stated redemption price at maturity, special rules would apply which could result in a deferral of the amortization of some bond premium until later in the term of the note. Any election to amortize bond premium applies to all taxable debt instruments acquired by the U.S. Holder on or after the first day of the first taxable year to which such election applies and may be revoked only with the consent of the IRS.

Disposition of a Note

Except as described above, upon the sale, exchange or retirement of a note (including the Survivor's Option, if applicable), a U.S. Holder generally will recognize taxable gain or loss equal to the difference, if any, between the amount realized on the sale, exchange or retirement (other than amounts representing accrued and unpaid interest) and such U.S. Holder's adjusted tax basis in the note. A U.S. Holder's adjusted tax basis in a note generally will equal such U.S. Holder's initial investment in the note increased by accrued market discount, if any, if the U.S. Holder has included such market discount in income, and decreased by the amount of any payments, other than stated interest payments, received and amortizable bond premium taken with respect to such note. Such gain or loss generally will be long-term capital gain or loss if the note had been held for more than one year. Non-corporate taxpayers are subject to reduced maximum rates on long-term capital gains and are generally subject to tax at ordinary income rates on short-term capital gains. The tax rate for long-term capital gains of non-corporate taxpayers is scheduled to increase for

taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2011. The deductibility of capital losses is subject to certain limitations. Prospective investors should consult their own tax advisors concerning these tax law provisions.

If a U.S. Holder disposes of only a portion of a note pursuant to a redemption or repayment (including the Survivor's Option, if applicable), such disposition will be treated as a pro rata prepayment in retirement of a portion of a debt instrument. Generally, the resulting gain or loss would be calculated by assuming that the original note being tendered consists of two instruments, one that is retired (or repaid), and one that remains outstanding. The adjusted issue price and the U.S. Holder's adjusted basis, determined immediately before the disposition, would be allocated between these two instruments based on the portion of the instrument that is treated as retired by the pro rata prepayment.

Backup Withholding

Backup withholding and information reporting requirements may apply to certain payments of principal of, and interest on, an obligation and to proceeds of the sale or redemption of an obligation to certain non-corporate holders of notes that are United States persons. Information reporting generally will apply to payments of interest and to proceeds from the sale or redemption of notes made within the United States (and in some cases, outside of the United States) to a holder of notes (other than an exempt recipient, including a corporation and certain other persons). The payor will be required to backup withhold on payments made within the United States on a note to a holder of a note that is a United States person, other than an exempt recipient, such as a corporation, if the holder fails to furnish its correct taxpayer identification number or otherwise fails to comply with, or establish an exemption from, the backup withholding requirements.

The backup withholding rate is 28% for taxable years through 2010. Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any backup withholding generally will be allowed as a credit against the holder's U.S. federal income tax liability provided the required information is furnished to the IRS in a timely manner.

Table of Contents

Non-U.S. Holders

Payments of Interest. The United States generally imposes a 30 percent withholding tax on payments of interest to non-U.S. persons. The 30 percent (or lower applicable treaty rate) U.S. federal withholding tax will not apply to a non-U.S. Holder in respect of any payment of interest on the notes provided that:

such holder does not actually (or constructively) own ten percent or more of the total combined voting power of all classes of our voting stock within the meaning of the Code and the U.S. Treasury regulations;
such holder is not a controlled foreign corporation that is related to us actually or constructively through sufficient stock ownership;
such holder is not a bank whose receipt of interest on the notes is described in section 881(c)(3)(A) of the Code; and
(a) such holder provides identifying information (i.e., name and address) to us or our paying agent on IRS Form W-8BEN (or successor form), and certifies, under penalty of perjury, that such holder is not a U.S. person or (b) a financial institution holding the notes on behalf of such holder certifies, under penalty of perjury, that it has received the applicable IRS Form W-8BEN (or successor form) from the beneficial owner and provides us with a copy.

If a non-U.S. Holder cannot satisfy the requirements described above, payments of interest made to such holder will be subject to the 30 percent U.S. federal withholding tax, unless such holder provides us with a properly executed (i) IRS Form W-8BEN (or successor form) claiming an exemption from or reduction in withholding under the benefit of an income tax treaty or (ii) IRS Form W-8ECI (or successor form) stating that interest paid on the note is not subject to withholding tax because it is effectively connected with such holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States.

If a non-U.S. Holder is engaged in a trade or business in the United States and interest on the notes is effectively connected with the conduct of

that trade or business (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, is attributable to a permanent establishment in the United States maintained by such holder), such holder, although exempt from the 30 percent withholding tax, generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on that interest on a net income basis in the same manner as if such holder were a United States person as defined under the Code. In addition, if a non-U.S. Holder is a non-U.S. corporation, it may be subject to a branch profits tax equal to 30 percent (or lower applicable treaty rate) of its earnings and profits for the taxable year, subject to adjustments, that are effectively connected with the conduct by it of a trade or business in the United States. For this purpose, effectively connected interest on notes will be included in earnings and profits.

Disposition of a Note. Any gain realized on the disposition of a note by a non-U.S. Holder generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax unless (i) that gain is effectively connected with the non-U.S. Holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States (and, if required by an income tax treaty, is attributable to a U.S. permanent establishment maintained by such non-U.S. Holder), (ii) such holder is an individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more in the taxable year of that disposition and certain other conditions are met, or (iii) in the case of disposition proceeds representing accrued interest, the non-U.S. Holder cannot satisfy the requirements of the complete exemption from withholding tax on interest described above (and the non-U.S. Holder's U.S. federal income tax liability has not otherwise been fully satisfied through the U.S. federal withholding tax described above).

If a non-U.S. Holder's gain is effectively connected with such holder's U.S. trade or business (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, is attributable to a U.S. permanent establishment maintained by such holder), such holder generally will be required to pay U.S. federal income tax on the net gain derived from the sale in the same manner as if it were a United States person as defined under the Code. If such a non-U.S. Holder is a corporation, such holder may also, under certain circumstances, be subject to a branch profits tax at a 30 percent rate (or lower applicable treaty rate). If a non-U.S. Holder is subject to the 183-day rule described above, such holder generally will be subject to U.S. federal

Table of Contents

income tax at a flat rate of 30 percent (or a reduced rate under an applicable treaty) on the amount by which capital gains allocable to U.S. sources (including gains from the sale, exchange, retirement or other disposition of the note) exceed capital losses allocable to U.S. sources, even though the non-U.S. Holder is not considered a resident alien under the Code.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding

In general, a non-U.S. Holder will not be subject to backup withholding and information reporting with respect to interest payments that we make to such holder provided that we have received from such holder the certification described above under **Non-U.S. Holders Payments of Interest** and neither we nor our paying agent has actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a **United States person**. However, we or our paying agent will be required to report to the IRS and the non-U.S. Holder payments of interest on the notes and the amount of tax, if any, withheld with respect to those payments. Copies of the information returns reporting such interest payments and any withholding may also be made available to the tax authorities in the country in which the non-U.S. Holder resides under the provisions of a treaty or agreement.

Payments of the proceeds of a sale or other disposition (including a redemption) of the notes made to or through a non-U.S. office of non-U.S. financial intermediaries that do not have certain enumerated connections with the United States generally will not be subject to information reporting or backup withholding. In addition, a non-U.S. Holder will not be subject to backup withholding or information reporting with respect to the proceeds of the sale or other disposition of a note within the United States or conducted through non-U.S. financial intermediaries with certain enumerated connections with the United States, if the payor receives the certification described above under **Non-U.S. Holders Payments of Interest** or such holder otherwise establishes an exemption, provided that the payor does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that the non-U.S. Holder is a **United States person** or the conditions of any other exemption are not, in fact, satisfied.

CERTAIN CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO ERISA, GOVERNMENTAL AND OTHER PLAN INVESTORS

A fiduciary of a pension plan or other employee benefit plan (including a governmental plan, an individual retirement account or a Keogh plan) proposing to invest in the notes should consider this section carefully.

A fiduciary of an employee benefit plan subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended (commonly referred to as **ERISA**) should consider fiduciary standards under ERISA in the context of the particular circumstances of such plan before authorizing an investment in the notes. Such fiduciary should consider whether the investment is in accordance with the documents and instruments governing the plan.

In addition, ERISA and the Code prohibit certain transactions (referred to as **prohibited transactions**) involving the assets of a plan subject to ERISA or the assets of an individual retirement account or plan subject to Section 4975 of the Code (referred to as an **ERISA plan**), on the one hand, and persons who have certain specified relationships to the plan (**parties in interest** within the meaning of ERISA or **disqualified persons** within the meaning of the Code), on the other. If we (or an affiliate) are considered a party in interest or disqualified person with respect to an ERISA plan, then the investment in notes by the ERISA plan may give rise to a prohibited transaction.

By purchasing and holding the notes, the person making the decision to invest on behalf of an ERISA plan is representing that the purchase and holding of the notes will not result in a prohibited transaction under ERISA or the Code. Therefore, an ERISA plan should not invest in the notes unless the plan fiduciary or other person acquiring securities on behalf of the ERISA plan determines that neither we nor an affiliate is a party in interest or a disqualified person or, alternatively, that an exemption from the prohibited transaction rules is available. If an ERISA plan engages in a prohibited transaction, the transaction may require **correction** and may cause the ERISA plan fiduciary to incur certain liabilities

Table of Contents

and the parties in interest or disqualified persons to be subject to excise taxes.

Employee benefit plans that are governmental plans and non-U.S. plans are not subject to ERISA requirements. However, non-U.S., federal, state or local laws or regulations governing the investment and management of the assets of governmental or non-U.S. plans may contain fiduciary and prohibited transaction requirements similar to those under ERISA and Section 4975 of the Code discussed above. By purchasing and holding the notes, the person making the decision to invest on behalf of such plans is representing that the purchase and holding of the notes will not violate any law applicable to such governmental or non-U.S. plan that is similar to the prohibited transaction provisions of ERISA or the Code.

If you are the fiduciary of an employee benefit plan or ERISA plan and you propose to invest in the notes with the assets of such employee benefit plan or ERISA plan, you should consult your own legal counsel for further guidance.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

Under the terms of a Selling Agent Agreement dated February 19, 2010, the notes will be offered from time to time by us to the Purchasing Agent for subsequent resale to the agents and other dealers who are broker-dealers and securities firms. The agents, including the Purchasing Agent, are parties to the Selling Agent Agreement. The notes will be offered for sale in the United States only. Dealers who are members of the selling group have executed a Master Selected Dealer Agreement with the Purchasing Agent. We also may appoint additional agents to sell the notes. Any sale of the notes through those additional agents, however, will be on the same terms and conditions to which the original agents have agreed. The Purchasing Agent will purchase the notes at a discount ranging from 0.2% to 3.0% of the non-discounted price for each note sold. However, we also may sell the notes to the Purchasing Agent at a discount greater than or less than the range specified above. The discount at which we sell the notes to the Purchasing Agent will be set forth in the applicable pricing supplement. The

Purchasing Agent also may sell notes to dealers at a concession not in excess of the discount it received from us. In certain cases, the Purchasing Agent and the other agents and dealers may agree that the Purchasing Agent will retain the entire discount. We will disclose any particular arrangements in the applicable pricing supplement.

Following the solicitation of orders, each of the agents, severally and not jointly, may purchase notes as principal for its own account from the Purchasing Agent. Unless otherwise set forth in the applicable pricing supplement, these notes will be purchased by the agents and resold by them to one or more investors at a fixed public offering price. After the initial public offering of notes, the public offering price (in the case of notes to be resold at a fixed public offering price), discount and concession may be changed.

We have the sole right to accept offers to purchase notes and may reject any proposed offer to purchase notes in whole or in part. Each agent also has the right, in its discretion reasonably exercised, to reject any proposed offer to purchase notes in whole or in part. We reserve the right to withdraw, cancel or modify any offer without notice. We also may change the terms, including the interest rate we will pay on the notes, at any time prior to our acceptance of an offer to purchase.

Each agent, including the Purchasing Agent, may be deemed to be an underwriter within the meaning of the Securities Act of 1933. We have agreed to indemnify the agents against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, or to contribute to any payments they may be required to make in respect of such liabilities. We also have agreed to reimburse the agents for certain expenses.

No note will have an established trading market when issued. We do not intend to apply for the listing of the notes on any securities exchange. However, we have been advised by the agents that they may purchase and sell notes in the secondary market as permitted by applicable laws and regulations. The agents are not obligated to make a market in the notes, and they may discontinue making a market in the notes at any time without notice. Neither we nor the agents can provide any assurance regarding the development, liquidity or

S-17

Table of Contents

maintenance of any trading market for any notes. All secondary trading in the notes will settle in same-day funds. See Registration and Settlement on page S-9.

In connection with certain offerings of notes, the rules of the SEC permit the Purchasing Agent to engage in transactions that may stabilize the price of the notes. The Purchasing Agent will conduct these activities for the agents. These transactions may consist of short sales, stabilizing transactions and purchases to cover positions created by short sales. A short sale is the sale by the Purchasing Agent of a greater amount of notes than the amount the Purchasing Agent has agreed to purchase in connection with a specific offering of notes. Stabilizing transactions consist of certain bids or purchases made by the Purchasing Agent to prevent or retard a decline in the price of the notes while an offering of notes is in process. In general, these purchases or bids for the notes for the purpose of stabilization or to reduce a syndicate short position could cause the price of the notes to be higher than it might otherwise be in the absence of those purchases or bids. Neither we nor the Purchasing Agent makes any representation or prediction as to the direction or magnitude of any effect that these transactions may have on the price of any notes. In addition, neither we nor the Purchasing Agent makes any representation that, once commenced, these transactions will not be discontinued without notice. The Purchasing Agent is not required to engage in these activities and may end any of these activities at any time.

The agents or dealers to or through which we may sell notes may engage in transactions with us and perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

LEGAL MATTERS

The legality of the notes will be passed upon for Dow by Duncan A. Stuart, our Associate General Counsel Corporate Transactions. Mayer Brown LLP, Chicago, Illinois, will pass on certain matters for the agents. Mayer Brown LLP has from time to time acted as counsel for us and our subsidiaries and may do so in the future.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

The Dow Chemical Company

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Depositary Shares

Debt Securities

Warrants to Purchase Common Stock, Preferred Stock and Debt Securities

Stock Purchase Contracts

Stock Purchase Units

The Dow Chemical Company will provide the specific terms of these securities in supplements to this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement carefully before you invest in any of these securities.

Dow's common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol DOW.

We may offer and sell these securities to or through one or more agents, underwriters, dealers or other third parties or directly to one or more purchasers, on a continuous or delayed basis.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

February 19, 2010

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<u>About This Prospectus</u>	3
<u>The Dow Chemical Company</u>	3
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	3
<u>Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	3
<u>Description of Capital Stock</u>	4
<u>Description of Depositary Shares</u>	11
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	13
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	24
<u>Description Of Stock Purchase Contracts and Stock Purchase Units</u>	26
<u>Plan Of Distribution</u>	27
<u>Validity Of Securities</u>	28
<u>Experts</u>	28
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	28

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or any supplement. Dow has not authorized anyone else to provide you with different information. Dow is offering these securities only in states where the offer is permitted. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus or any supplement is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of those documents. Dow's business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since that date.

In this prospectus, references to Dow, we, us or our are to The Dow Chemical Company and does not include its subsidiaries, except under the caption The Dow Chemical Company.

Table of Contents**ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS**

This prospectus is part of a registration statement filed by Dow with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, using a shelf registration process. Under this shelf process, we are registering an unspecified amount of each class of the securities described in this prospectus, and we may sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. In addition, selling security holders may sell securities under our shelf registration statement. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we or any selling security holders may offer. Each time we or any selling security holders sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information in the applicable prospectus supplement. You should read both this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, together with additional information described under the heading [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

The registration statement containing this prospectus, including the exhibits to the registration statement, provides additional information about us and the securities to be offered. The registration statement, including the exhibits, can be read at the SEC web site or at the SEC offices mentioned under the heading [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

THE DOW CHEMICAL COMPANY

Dow combines the power of science and technology with the Human Element to passionately innovate what is essential to human progress. Dow connects chemistry and innovation with the principles of sustainability to help address many of the world's most challenging problems such as the need for clean water, renewable energy generation and conservation, and increasing agricultural productivity. Dow's diversified industry-leading portfolio of specialty chemical, advanced materials, agrosocieties and plastics businesses deliver a broad range of technology-based products and solutions to customers in approximately 160 countries and in high growth sectors such as electronics, water, energy, coatings and agriculture. In 2009, Dow had annual sales of \$44.9 billion and employed approximately 52,000 people worldwide. Dow's more than 5,000 products are manufactured at 214 sites in 37 countries across the globe. Dow's corporate offices are located at 2030 Dow Center, Midland, Michigan 48674, and Dow's telephone number is (989) 636-1000.

Additional information concerning Dow and its subsidiaries is included in the documents filed with the SEC and incorporated in this prospectus by reference. See the discussion under the heading [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

USE OF PROCEEDS

Dow expects to use the net proceeds from sales of any securities described in this prospectus for its general corporate purposes, which may include funding capital expenditures, pursuing growth initiatives, whether through acquisitions, joint ventures or otherwise, repaying or refinancing indebtedness or other obligations, and financing working capital. Pending the application of the net proceeds, Dow expects to invest the net proceeds in marketable securities or reduce its short-term indebtedness.

RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

	Year Ended December 31,				
	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges	1.3x	2.3x	5.3x	6.0x	7.1x
Ratio of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Share Dividends	1.0x	2.3x	5.3x	6.0x	7.1x

Table of Contents

For the purposes of these ratios, earnings consist of income from continuing operations before income taxes, noncontrolling interests and equity in earnings of nonconsolidated affiliates; plus fixed charges, amortization of capitalized interest and distributed income of nonconsolidated affiliates; minus capitalized interest and preferred security dividends. Fixed charges consist of interest expense and amortization of debt discount, capitalized interest, preferred security dividends, and a portion of rentals deemed to represent an interest factor.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following summary of Dow's common stock and preferred stock does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, the relevant provisions of Delaware law, and by Dow's restated certificate of incorporation and bylaws, which are incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

Dow is authorized to issue 1,750,000,000 shares of all classes of stock, 1,500,000,000 of which are shares of common stock, par value \$2.50 per share, and 250,000,000 of which are shares of preferred stock. As of January 31, 2010, there were 1,150,293,750 shares of common stock issued and outstanding and 4,000,000 shares of preferred stock issued and outstanding designated as Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series A. All issued and outstanding shares of common stock and preferred stock are fully paid and non-assessable. Any additional shares of common stock and preferred stock that Dow issues pursuant to this prospectus will be fully paid and non-assessable. Neither Dow's common stockholders nor preferred stockholders have preemptive rights.

Common Stock

General

Dow's restated certificate of incorporation provides that, subject to all of the rights of holders of preferred stock provided for by the board of directors or by Delaware corporate law, the holders of common stock will have full voting rights on all matters requiring stockholder action, with each share of common stock being entitled to one vote and having equal rights of participation in the dividends and assets of Dow.

Board of Directors

Dow's restated certificate of incorporation provides that all of Dow's directors are elected each year at Dow's annual meeting for a term of one year and until his or her successor is duly elected and qualified. A quorum of directors consists of a majority of Dow's entire board of directors then holding office.

Number, Filling of Vacancies and Removal of Directors

Dow's restated certificate of incorporation and bylaws provide that its board of directors may not have less than six or more than twenty-one members. The actual number of directors is determined by a vote of a majority of Dow's entire board of directors. Currently, Dow has twelve members on its board of directors. Vacancies on Dow's board of directors and any newly created directorships are filled by a vote of the majority of the other directors then in office. Directors elected to fill a vacancy or a new position hold office until the next annual meeting of stockholders. Directors can be removed from office at any time, with or without cause, only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting power of all the outstanding shares of Dow's capital stock then entitled to vote in the election of directors. Holders of Dow's outstanding preferred stock in certain circumstances will have the right to elect two directors to Dow's board of directors.

Table of Contents

Dividends

Delaware corporate law generally provides that a corporation, subject to restrictions in its certificate of incorporation, including preferred stockholders' rights to receive dividends prior to common stockholders, may declare and pay dividends out of:

surplus; or

net profits for the fiscal year in which the dividend is declared and/or the preceding fiscal year, if there is no surplus.

Dividends may not be declared or paid out of net profits if the capital of the corporation is less than the aggregate amount of capital represented by the issued and outstanding stock of all classes having a preference on the distribution of assets. Dividends on Dow common stock are not cumulative. Dow's restated certificate of incorporation does not contain any additional restrictions on the declaration or payment of dividends.

However, Dow currently has, and in the future may have, outstanding preferred stock which restricts its ability to pay dividends on its common stock if it fails in the payment of dividends on the preferred stock.

Preferred Stock

Dow's board of directors is authorized, subject to Delaware corporate law and without a vote of its stockholders, to issue shares of preferred stock from time to time in one or more series and to determine the voting rights, designations, preferences and relative, participating, optional or other special rights and qualifications, limitations and restrictions of any series of preferred stock. The prospectus supplement relating to an offering of shares of Dow's preferred stock will describe the terms of the series of preferred stock Dow is offering.

The rights of holders of the common stock and/or the preferred stock offered may be adversely affected by the rights of holders of any shares of preferred stock that may be issued in the future. Shares of preferred stock issued by Dow may have the effect of rendering more difficult or discouraging an acquisition of Dow deemed undesirable by the board of directors of Dow.

Any shares of preferred stock will be, when issued, fully paid and non-assessable. Holders of preferred stock will not have any preemptive or subscription rights to acquire more stock of Dow.

The transfer agent, registrar, dividend disbursing agent and redemption agent for shares of each series of preferred stock will be named in the prospectus supplement relating to such series.

Rank

Unless otherwise specified in connection with a particular offering of preferred stock, such shares will rank on an equal basis with each other series of preferred stock and prior to the common stock as to dividends and distributions of assets.

Dividends

Holders of each series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive cash dividends when, as and if declared by Dow's board of directors out of funds legally available for dividends. The rates and dates of payment of dividends will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to each series of preferred stock. Dividends will be payable to holders of record of preferred stock as they appear on Dow's books or, if applicable, the records of the depositary referred to below under "Description of Depositary Shares," on the record dates fixed by Dow's board of directors. Dividends on a series of preferred stock may be cumulative or non-cumulative.

Table of Contents

Dow may not declare, pay or set apart for payment dividends on the preferred stock unless full dividends on other series of preferred stock that rank on an equal or senior basis have been paid or sufficient funds have been set apart for payment for:

all prior dividend periods of other series of preferred stock that pay dividends on a cumulative basis; or

the immediately preceding dividend period of other series of preferred stock that pay dividends on a non-cumulative basis.

Partial dividends declared on shares of preferred stock and each other series of preferred stock ranking on an equal basis as to dividends will be declared pro rata. A pro rata declaration means that the ratio of dividends declared per share to accrued dividends per share will be the same for each series of preferred stock.

Similarly, Dow may not declare, pay or set apart for payment non-stock dividends or make other payments on the common stock or any other stock of Dow ranking junior to the preferred stock until full dividends on the preferred stock have been paid or set apart for payment for:

all prior dividend periods if the preferred stock pays dividends on a cumulative basis; or

the immediately preceding dividend period if the preferred stock pays dividends on a non-cumulative basis.

Conversion and Exchange

The prospectus supplement for a series of preferred stock will state the terms, if any, on which shares of that series are convertible into or exchangeable for shares of Dow's common stock.

Redemption

If so specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, a series of preferred stock may be redeemable at any time, in whole or in part, at Dow's option or the holder thereof and may be mandatorily redeemed.

Any partial redemptions of preferred stock will be made in a way that Dow's board of directors decides is equitable.

Unless Dow defaults in the payment of the redemption price, dividends will cease to accrue after the redemption date on shares of preferred stock called for redemption, and all rights of holders of such shares will terminate except for the right to receive the redemption price.

Liquidation Preference

Upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of Dow, holders of each series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive distributions upon liquidation in the amount set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to such series of preferred stock, plus an amount equal to any accrued and unpaid dividends. Such distributions will be made before any distribution is made on any securities ranking junior relating to liquidation, including common stock.

If the liquidation amounts payable relating to the preferred stock of any series and any other securities ranking on a parity regarding liquidation rights are not paid in full, the holders of the preferred stock of such series and such other securities will share in any such distribution of available assets of Dow on a ratable basis in proportion to the full liquidation preferences. Holders of such series of preferred stock will not be entitled to any other amounts from Dow after they have received their full liquidation preference.

Table of Contents

Voting Rights

The holders of shares of preferred stock will have no voting rights except:

as otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement;

as otherwise stated in the certificate of designation establishing such series; and

as required by applicable law.

Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series A

The following description of Dow's Cumulative Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series A (the "Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A") is qualified in its entirety by reference to the certificate of designations establishing the terms of the Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A (the "Series A Certificate of Designations") attached as Exhibit 3.1 to Dow's Current Report on Form 8-K filed on April 1, 2009.

Under the Series A Certificate of Designations:

Each share of the Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A may be converted at any time, at the option of the holder, into 24.2010 shares of Dow common stock, subject to certain anti-dilution adjustments and certain other adjustments, which represents an initial conversion price of approximately \$41.32 per share;

On or after five years from the date on which the Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A is issued, Dow may, at its option, at any time or from time to time, cause some or all of the Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A to be converted into shares of Dow common stock at the then applicable conversion rate if, (i) for 20 trading days within any period of 30 consecutive trading days ending on the trading day preceding the date we give notice of conversion at its option, the closing price of Dow common stock exceeds 130% of the then-applicable conversion price and (ii) Dow has declared and paid (or has declared and set apart for payment) any past due dividends on the Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A;

Dow will pay cumulative dividends on the Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A quarterly in arrears, at the rate of 8.5% per annum, in either cash, common stock or a combination of both, at Dow's option, plus 10% per annum additional dividends, compounded quarterly, on the amount of any unpaid dividends;

The Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A will rank senior to Dow outstanding common stock and any other junior capital stock (collectively, the "Junior Stock") with respect to the payment of dividends and distributions in liquidation; at any time when dividends on the Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A have not been paid in full, Dow will not, and will cause its subsidiaries not to, declare or pay any dividend on Junior Stock, make any distributions relating to Junior Stock, redeem, purchase, acquire or make a liquidation payment relating to Junior Stock, or make any guarantee payment with respect to Junior Stock, in each case subject to certain exceptions set out in the Series A Certificate of Designations;

The Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A is perpetual and has no maturity date and is not redeemable at Dow's option; and

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

Holders of Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A do not have voting rights, except under certain circumstances. If dividends on the Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A are not paid in full for six dividend periods, holders of Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A (together with the holders of any of Dow's other preferred stock with similar voting rights) will have the right to elect two directors to Dow's board of directors.

Table of Contents

Selected Provisions in Dow's Restated Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws

Dow's restated certificate of incorporation and bylaws contain a number of provisions that could have the effect of prohibiting or delaying a third party's ability to take control of Dow.

Advance Notice Provisions for Director Nominations and Stockholder Proposals at an Annual or Special Stockholders' Meeting

Dow's bylaws provide that a stockholder may make a nomination of persons for election to the board of directors and propose other business at an annual stockholders' meeting only if the stockholder gives timely written notice thereof to Dow's Secretary and any such business is a proper subject for stockholder action. The notice must be delivered to, or mailed and received by, Dow's Secretary at Dow's principal executive offices:

no earlier than the close of business on the 120th day or later than the close of business on the 60th day before the anniversary date of the date Dow first distributed its proxy materials for the prior year's annual meeting; or

if the annual meeting is more than 30 days before or after the anniversary date of the prior year's annual meeting, no earlier than the close of business on the 120th day or later than the close of business on the later of the 90th day prior to such annual meeting or the 10th day after the date on which public disclosure, as defined in Dow's bylaws, of the date of the annual meeting is first made by Dow.

The notice must include the following information as to each person whom the stockholder proposes to nominate for election or re-election as a director:

all information relating to such person that is required to be disclosed in solicitations of proxies for election of directors in an election contest, or is otherwise required, in each case pursuant to and in accordance with Regulation 14A under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 as amended (the "Exchange Act"); and

such person's written consent to being named in the proxy statement as a nominee and to serving as a director if elected.

In addition, the notice must include the following information as to any other business that the stockholder proposes to bring before the meeting:

a brief description of the business desired to be brought before the meeting;

the text of the proposal or business (including the text of any resolutions proposed for consideration and, in the event that such business includes a proposal to amend Dow's bylaws, the language of the proposed amendment);

the reasons for conducting such business at the meeting; and

any substantial interest (within the meaning of Item 5 of Schedule 14A under the Exchange Act) in such business of such stockholder and the beneficial owner (within the meaning of Section 13(d) of the Exchange Act), if any, on whose behalf the business is being proposed.

The notice must also include information specified in Dow's bylaws as to the stockholder giving the notice and the beneficial owner, if any, on whose behalf the nomination is made or the other business is proposed, including:

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

the name and address of such stockholder, as they appear on Dow's books, and the name and address of such beneficial owner;

the class and number of shares of Dow's capital stock which are owned of record by such stockholder and such beneficial owner as of the date of the notice, and a representation that the stockholder shall notify Dow in writing within five business days after the record date for such meeting of the class and number of shares of Dow's capital stock owned of record by the stockholder and such beneficial owner as of the record date for the meeting;

Table of Contents

a representation that the stockholder intends to appear in person or by proxy at the meeting to propose such nomination or other business;

the class and number of shares of Dow's capital stock which are beneficially owned (as defined in Dow's bylaws) as of the date of the notice, by the stockholder or the beneficial owner on whose behalf the notice is given and a representation that the stockholder shall notify Dow in writing within five business days after the record date for such meeting of the class and number of shares of Dow's capital stock beneficially owned by such stockholder or beneficial owner as of the record date for the meeting;

a description of any agreement, arrangement or understanding with respect to the nomination or other business between or among such stockholder or beneficial owner and any other person, including without limitation any agreements that would be required to be disclosed pursuant to Item 5 or Item 6 of Exchange Act Schedule 13D (regardless of whether the requirement to file a Schedule 13D is applicable to the stockholder or beneficial owner) and a representation that the stockholder shall notify Dow in writing within five business days after the record date for such meeting of any such agreement, arrangement or understanding in effect as of the record date for the meeting;

a description of any agreement, arrangement or understanding (including any derivative or short positions, profit interests, options, hedging transactions, and borrowed or loaned shares) that has been entered into as of the date of the stockholder's notice by, or on behalf of, such stockholder or beneficial owner, the effect or intent of which is to mitigate loss, manage risk or benefit from changes in the share price of any class of Dow's capital stock, or maintain, increase or decrease the voting power of the stockholder or beneficial owner with respect to shares of Dow stock, and a representation that the stockholder shall notify Dow in writing within five business days after the record date for such meeting of any such agreement, arrangement or understanding in effect as of the record date for the meeting.

At any special meeting of stockholders called by the board of directors for the election of directors, a stockholder may make a nomination of persons for election to the board of directors only if the stockholder gives timely written notice thereof to Dow's Secretary, which notice shall contain the information specified in Dow's bylaws as described above with respect to any annual meeting of stockholders. To be timely, any such notice must be received no earlier than the close of business on the 120th day or later than the close of business on the later of the 90th day prior to such special meeting or the 10th day after the date on which public disclosure, as defined in Dow's bylaws, of the date of the special meeting is first made by Dow.

Special Meetings of Stockholders

Dow's bylaws provide that a special stockholders' meeting for any purpose may be called by the board of directors by a resolution adopted by a majority of the entire board. A special stockholders' meeting will be called upon a written request from stockholders satisfying the ownership requirements set forth in Dow's restated certificate of incorporation that complies with the procedures for calling a special meeting of stockholders, as set forth in Dow's bylaws.

A stockholder notice requesting a special meeting must:

be delivered to, or mailed to and received by Dow's Secretary at Dow's principal executive offices;

be signed by each stockholder requesting the special meeting, or a duly authorized agent thereof;

set forth the purpose of the special meeting; and

include the same information required to be included in a stockholder's notice for proposals to be brought before an annual meeting of stockholders (see Advance Notice Provisions for Director Nominations and Stockholder Proposals at an Annual or Special

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

Stockholders Meeting).

Subject to certain exceptions specified in Dow's bylaws, a special stockholders meeting will be held within 90 days after such stockholder request to call the special meeting is delivered to or received by Dow's Secretary,

Table of Contents

at such date, time and place as determined by the board of directors. Only the business set forth in the stockholders' notice and any business included in the notice of the special meeting by or at the direction of the board of directors shall be conducted at a special meeting of stockholders.

Stockholder Action by Written Consent

Dow's restated certificate of incorporation provides that any action required or permitted to be taken by the stockholders must be taken at a duly called annual or special stockholders' meeting and may not be taken by written consent.

Transactions with Interested Stockholders and a Merger or Sale of Assets

Delaware corporate law requires the approval of the board of directors and a majority of a corporation's outstanding stock entitled to vote to authorize a merger or consolidation. Unless required by a corporation's certificate of incorporation, stockholder approval, however, is not required in certain cases, such as where either:

no shares of common stock of the surviving corporation and no shares, securities or obligations convertible into common stock are to be issued or delivered in the merger; or

the authorized and unissued shares or the treasury shares of common stock of the surviving corporation to be issued or delivered in the merger, plus those initially issuable upon conversion of any other shares, securities or obligations to be issued or delivered in the merger, do not exceed 20% of the shares of common stock of the corporation outstanding immediately prior to the effective date of the merger.

A sale of all or substantially all of a Delaware corporation's assets or a voluntary dissolution of a Delaware corporation requires the vote of a majority of the board of directors and a majority of the corporation's outstanding shares entitled to vote on the matter unless the corporation's certificate of incorporation requires a greater percentage. Dow's restated certificate of incorporation does not require a greater percentage.

Delaware corporate law generally defines an interested stockholder as a person, other than the corporation and any direct or indirect majority owned subsidiary of the corporation:

who is the direct or indirect owner of 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation; or

who is an affiliate or associate of the corporation and was the direct or indirect owner of 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation at any time within the three-year period immediately prior to the date it asked for determination of its status as an interested stockholder; and

the affiliates and associates of that person.

Delaware corporate law prohibits an interested stockholder from engaging in a business combination with the corporation for three years following the time of becoming an interested stockholder. This three-year waiting period does not apply when:

prior to the time of becoming an interested stockholder, the board of directors approves either the business combination or the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder;

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

as a result of becoming an interested stockholder, the stockholder owned, excluding shares owned by directors who are also officers and employee stock plans in which participants do not have the right to determine confidentially whether shares held subject to the plan will be tendered in a tender or exchange offer, at least 85% of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation at the time the transaction commenced; or

at or after the time of becoming an interested stockholder, the business combination is approved by the board of directors and authorized at a meeting of stockholders by a vote of at least two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock that is not owned by the interested stockholder.

Table of Contents

These restrictions also do not apply in other circumstances, which are set forth in Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, including business combinations with an interested stockholder that are proposed after the earlier of a public announcement or the notice required under such section of and prior to the consummation or abandonment of:

certain mergers or consolidations specified in Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law;

sales of 50% or more of the aggregate market value of a corporation's assets or outstanding voting stock; or

tender offers or exchange offers for 50% or more of a corporation's voting stock.

Delaware corporate law allows a corporation to specify in its certificate of incorporation or bylaws that it will not be governed by the section relating to transactions with interested stockholders. Dow has not made that election in its certificate of incorporation or bylaws.

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

The following summarizes briefly the material provisions of the deposit agreement and the depositary shares and depositary receipts. You should read the particular terms of any depositary shares and any depositary receipts that are offered by us, and any deposit agreement relating to a particular series of preferred stock, which will be described in more detail in an applicable prospectus supplement. A copy of the form of deposit agreement, including the form of depositary receipt, is incorporated by reference as an exhibit in the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

General

We may, at our option, elect to offer fractional shares of preferred stock, rather than full shares of preferred stock. In the event we exercise this option, we will issue receipts for depositary shares, each of which will represent a fraction, to be described in an applicable prospectus supplement, of a share of a particular series of preferred stock as described below.

The shares of each series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares will be deposited under a deposit agreement between us and a bank or trust company selected by us and having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000. Subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, each owner of a depositary share will be entitled to all of the rights and preferences of the preferred stock in proportion to the applicable fraction of a share of preferred stock represented by the depositary share, including dividend, voting, redemption, conversion and liquidation rights.

The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the deposit agreement. Depositary receipts will be distributed to those persons purchasing the fractional shares of preferred stock in accordance with the terms of the offering.

Pending the preparation of definitive depositary receipts, the depositary may, upon our written order, execute and deliver temporary depositary receipts which are substantially identical to, and which entitle the holders to all the rights pertaining to, the definitive depositary receipts. Depositary receipts will be prepared thereafter without unreasonable delay, and temporary depositary receipts will be exchangeable for definitive depositary receipts at our expense.

Dividends and Other Distributions

The depositary will distribute all cash dividends and other cash distributions received in respect of the deposited preferred stock to the record holders of depositary shares relating to the preferred stock, in proportion to the numbers of the depositary shares owned by such holders.

Table of Contents

In the event of a non-cash distribution, the depositary will distribute property it receives to the appropriate record holders of depositary shares. If the depositary determines that it is not feasible to make a distribution, it may, with our approval, sell the property and distribute the net proceeds from the sale to the holders.

Redemption of Stock

If a series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares is to be redeemed, the depositary shares will be redeemed from the proceeds received by the depositary resulting from the redemption, in whole or in part, of each series of preferred stock held by the depositary. The depositary shares will be redeemed by the depositary at a price per depositary share equal to the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share payable in respect of the shares of preferred stock so redeemed. Whenever we redeem shares of preferred stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem, as of the same date, the number of depositary shares representing shares of preferred stock redeemed. If fewer than all the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected by the depositary by lot or pro rata or by any other equitable method as may be determined by the depositary.

Withdrawal of Stock

Any holder of depositary shares may, upon surrender of the depositary receipts at the corporate trust office of the depositary, unless the related depositary shares have previously been called for redemption, receive the number of whole shares of the related series of preferred stock and any money or other property represented by the depositary receipts. Holders of depositary shares making withdrawals will be entitled to receive whole shares of preferred stock on the basis described in an applicable prospectus supplement for such series of preferred stock, but holders of whole shares of preferred stock will not thereafter be entitled to deposit the preferred stock under the deposit agreement or to receive depositary receipts therefor. If the depositary shares surrendered by the holder in connection with a withdrawal exceed the number of depositary shares that represent the number of whole shares of preferred stock to be withdrawn, the depositary will deliver to the holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing the excess number of depositary shares.

Voting Deposited Preferred Stock

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of any series of deposited preferred stock are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail the information contained in the notice of meeting to the record holders of the depositary shares relating to such series of preferred stock. Each record holder of the depositary shares on the record date, which will be the same date as the record date for the relevant series of preferred stock, will be entitled to instruct the depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the amount of the preferred stock represented by the holder's depositary shares.

The depositary will attempt, insofar as practicable, to vote the amount of such series of preferred stock represented by the depositary shares in accordance with the instructions, and we will agree to take all reasonable actions that may be deemed necessary by the depositary to enable the depositary to do so. The depositary will refrain from voting shares of the preferred stock to the extent it does not receive specific instructions from the holder of depositary shares representing the preferred stock.

Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement

The form of depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares and any provision of the deposit agreement may at any time be amended by agreement between us and the depositary. However, any amendment which materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of the depositary shares representing preferred stock of any series will not be effective unless the amendment has been approved by the holders of at least the amount of the depositary shares then outstanding representing the minimum amount of preferred stock of such series necessary to approve any amendment that would materially and adversely affect the rights of the holders of the

Table of Contents

preferred stock of such series. Every holder of an outstanding depositary receipt at the time any amendment becomes effective, or any transferee of the holder, will be deemed, by continuing to hold the depositary receipt, or by reason of the acquisition thereof, to consent and agree to the amendment and to be bound by the deposit agreement as amended thereby. The deposit agreement may be terminated by us or the depositary only after:

all outstanding depositary shares have been redeemed; or

a final distribution in respect of the preferred stock has been made to the holders of depositary shares in connection with any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of Dow.

Charges of Depositary

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the depositary arrangements. We will pay all charges of the depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the relevant series of preferred stock and any redemption of the preferred stock. Holders of depositary receipts will pay other transfer and other taxes and governmental charges and other charges or expenses as are expressly provided in the deposit agreement.

Resignation and Removal of Depositary

The depositary may resign at any time by delivering to us notice of its election to do so, and we may at any time remove the depositary, any resignation or removal to take effect upon the appointment of a successor depositary and its acceptance of the appointment. The successor depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000.

Miscellaneous

The depositary will forward all reports and communications from us which are delivered to the depositary and which we are required to furnish to the holders of the deposited preferred stock.

Neither we nor the depositary will be liable if we are or it is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstances beyond our or its control in performing any obligations under the deposit agreement. Our and its obligations under the deposit agreement will be limited to performance in good faith of our and its duties under the deposit agreement and neither we nor it will be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depositary shares, depositary receipts or shares of preferred stock unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. The depositary and we may rely upon written advice of counsel or accountants, or upon information provided by holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed to be competent and on documents believed to be genuine.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following description of the debt securities summarizes the material terms and provisions of the debt securities to which a prospectus supplement may relate. Each time Dow offers debt securities, the prospectus supplement related to that offering will describe the terms of the debt securities Dow is offering.

The debt securities offered by this prospectus will be unsecured obligations of Dow and will be either senior or subordinated debt. The senior debt securities will be issued under an indenture, which we refer to as the senior indenture, between Dow and The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A., as trustee. The subordinated debt securities will be issued under an indenture, which we refer to as the subordinated indenture, between Dow and The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A., as trustee. We refer to the senior indenture and the subordinated indenture collectively as the indentures. The following summary of the debt securities and the indentures does not purport to be complete and is subject to the provisions of the indentures, including the defined terms. Whenever we refer to particular defined terms of the indentures, those defined terms are

Table of Contents

incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement. For additional information, you should review the indenture or form of indenture that are incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part.

General

Dow may issue debt securities from time to time in one or more series without limitation as to aggregate principal amount. The indentures do not limit the amount of other indebtedness or securities that Dow may issue.

The debt securities will be unsecured obligations. The senior debt securities will rank equally with all of Dow's other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness. The subordinated debt securities will rank equally with all of Dow's other unsecured and subordinated indebtedness, except for a series of subordinated debt securities that is by its terms junior to such subordinated debt securities.

The prospectus supplement will describe the following terms of the debt securities Dow is offering:

the title of the debt securities or the series in which the debt securities will be included;

whether such debt securities will be senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of that series;

the price or prices at which the debt securities will be issued;

if other than the principal amount, the portion of the principal amount of the debt securities payable if the maturity is accelerated;

the date or dates on which the principal amount of the debt securities is payable;

the interest rate or rates, or the formula by which the interest rate or rates will be determined, if any, the date from which any interest will accrue and the circumstances, if any, in which the Company may defer interest payments;

the interest payment dates on which any interest will be payable, the regular record date for any interest payable on any debt securities that are registered securities on any interest payment date, and the extent to which, or the manner in which, any interest payable on a global security on an interest payment date will be paid if different from the manner described below under "Global Securities";

any mandatory or optional sinking fund or analogous provisions;

each office or agency where the principal of and any premium and interest on the debt securities will be payable and each office or agency where the debt securities may be presented for registration of transfer or exchange;

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

the date, if any, after which and the price or prices at which the debt securities may, pursuant to any optional or mandatory redemption provisions, be redeemed, in whole or in part, and the other detailed terms and provisions of any optional or mandatory redemption provisions;

the denominations in which Dow may issue any debt securities which are registered securities, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof;

if other than U.S. dollars, the currency or currencies of payment of principal of and any premium and interest on the debt securities;

if the amount of any payment may be determined with reference to an index or formula based on securities, commodities, intangibles, articles or goods, or any other financial, economic or other measure or instrument, including the occurrence or non-occurrence of any event or circumstance, the manner in which the amount will be determined;

any additional covenants applicable to the debt securities; and

any other terms and provisions of the debt securities not inconsistent with the terms and provisions of the indenture.

Table of Contents

The terms on which debt securities may be convertible into or exchangeable for common stock or other securities of Dow or a third party will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to such offering. Such terms will include provisions as to whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at the option of Dow. The terms may include provisions pursuant to which the number of shares of common stock or other securities to be received by the holders of such debt securities may be adjusted.

The prospectus supplement also will describe any special provisions for the payment of additional amounts with respect to the debt securities.

If the purchase price of any of the debt securities is denominated in one or more foreign currencies or if the principal of, or any premium and interest on, any series of debt securities is payable in one or more foreign currencies, the restrictions, elections, general tax considerations, specific terms and other information with respect to such debt securities and such foreign currency or currency units will be set forth in the related prospectus supplement.

Some of the debt securities may be issued as original issue discount securities (bearing no interest or bearing interest at a rate which at the time of issuance is below market rates) to be sold at a substantial discount below their principal amount. The prospectus supplement will describe the federal income tax considerations and other special considerations which apply to any original issue discount securities.

Dow may, without notice to or consent of the holders or beneficial owners of a series of debt securities, issue additional debt securities having the same ranking, interest rate, maturity and other terms as the debt securities initially issued. Any such debt securities could be considered part of the same series of debt securities as the debt securities initially issued.

Denominations, Registration and Transfer

The debt securities may be issued as registered securities. Debt securities may be issued in the form of one or more global securities, as described below under the section of this prospectus captioned Global Securities. Unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement, registered securities denominated in U.S. dollars will be issued only in minimum denominations of \$1,000 or any integral multiple thereof. A global security will be issued in a denomination equal to the aggregate principal amount of outstanding debt securities represented by that global security. The prospectus supplement relating to debt securities denominated in a foreign or composite currency will specify the denominations in which the debt securities will be issued.

Registered securities of any series may be exchanged for other registered securities of the same series and of a like aggregate principal amount and tenor of different authorized denominations.

Debt securities may be presented for exchange as described in the previous paragraph, and registered securities, other than a global security, may be presented for registration of transfer, with the form of transfer duly executed, at the office of the security registrar designated by Dow or at the office of any transfer agent designated by Dow for that purpose, without service charge and upon payment of any taxes and other governmental charges as described in the indenture. The transfer or exchange will be effected when the security registrar or the transfer agent is satisfied with the documents of title and identity of the person making the request. Dow has initially appointed the trustee as the security registrar under the indenture. If a prospectus supplement refers to any transfer agent initially designated by Dow with respect to any series of debt securities, Dow may at any time cancel the designation of the transfer agent or approve a change in the location through which the transfer agent acts, except that Dow will be required to maintain a transfer agent in each place of payment for the series.

Dow may at any time designate additional transfer agents with respect to any series of debt securities.

Table of Contents

In the event of any redemption in part, Dow will not be required to:

issue, register the transfer of or exchange debt securities of any series during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before the date of the mailing of a notice of redemption of debt securities of that series selected to be redeemed and ending at the close of business on the day of mailing of the relevant notice of redemption; or

register the transfer of or exchange any registered security or portion of any registered security called for redemption, except the unredeemed portion of any registered security being redeemed in part.

Payments and Paying Agents

Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, Dow will pay the principal of and any premium and interest on registered securities other than a global security at the office of one or more paying agents designated by Dow. At Dow's option, however, Dow may pay any interest by check mailed to the address of the payee entitled to the interest at the address which appears in the security register. Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, payment of any installment of interest on registered securities will be made to the person in whose name the registered security is registered at the close of business on the record date for the applicable interest payment.

Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, the principal office of the trustee in New York City will be Dow's sole paying agent for payments with respect to debt securities which may be issued only as registered securities. Any paying agent outside the United States and any other paying agent in the United States initially designated by Dow for the debt securities will be named in the prospectus supplement. Dow may at any time designate additional paying agents, or cancel the designation of any paying agent or approve a change in the office through which any paying agent acts, except that Dow will be required to maintain a paying agent in each place of payment for the series.

All amounts paid by Dow to a paying agent for the payment of principal of and any premium and interest on any debt security that remain unclaimed at the end of two years after the principal, premium or interest has become due and payable will be repaid to Dow and after the repayment the holder of the debt security or any coupon related to the debt security may look only to Dow for the payment of principal of and any premium and interest on the debt security.

Global Securities

The debt securities of a series may be issued in whole or in part in the form of one or more global securities that will be deposited with, or on behalf of, a depository identified in the prospectus supplement. Global securities may be issued in registered form and in either temporary or permanent form. Unless and until it is exchanged for debt securities in definitive form, a temporary global security in registered form may not be transferred except as a whole by:

the depository for the global security to a nominee of the depository;

a nominee of the depository for the global security to the depository or another nominee of the depository; or

the depository for the global security or the nominee to a successor of the depository or a nominee of the successor.

Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, registered debt securities issued in global form will be represented by one or more global securities deposited with, or on behalf of, The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York, which we refer to as DTC, or another depository appointed by Dow, and registered in the name of the depository or its nominee. The debt securities will not be issued in definitive form unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

DTC will act as securities depository for the securities. The debt securities will be issued as fully registered securities registered in the name of Cede & Co. (DTC's partnership nominee). One fully registered global security will be issued with respect to each \$500 million of principal amount and one or more additional certificates will be issued with respect to any remaining principal amount of debt securities.

DTC is a limited-purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law, a banking organization within the meaning of the New York Banking Law, a member of the Federal Reserve System, a clearing corporation within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code, and a clearing agency registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Exchange Act. DTC holds securities that its participants deposit with DTC. DTC also facilitates the settlement among participants of securities transactions, such as transfers and pledges, in deposited securities through electronic computerized book-entry changes in participants' accounts, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities certificates. Direct participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and other similar organizations. DTC is owned by a number of its direct participants and by the New York Stock Exchange, Inc., the American Stock Exchange LLC and the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. Access to the DTC system is also available to indirect participants such as securities brokers and dealers, banks and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a direct participant, either directly or indirectly. The rules applicable to DTC and its participants are on file with the SEC.

Purchases of debt securities under the DTC system must be made by or through direct participants, which will receive a credit for the debt securities on DTC's records. The ownership interest of each actual purchaser of each debt security is in turn to be recorded on the direct and indirect participants' records. These beneficial owners will not receive written confirmation from DTC of their purchase, but beneficial owners are expected to receive a written confirmation providing details of the transaction, as well as periodic statements of their holdings, from the direct or indirect participants through which the beneficial owner entered into the transaction. Transfers of ownership interests in the debt securities are to be accomplished by entries made on the books of participants acting on behalf of beneficial owners. Beneficial owners will not receive certificates representing their ownership interests in debt securities, except in the event that use of the book-entry system for the debt securities is discontinued.

To facilitate subsequent transfers, all debt securities deposited by participants with DTC are registered in the name of DTC's partnership nominee, Cede & Co. The deposit of debt securities with DTC and their registration in the name of Cede & Co. will effect no change in beneficial ownership. DTC has no knowledge of the actual beneficial owners of the debt securities; DTC's records reflect only the identity of the direct participants to whose accounts the debt securities are credited, which may or may not be the beneficial owners. The participants will remain responsible for keeping account of their holdings on behalf of their customers.

Delivery of notices and other communications by DTC to direct participants, by direct participants to indirect participants, and by direct participants and indirect participants to beneficial owners will be governed by arrangements among them, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements as may be in effect from time to time.

Redemption notices will be sent to DTC. If less than all of the debt securities within an issue are being redeemed, DTC's practice is to determine by lot the amount of the interest of each direct participant in the issue to be redeemed.

Neither DTC nor Cede & Co. will consent or vote with respect to debt securities. Under its usual procedures, DTC mails an omnibus proxy to Dow as soon as possible after the record date. The omnibus proxy assigns Cede & Co.'s consenting or voting rights to those direct participants to whose accounts the debt securities are credited on the record date (identified in a listing attached to the omnibus proxy).

Principal and interest payments, if any, on the debt securities will be made to Cede & Co., as nominee of DTC. DTC's practice is to credit direct participants' accounts, upon DTC's receipt of funds and corresponding

Table of Contents

detail information from Dow or the trustee, on the applicable payable date in accordance with their respective holdings shown on DTC's records. Payments by participants to beneficial owners will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is the case with securities held for the accounts of customers registered in street name, and will be the responsibility of that participant and not of DTC, the trustee or Dow, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements as may be in effect from time to time. Payment of principal and interest to Cede & Co. is Dow's responsibility or the trustee's, disbursement of payments to direct participants shall be the responsibility of DTC, and disbursement of payments to beneficial owners is the responsibility of direct and indirect participants.

A beneficial owner must give notice to elect to have its debt securities purchased or tendered, through its participant, to a tender agent, and shall effect delivery of debt securities by causing the direct participants to transfer the participant's interest in the debt securities, on DTC's records, to a tender agent. The requirement for physical delivery of debt securities in connection with an optional tender or a mandatory purchase will be deemed satisfied when the ownership rights in the debt securities are transferred by direct participants on DTC's records and followed by a book-entry credit of tendered debt securities to the tender agent's account.

DTC may discontinue providing its services as securities depository with respect to the debt securities at any time by giving reasonable notice to Dow or the trustee. Under these circumstances, in the event Dow does not appoint a successor securities depository, debt security certificates will be printed and delivered.

Dow may decide to discontinue use of the system of book-entry transfers through DTC (or a successor securities depository). In that event, debt security certificates will be printed and delivered.

The information in this section concerning DTC and DTC's book-entry system has been obtained from sources that Dow believes to be reliable, but Dow takes no responsibility for their accuracy.

Certain Covenants Applicable to Senior Debt Securities

Limitations on Liens

The senior indenture provides that, subject to the exceptions described below and those set forth under Exempted Indebtedness, Dow may not, and may not permit any restricted subsidiary to, create or permit to exist any lien on any principal property, additions to principal property or shares of capital stock of any restricted subsidiary without equally and ratably securing the debt securities. This restriction will not apply to permitted liens, including:

liens on principal property existing at the time of its acquisition or to secure the payment of all or part of the purchase price or any additions thereto or to secure any indebtedness incurred at the time of, or within 120 days after, the acquisition of such principal property or any addition thereto;

liens existing on the date of the indenture;

liens on property or shares of capital stock, or arising out of any indebtedness of any corporation existing at the time the corporation becomes or is merged into Dow or a restricted subsidiary;

liens which exclusively secure debt owing to Dow or a subsidiary by a restricted subsidiary;

liens of carriers, warehousemen, mechanics and materialmen incurred in the ordinary course of business for sums not yet due or being contested in good faith;

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

liens arising by reason of any judgment, decree or order of any court, so long as any appropriate legal proceedings which may have been duly initiated for the review of such judgment, decree or order shall not have been finally terminated or so long as the period within which such proceedings may be initiated shall not have expired; or pledges or deposits to secure payment of workmen's compensation or other insurance, good faith deposits in connection with tenders, contracts (other than contracts for

Table of Contents

the payment of money) or leases, deposits to secure public or statutory obligations, deposits to secure public or statutory obligations, deposits to secure or in lieu of surety or appeal bonds, or deposits as security for the payment of taxes;

liens in connection with the issuance of tax-exempt industrial development or pollution control bonds or other similar bonds issued pursuant to Section 103(b) of the Internal Revenue Code to finance all or any part of the purchase price of or the cost of construction, equipping or improving property; provided that those liens are limited to the property acquired or constructed or the improvement and to substantially unimproved real property on which the construction or improvement is located; provided further, that Dow and its restricted subsidiaries may further secure all or any part of such purchase price or the cost of construction of any improvements and personal property by an interest on additional property of Dow and restricted subsidiaries only to the extent necessary for the construction, maintenance and operation of, and access to, the property so acquired or constructed or the improvement;

liens arising from assignments of money due under contracts of Dow or a restricted subsidiary with the United States or any State, or any department, agency or political subdivision of the United States or any State;

liens in favor of any customer arising in respect of payments made by or on behalf of a customer for goods produced for or services rendered to customers in the ordinary course of business not exceeding the amount of those payments;

any extension, renewal or replacement of any lien referred to in any of the previous clauses; and

statutory liens, liens for taxes or assessments or governmental charges or levies not yet due or delinquent or which can be paid without penalty or are being contested in good faith, landlord's liens on leased property, easements and liens of a similar nature as those described above.

Limitation on Sale and Lease-Back Transactions

The senior indenture provides that, subject to the exceptions set forth below under the section of this prospectus captioned "Exempted Indebtedness," sale and lease-back transactions by Dow or any restricted subsidiary of any principal property are prohibited (except for temporary leases for a term, including any renewal thereof, of not more than three years and except for leases between Dow and a subsidiary or between subsidiaries) unless the net proceeds of the sale and leaseback transaction are at least equal to the fair value of the property.

Exempted Indebtedness

Dow or any restricted subsidiary may create or assume liens or enter into sale and lease-back transactions not otherwise permitted under the limitations on liens and sale and lease-back transactions described above, so long as at that time and after giving effect to the lien or sale and lease-back transaction, the sum of:

(1) the aggregate outstanding indebtedness of Dow and its restricted subsidiaries incurred after the date of the indenture and secured by the proscribed liens relating to principal property; plus

(2) the aggregate discounted value of the obligations for rental payments in respect to the proscribed sale and lease-back transactions relating to principal property;

does not exceed 10% of consolidated net tangible assets at such time.

There are no covenants or provisions contained in the indenture which protect holders of debt securities in the event of a highly leveraged transaction.

Table of Contents

Certain Definitions

The following are the meanings of terms that are important in understanding the covenants previously described:

Consolidated net tangible assets means the total assets of Dow and its consolidated subsidiaries as shown on or reflected in its balance sheet, less:

all current liabilities, excluding current liabilities that could be classified as long-term debt under generally accepted accounting principles and current liabilities that are by their terms extendible or renewable at the obligor's option to a time more than 12 months after the time as of which the amount of current liabilities is being computed;

advances to entities accounted for on the equity method of accounting; and

intangible assets.

Intangible assets means the aggregate value, net of any applicable reserves, as shown on or reflected in Dow's balance sheet, of:

all trade names, trademarks, licenses, patents, copyrights and goodwill;

organizational and development costs;

deferred charges, other than prepaid items such as insurance, taxes, interest, commissions, rents and similar items and tangible assets being amortized; and

amortized debt discount and expense, less unamortized premium.

Principal property means any manufacturing facility having a gross book value in excess of 1% of consolidated net tangible assets that is owned by Dow or any restricted subsidiary and located within the United States, excluding its territories and possessions and Puerto Rico, other than any facility or portion of a facility which Dow's board of directors reasonably determines is not material to the business conducted by Dow and its subsidiaries as a whole.

Restricted subsidiary means any subsidiary:

of which substantially all of the property of is located, and substantially all of the business is carried on, within the United States, excluding its territories and possessions and Puerto Rico; and

that owns or operates one or more principal properties; provided, however, restricted subsidiary shall not include a subsidiary that is primarily engaged in the business of a finance or insurance company, and branches of that finance or insurance company.

Subsidiary means each corporation of which more than 50% of the outstanding voting stock is owned, directly or indirectly, by Dow or by Dow and one or more of its subsidiaries.

Subordination of Subordinated Debt Securities

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to the subordinated debt securities.

The subordinated debt securities will, to the extent described in the subordinated indenture, be subordinate in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all senior indebtedness (as defined below). Upon any payment or distribution of assets to creditors pursuant to any liquidation, dissolution, winding up, reorganization, assignment for the benefit of creditors, marshaling of assets or any bankruptcy, insolvency, debt restructuring or

Table of Contents

similar proceedings in connection with any insolvency or bankruptcy proceeding of ours, the holders of senior indebtedness will be entitled to payment in full of any principal, premium, if any, and interest on such senior indebtedness, before the holders of the subordinated debt securities will be entitled to any payment in respect of any principal, premium, if any, or interest on the subordinated debt securities. Because of the subordination, our creditors may ratably recover less than the holders of senior indebtedness, and more than the holders of the subordinated debt securities, upon liquidation or insolvency.

If the maturity of any subordinated debt securities is accelerated, the holders at that time of all senior indebtedness then outstanding will first be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts due thereon, before the holders of the subordinated debt securities will be entitled to receive any payment of any principal, premium, if any, and interest on the subordinated debt securities.

No principal, premium or interest payments may be made in respect of the subordinated debt securities if:

a default beyond any grace period in any payment of principal, interest or any other monetary amounts has occurred and is continuing regarding any senior indebtedness;

an event of default resulting in the acceleration of the maturity of any senior indebtedness has occurred and is continuing;

any judicial proceeding is pending regarding any such default; or

Dow dissolves, winds-up, liquidates or reorganizes, whether in bankruptcy, insolvency or otherwise.

For purposes of the subordination provisions of the subordinated indenture, the payment, issuance and delivery of cash, property or securities, other than stock and our specified subordinated securities, upon conversion of a subordinated debt security, is a principal payment in respect of the subordinated debt security.

The subordinated indenture does not limit or prohibit the incurrence of additional senior indebtedness, including indebtedness that is senior to the subordinated debt securities, but subordinate to our other obligations. The senior debt securities constitute senior indebtedness under the subordinated indenture.

The term **senior indebtedness** includes all amounts due on and obligations incurred in connection with any of the following, whether outstanding at the date the subordinated indenture is executed, or incurred or created after the subordinated indenture is executed, unless the instrument creating or evidencing the obligation provides that it is not senior in right of payment to the subordinated debt securities, or is equally senior with or junior to the subordinated debt securities:

our indebtedness, obligations and other liabilities, contingent or otherwise, incurred for money borrowed or evidenced by bonds, debentures, notes or similar instruments;

our reimbursement obligations and other liabilities, contingent or otherwise, regarding letters of credit, bankers' acceptances issued for our account, or similar credit transactions;

obligations and liabilities, contingent or otherwise, in respect of leases by us as lessee that are accounted for as capitalized lease obligations on our balance sheet in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

our obligations and liabilities, contingent or otherwise, issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property, as conditional sale obligations, or under any title retention agreements;

all direct or indirect guarantees or similar agreements in respect of, and obligations or liabilities, contingent or otherwise, to purchase or otherwise acquire or assure a creditor against our loss in respect of, indebtedness, obligations, dividends, or liabilities of another person described in any of the four immediately preceding provisions;

Table of Contents

any indebtedness described in any of the five immediately preceding provisions and that is secured by any mortgage, pledge, lien or other encumbrance existing on property owned or held by us, regardless of whether the indebtedness secured thereby has been assumed by us; and

any deferrals, renewals, extensions and refunds of, or amendments, modifications or supplements to, any indebtedness, obligation or liability described in any of the five immediately preceding provisions.

Senior indebtedness will not include trade accounts payable, accrued liabilities arising in the ordinary course of business or indebtedness to our subsidiaries.

The applicable prospectus supplement may further describe the provisions, if any, applicable to the subordination of the subordinated debt securities of a particular series.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

Dow may not merge or consolidate or sell or convey all or substantially all of its assets unless:

the successor corporation is Dow or is a domestic corporation that assumes Dow's obligations on the debt securities and under the indenture; and

after giving effect to the transaction, Dow or the successor corporation would not be in default under the indenture.

Events of Default

With respect to any series of debt securities, any one of the following events will constitute an event of default under the indenture:

- (1) default by Dow for 30 days in the payment of any installment of interest on the debt securities of that series;
- (2) default by Dow in the payment of any principal on the debt securities of that series;
- (3) default by Dow in the payment of any sinking fund installment;
- (4) default by Dow in the performance, or breach by Dow, of any of the covenants or warranties contained in the indenture for the benefit of the debt securities of that series which is not remedied within a period of 90 days after receipt of written notice by Dow from the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the debt securities of that series then outstanding;
- (5) Dow commences bankruptcy or insolvency proceedings or consents to any bankruptcy relief sought against it;
- (6) Dow becomes involved in involuntary bankruptcy or insolvency proceedings and an order for relief is entered against it, if that order remains unstayed and in effect for more than 60 consecutive days; or
- (7) any other event of default established in accordance with a supplemental indenture or board resolution with respect to any series of debt securities.

No event of default described in clauses (1), (2), (3), (4) or (7) above with respect to a particular series of debt securities necessarily constitutes an event of default with respect to any other series of debt securities.

The indenture provides that if an event of default under clauses (1), (2), (3), (4) or (7) above (but only if the event of default under clauses (4) or (7) is with respect to less than all series of debt securities then outstanding)

Table of Contents

shall have occurred and be continuing, either the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of the then-outstanding debt securities of the series affected by the event of default, each affected series treated as a separate class, may declare the principal of all the debt securities of each affected series, together with accrued interest, to be due and payable immediately. If an event of default under clauses (4) or (7) above (but only if the event of default under clauses (4) or (7) is with respect to all of the series of debt securities then outstanding) shall have occurred and be continuing, either the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in the aggregate principal amount of all the debt securities then outstanding, treated as one class, may declare the principal of all the debt securities, together with accrued interest, to be due and payable immediately. If an event of default under clauses (5) or (6) above shall have occurred, the principal of all the debt securities, together with accrued interest, will become due and payable immediately without any declaration or other act by the trustee or any holder.

If prior to any judgment or decree for the payment of money due being entered or obtained, Dow delivers to the trustee an amount of money sufficient to pay all interest then due and the principal of any securities that have matured (other than through acceleration) and the trustee's expenses and Dow has cured any defaults under the indenture, then such declaration (including a declaration caused by a default in the payment of principal or interest, the payment for which has subsequently been provided) may be rescinded and annulled by the holders of a majority in principal amount of the debt securities of the series then outstanding, each such series treated as a separate class, or all debt securities treated as one class, as the case may be, as were entitled to declare such default. In addition, past defaults may be waived by the holders of a majority in principal amount of the debt securities of the series then outstanding, each series treated as a separate class, or all debt securities treated as one class, as the case may be, as were entitled to declare such default, except a default in the payment of the principal of or interest on the debt securities or in respect of a covenant or provision of the indenture that cannot be modified or amended without the approval of the holder of each debt security so affected.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, at Dow's election, the sole remedy for an event of default specified in clause (4) above relating to the failure by Dow to comply with the covenant in the indenture requiring Dow to file with the trustee copies of the reports and other information it files with the SEC (Dow's SEC filing obligations) and for any failure by Dow to comply with the requirements of Section 314(a)(1) of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended (the TIA), which similarly requires Dow to file with the trustee copies of the reports and other information it files with the SEC, shall for the first 270 days after the occurrence of such an event of default consist exclusively of the right to receive additional interest on the debt securities of such series at an annual rate equal to 0.25% of the principal amount of the debt securities. This additional interest will accrue on the debt securities from and including the date on which an event of default relating to a failure to comply with Dow's SEC filing obligations or the failure to comply with the requirements of Section 314(a)(1) of the TIA first occurs to but not including the 270th day thereafter (or such earlier date on which the event of default shall have been cured or waived). On such 270th day (or earlier, if such event of default is cured or waived prior to such 270th day), such additional interest will cease to accrue and, if such event of default has not been cured or waived prior to such 270th day, then either the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of such series then outstanding may declare the principal of all the debt securities of such series, together with accrued interest, to be due and payable immediately. This provision shall not affect the rights of holders in the event of the occurrence of any other event of default.

The indenture contains a provision entitling the trustee, subject to the duty of the trustee during default to act with the required standard of care, to be indemnified by the holders of debt securities before exercising any right or power under the indenture at the request of the holders of the debt securities. The indenture also provides that the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of all series affected, each series treated as a separate class, may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee, or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee, with respect to the debt securities of such series.

The indenture requires Dow to file annually with the trustee a certificate as to the absence of any default or specifying any default that exists.

Table of Contents

Satisfaction and Discharge of Indenture

The indenture with respect to any series, except for the surviving obligations, including Dow's obligation to compensate the trustee and to pay the principal of and interest on the debt securities of that series, will be discharged and canceled upon the satisfaction of specified conditions, including:

payment of all the debt securities of that series; or

the deposit with the trustee of cash or U.S. government obligations or a combination of cash and U.S. government obligations sufficient for the payment or redemption in accordance with the indenture and the terms of the debt securities of that series.

Modification and Waiver

Dow and the trustee may modify and amend the indenture with the consent of the holders of more than 50% of the principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series which is affected. No supplemental indenture may, without the consent of the holders of all outstanding debt securities:

extend the final maturity of, reduce the rate or extend the time of payment of interest on, reduce the principal amount of, or reduce any amount payable on any redemption of, any debt securities; or

reduce the percentage in principal amount of outstanding debt securities of any series, the consent of whose holders is required for any supplemental indenture.

Governing Law

The indenture and the debt securities will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, without regard to conflict of laws principles thereof.

Information About the Trustee

The trustee's corporate trust office is located at 2 North LaSalle Street, Suite 1020, Chicago, Illinois 60602. The trustee's principal corporate trust office in New York City is located at 101 Barclay Street, New York, New York 10286.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue warrants, including warrants to purchase debt securities, as well as other types of warrants to purchase securities. Warrants may be issued independently or together with any securities and may be attached to or separate from the securities. The warrants are to be issued under warrant agreements to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent. You should read the particular terms of the warrants, which will be described in more detail in the applicable prospectus supplement. The applicable prospectus supplement will also state whether any of the general provisions summarized below do not apply to the warrants being offered.

Debt Warrants

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of debt warrants offered thereby, the warrant agreement relating to the debt warrants and the certificates representing the debt warrants, including the following:

the title of the debt warrants;

the aggregate number of debt warrants;

Table of Contents

the price or prices at which the debt warrants will be issued;

the currency or currencies, including composite currencies or currency units, in which the price of the debt warrants may be payable;

the designation, aggregate principal amount and terms of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the debt warrants, and the procedures and conditions relating to the exercise of the debt warrants;

the designation and terms of any related debt securities with which the debt warrants are issued, and the number of the debt warrants issued with each debt security;

the currency or currencies, including composite currencies or currency units, in which any principal, premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the debt warrants will be payable;

the date, if any, on and after which the debt warrants and the related debt securities will be separately transferable;

the principal amount of debt securities purchasable upon exercise of each debt warrant, and the price at which and the currency or currencies, including composite currencies or currency units, in which the principal amount of debt securities may be purchased upon exercise;

the date on which the right to exercise the debt warrants will commence, and the date on which the right will expire;

the maximum or minimum number of the debt warrants which may be exercised at any time;

a discussion of any material United States federal income tax considerations; and

any other terms of the debt warrants and terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exercise of the debt warrants.

Certificates representing debt warrants will be exchangeable for new certificates representing debt warrants of different denominations, and debt warrants may be exercised at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Before the exercise of their debt warrants, holders of debt warrants will not have any of the rights of holders of the debt securities issuable upon exercise and will not be entitled to payment of principal of or any premium or interest on the debt securities issuable upon exercise.

Other Warrants

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the following terms of any other warrants that we may issue:

the title of the warrants;

the securities (which may include common stock, preferred stock or depository shares) for which the warrants are exercisable;

Edgar Filing: DOW CHEMICAL CO /DE/ - Form 424B3

the price or prices at which the warrants will be issued;

the currency or currencies, including composite currencies or currency units, in which the price of the warrants may be payable;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares with which the warrants are issued, and the number of the warrants issued with each share of common stock or preferred stock or each depositary share;

if applicable, the date on and after which the warrants and the related common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares will be separately transferable;

Table of Contents

if applicable, a discussion of any material United States federal income tax considerations; and

any other terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants.

Exercise of Warrants

Each warrant will entitle the holder to purchase for cash the principal amount of debt securities or the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock or depositary shares at the exercise price as will in each case be described in, or can be determined from, the applicable prospectus supplement relating to the offered warrants. Warrants may be exercised at any time up to the close of business on the expiration date described in the applicable prospectus supplement. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void.

Warrants may be exercised as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Upon receipt of payment and the certificate representing the warrant properly completed and duly executed at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other offices indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will, as soon as practicable, forward the securities issuable upon exercise. If less than all of the warrants represented by the certificate are exercised, a new certificate will be issued for the remaining warrants.

DESCRIPTION OF STOCK PURCHASE CONTRACTS AND STOCK PURCHASE UNITS

Dow may issue stock purchase contracts that obligate you to purchase from Dow, and obligate Dow to sell to you, a specified or varying number of shares of common stock at a future date or dates. Alternatively, the stock purchase contracts may obligate Dow to purchase from you, and obligate you to sell to Dow, a specified or varying number of shares of common stock or preferred stock at a future date or dates. The price per share of common stock or preferred stock may be fixed at the time the stock purchase contracts are entered into or may be determined by reference to a specific formula set forth in the stock purchase contracts. Any stock purchase contract may include anti-dilution provisions to adjust the number of shares to be delivered pursuant to the stock purchase contract upon the occurrence of specified events.

The stock purchase contracts may be entered into separately or as a part of stock purchase units consisting of a stock purchase contract and, as security for your obligations to purchase or sell the shares of common stock or preferred stock, as the case may be, under the stock purchase contracts, either:

common stock;

preferred stock;

debt securities; or

debt obligations of third parties, including U.S. Treasury securities.

The stock purchase contracts may require Dow to make periodic payments to you or vice versa, and these payments may be unsecured or prefunded and may be paid on a current or deferred basis. The stock purchase contracts may require you to secure your obligations in a specified manner, and, in some circumstances, Dow may deliver newly issued prepaid stock purchase contracts upon release to you of any collateral securing your obligations under the original stock purchase contract.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of any stock purchase contracts or stock purchase units and, if applicable, prepaid stock purchase contracts. However, that description will not purport to be complete and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to:

the stock purchase contracts;

Table of Contents

the collateral arrangements and depositary arrangements, if applicable, relating to the stock purchase contracts or stock purchase units; and

if applicable, the prepaid stock purchase contracts and the document pursuant to which the prepaid stock purchase contracts will be issued.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

Dow may sell the securities:

directly to purchasers, or

through agents, underwriters or dealers, or

through a combination of any of these methods of sale.

Dow may distribute the securities from time to time in one or more transactions at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed, or at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to the prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices.

Dow may determine the price or other terms of the securities offered under this prospectus by use of an electronic auction. Dow will describe how any auction will determine the price or any other terms, how potential investors may participate in the auction and the nature of the underwriters' obligations in the related supplement to this prospectus.

Dow may designate agents to solicit offers to purchase the securities from time to time. These agents may be deemed to be underwriters, as defined in the Securities Act of 1933, involved in the offer or sale of the securities. The prospectus supplement will name the agents and any commissions Dow pays them. Agents may be entitled to indemnification by Dow against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, under agreements between Dow and the agents, and the agents or their affiliates may extend credit to or engage in transactions with or perform services for Dow in the ordinary course of business. Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, any agent will be acting on a reasonable efforts basis for the period of its appointment.

If Dow uses any underwriters in the sale of any of the securities, Dow will enter into an underwriting agreement with them at the time of sale and the names of the underwriters and the terms of the transaction will be set forth in the prospectus supplement that the underwriters use to make resales of the securities. The underwriters may be entitled under the relevant underwriting agreement to indemnification by Dow against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, and the underwriters or their affiliates may extend credit to or engage in transactions with or perform services for Dow in the ordinary course of business.

If Dow uses dealers in the sale of the securities, Dow will sell the securities to those dealers, as principal. The dealers may then resell the securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by them at the time of resale. Dealers may be entitled to indemnification by Dow against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, and the dealers or their affiliates may extend credit to or engage in transactions with or perform services for Dow in the ordinary course of business.

Shares of Dow common stock are principally traded on the New York Stock Exchange. Shares of Dow common stock also are listed on the Chicago, Amsterdam, Bavarian, Brussels, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Hannover, London, Paris, Switzerland and Tokyo exchanges and are traded on the Toronto, Boston, Cincinnati and Philadelphia Exchanges. Each series of securities will be a new issue and, other than the common stock, will have no established trading market. Dow may elect to list any series of securities on an exchange, and in the case

Table of Contents

of the common stock, on any additional exchange, but, unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, Dow will not be obligated to do so. Dow can give no assurance as to the liquidity of the trading market for any of the offered securities.

VALIDITY OF SECURITIES

In connection with particular offerings of the securities in the future, the validity of those securities, other than capital securities, will be passed upon for Dow by Duncan A. Stuart, Dow's Associate General Counsel - Corporate Transactions or another of Dow's lawyers named in the applicable prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, Mayer Brown LLP, Chicago, Illinois, will act as legal counsel to the underwriters, agents or dealers. Mayer Brown LLP has from time to time acted as counsel for Dow and its subsidiaries and may do so in the future.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements, and the related financial statement schedule, incorporated in this prospectus by reference from Dow's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009, and effectiveness of Dow's internal control over financial reporting have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports, which are incorporated herein by reference. Such financial statements and financial statement schedule have been so incorporated in reliance upon the reports of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

Dow files reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC under the Exchange Act, as amended, or the Exchange Act. You may read and copy that information at the SEC's Public Reference Room located at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information relating to the Public Reference Room. You may also obtain copies of this information by mail from the Public Reference Section of the SEC, 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549, at prescribed rates.

The SEC also maintains an internet site that contains reports, proxy statements and other information about issuers, including Dow, that file electronically with the SEC. The address of that site is <http://www.sec.gov>.

You can also inspect reports, proxy statements and other information about Dow at the offices of the New York Stock Exchange, 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

The SEC allows Dow to incorporate by reference information into this prospectus. This means that Dow can disclose important information to you by referring you to another document filed separately with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus, except for any information that is superseded by information that is included directly in this document.

This prospectus incorporates by reference Dow's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009 and our definitive Proxy Statement filed on March 31, 2009 (but only with respect to the information under the following captions: Corporate Governance, Agenda Item 1: Candidates for Election as Director, Compensation and Leadership Development Committee Report, Compensation Information, Equity Compensation Plan Information, Beneficial Ownership of Company Stock, Agenda Item 2: Ratification of the Appointment of the Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm and Audit Committee Report).

Table of Contents

Dow also incorporates by reference any future filings it makes with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act until Dow has sold all of the securities to which this prospectus relates or the offering is otherwise terminated. Dow's subsequent filings with the SEC will automatically update and supersede information in this prospectus.

You may obtain a copy of any of the documents incorporated by reference in this registration statement at no cost by writing to or telephoning Dow at the following address and telephone number:

Office of the Corporate Secretary

The Dow Chemical Company

2030 Dow Center

Midland, Michigan 48674

Telephone: 989-636-1792

Dow has not authorized anyone to give any information or make any representation about Dow that is different from, or in addition to, that contained in this prospectus or in any of the materials that have been incorporated into this document. Therefore, if anyone does give you information of this sort, you should not rely on it. This prospectus is an offer to sell or buy only the securities described in this document, but only under circumstances and in jurisdictions where it is lawful to do so. The information contained in this prospectus speaks only as of the date of this document unless the information specifically indicates that another date applies.