



The August 2008 Open for Business report highlights projects and related announcements that will assist with the creation of new jobs and the preservation of a significant number of existing jobs.

### **Nation's first modern coal-to-liquids plant to be built in West Virginia**

The nation's first modern coal-to-liquids plant will be built in the Marshall County Industrial Park in Benwood. Consol Energy Inc. and Synthesis Energy Systems Inc. intend to jointly develop their first U.S. coal gasification and liquefaction plant in West Virginia, an \$800 million investment. Consol and SES have formed Northern Appalachia Fuel LLC (NAF) as the company through which the development will occur.

Gov. Joe Manchin and Sen. Jay Rockefeller, with support from Sen. Robert C. Byrd and West Virginia's Congressional delegation, company executives and officials from the Regional Economic Development Partnership (RED) announced the project on July 28.

Coal will be converted to synthetic gas using SES proprietary technology. The syngas will be used to produce about 720,000 metric tons per year of methanol that can be used as a feedstock for the chemical industry. Officials expect the project will be capable of converting methanol to about 100 million gallons per year of 87 octane gasoline. As envisioned, the project will include a river terminal facility, where products will be stored in tanks for off-loading into barges for delivery.

### **ESSROC shifts work to West Virginia plant**

ESSROC is upgrading its cement plant in Martinsburg, W.Va. The project, expected to be a total \$500 million investment, is expected to be completed by early 2010. ESSROC will transfer substantial activities from its cement plant in Maryland, which is expected to remain open, to its West Virginia plant. Unlike the Maryland plant, the Martinsburg plant has new pre-heat tower technology that saves time in turning stone into cement.

### **Rotor-tube plant to start production in ATK factory in Mineral County**

New equipment installations at the Alliant Techsystems (ATK) facility in Rocket Center are nearly complete. The upgrades will convert existing ATK processing buildings into a production factory for centrifuge rotor-tubes. The plant is expected to go online by September. The rotors are key components in U.S. Enrichment Corp. (USEC) centrifuges that will concentrate uranium isotopes for nuclear power plants. The 125,000-square-foot plant will employ 120 workers at the Rocket Center facility.

### **WVEDA approves two loans**

During its July meeting, the West Virginia Economic Development Authority (WVEDA) gave final approval for loans for two companies:

- W. A. Wilson & Sons, \$695,000, to purchase glass tempering equipment to be installed at its facility in Wheeling. In business since 1841, W.A. Wilson is a wholesale distributor of glass architectural aluminum products. Currently W.A. Wilson employs 66 workers, a number the company expects to expand to as many as 81 within three years.
- HAGO Company, \$79,000, to finance a 25,000-square-foot expansion to W.A. Wilson & Sons' plant in Wheeling. HAGO will lease the facility to W.A. Wilson & Sons.

In other action, WVEDA approved \$43.3 million in tax-free bonds to help pay for construction of the Longview power plant near Morgantown. The Longview project currently employs more than 500 construction workers. The plant is expected to begin generating electricity in 2010.

### **West Virginia Small Business Division helps 156 clients in June**

The West Virginia Small Business Division (WVSBD) provided 504 hours of counseling to 156 clients in June. The Division trained 44 people at seven training events and approved eight loans totaling more than \$467,000 dollars. Since the fiscal year began on Oct. 1, 2007, WVSBD has served 951 clients, provided 1,612 hours of counseling and trained 987 participants in 112 training events. So far this fiscal year, the agency provided 72 small business loans totaling more than \$11.5 million. The West Virginia Small Business Division is a division of the West Virginia Development Office and works with colleges, universities and other host institutions to provide free business consulting and technical assistance at Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) statewide. The SBDC is a program supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis.

### **West Virginia's value-added manufacturing increases 31 percent**

West Virginia manufacturing productivity showed significant improvement in 2006, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2006 Annual Survey of Manufacturers. West Virginia's growth rate outpaced the nation by nearly 10 points, with value-added manufacturing increasing from \$7.98 billion to \$10.5 billion, a 31.2 percent increase. West Virginia's percentage increase was ranked 16<sup>th</sup> in the country. The state's value of manufacturing shipments increased from \$18.9 billion in 2002 to \$23.9 billion in 2006, a 26.5 percent rise. West Virginia's increase is just below that of the nation, which posted a gain of 28.2 percent, moving from \$3.9 trillion in 2002 to \$5.0 trillion in 2006.

**Putnam County rates in top 20 percent of best communities to locate a company**

Southern Business & Development Magazine ranks Putnam County 47<sup>th</sup> out of 250 best southern communities to locate a company. Charleston ranks 56<sup>th</sup>. Huntington was cited as one of the small communities to watch for growth. The study looks at population, population change, per capita income, median home price, cost of living index, unemployment rate, metro population and metro population change.

**DirectTV purchases PRC center in Huntington**

DirectTV recently celebrated its acquisition of the PRC call center in Huntington with a ribbon-cutting event. The purchase enables the center's 550 employees to retain their jobs. DirectTV had been a client of PRC, a company that provides outsourced customer service. The center's employees will help DirectTV's customers resolve service issues.

**Con-way Freight celebrates 20 years of growth and expansion in West Virginia**

This year, Con-way Freight celebrates 25 years in operation nationally and 20 years in West Virginia. One of America's leading less-than-truckload (LTL) motor carriers, Con-way Freight opened its first service center in West Virginia in Triadelphia. Gov. Joe Manchin marked the company's silver anniversary with a proclamation. The company honored six of its West Virginia driver sales representatives. Four of the drivers reached million-mile safe driving milestones and two have qualified for the upcoming National Truck Driving Championships in Houston, Aug. 19-23. Con-way Freight currently employs 167 workers at 13 locations in West Virginia. Nationally, the company has 20,000 employees and a fleet of more than 8,400 tractors and 25,000 trailers.

**West Virginia exhibits at 'America Festival' in Germany**

The West Virginia European Office (WVEO), with the support of West Virginia Tourism, exhibited at the "America Festival" on July 5 in Berlin, Germany. The "America Festival" was a public celebration of the opening of the new U.S. Embassy in its historical location near the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. Both the WVEO and West Virginia Tourism highlighted the unique recreational and business opportunities that make West Virginia one of the best places to visit, live, and do business in the United States. An estimated 350,000 Berliners and European tourists attended the cultural, culinary and sports activities.

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