



The January 2009 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.

West Virginia selected as site for new coal-to-liquids plants

TransGas Development Systems LLC (TGDS) has filed a permit to build a \$3 billion coal-to-liquids plant in West Virginia. Projected to be operational by 2013, the plant will be built in Mingo County's new energy park near Gilbert. The construction phase is expected to generate 3,000 jobs. When fully staffed, the facility will employ as many as 200 workers. TGDS estimates the facility will use up to 3 million tons of locally mined coal a year to produce more than 6.5 million barrels of gasoline. TGDS has signed a licensing agreement with Uhde Corporation of America for the use of the new PRENFLO gasifier reactor. The proprietary technology is under authorized license from Uhde GmbH, Germany.

WVEDA approves \$1.5 million in loans

The West Virginia Economic Development Authority approved two loans to businesses during its December meeting:

- Petitto Mine Equipment Inc., \$800,000, to finance the construction of two new buildings to allow expansion at its location in Morgantown. Petitto manufactures heavy duty crawler-track mounted longwall move equipment.
- Parkline Inc., \$700,000, to finance the construction of a new 15,000-square-foot building on a 3.9-acre lot in the Eleanor Industrial Park, Putnam County. Parkline manufactures assembled and unassembled metal building systems

Huntington receives \$150,000 grant to create new biotech business incubator

Verizon West Virginia awarded a \$150,000 grant to the Huntington Area Development Council for a new biotechnology incubator to hatch technology-based start-up companies. Under construction at Marshall University's Forensic Science Center, the incubator is scheduled for completion in May 2009. The biotech incubator will provide on-campus laboratory space for fledging companies.

MCTC develops new bioscience degree to meet industry demand

Marshall Community and Technical College (MCTC) in Huntington is introducing an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in bioscience in response to growing demand in the bioscience, biotechnology and biomanufacturing industries. The program will prepare graduates for careers from entry technician to advanced-specialty trained technologist. The new degree program is supported by the West Virginia Technical Programs grant and Verizon's Seamless Education grant.

Production plant for gasless power generator opens in Huntington

A new invention to generate electrical power without gasoline will be produced in Huntington. Six employees currently work in the 11,000-square-foot manufacturing facility. The Power Wagon is a gasless, noiseless temporary mobile power source that generates electrical energy to operate lights, air conditioning, refrigerators, tools and other powered equipment. The trailer-mounted battery generator receives its charge from the torque of turning wheels. The Power Wagon is distributed by Wolf Creek Distributors Group LLC, Kenova.

New owner plans to continue operation of Wayne County rubber manufacturing plant

Shortly after a bank foreclosed on American National Rubber in Ceredo, the plant is back in production under new ownership. The company was purchased by D&B Industrial Group. The company will continue to sell all rubber products under the trade name "American National Rubber" (ANR). The plant produces closed cell sponge rubber for use in aerospace, lighting, automotive, electrical, construction, sporting goods and appliance industries.

EyeMarker invention offers first non-invasive test for botulism

The first results of trail tests show the EyeMarker Systems' RTD1000 was effective in detecting poisoning from botulinum toxin. The non-invasive ocular scanning device measures markers in the eye to detect whether an individual has been exposed to toxins. Until now, diagnosis of botulism has required an invasive blood test and a 24-hour wait to receive results. Based in Morgantown, EyeMarker Systems was founded by scientists at The Eye Institute at West Virginia University and operates from the WVU Business Incubator. The company currently holds five patents in the development of the EyeMarker platform.

West Virginia WorkForce division wins national achievement award

The U.S. Department of Labor presented the West Virginia Unemployment Compensation program with the Pinnacle Award. The award recognizes the state's unemployment compensation program as the top performer in the country in providing timely and high-quality service in the areas of benefit payments, eligibility decisions, appeal decisions, new-employer accounts and tax operations.

West Virginia towns rank among nation's most safe and secure

Those looking for a safe, secure place to work, live or raise a family can consider communities in West Virginia, according to the "Most Secure U.S. Places to Live" rankings by the Farmers Insurance Group of Companies. The rankings are based on factors such as crime statistics, housing depreciation, air quality, life expectancy and risk of natural disasters. The study cited Charleston among mid-sized cities and Morgantown and Wheeling among small towns.

Festivals in Greenbrier County rank on tourism top 20 events list

The Southeast Tourism Society (STS) included two Lewisburg festivals on its list of “Top 20 Events” for Spring 2009. STS named The Battle of Lewisburg Living History and Re-enactment and the Lewisburg Chocolate Festival. The Southeast Tourism Society promotes tourism development in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

Schonstedt Instrument Company and customers donate demining instruments

Kearneysville-based Schonstedt Instrument Company and its customers donated 30 demining instruments to the Mine Action Centre for Testing, Development and training in Croatia. The instruments were tested, accredited and integrated into a new training curriculum prior to being distributed to United National Mine Action Programs throughout the region. As part of the ongoing Schonstedt Humanitarian Demining Initiative, when a customer buys a Schonstedt pipe and cable locator, a magnetic locator will be donated in the customer's name to the United Nations Mine Action Team for clearance of explosive remnants of war around the globe.

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