

Developments

Helping Employers Retain & Create Quality Jobs Rockford, Illinois USA

Chemtool Moves Corporate Office to Rockton

Chemtool, new to the region in 2008, occupies two facilities in Rockton and will staff them with about 500 employees within the year, according to President Jim Athans.

One of the leading lubricant manufacturing companies in the world, Chemtool makes custom lubricants and specialty products, including a growing line of bio-based products. Their customers include Fortune 500 companies in a wide range of industries.

"showplace"

The former Beloit Corp. plant at 1165 Prairie Hill Road is 380,000 square feet, serves as Chemtool's manufacturing and distribution site and **"will be a showplace"** according to Athans. There are two shifts running 24/7 at this location.

The company's corporate headquarters is moving from Crystal Lake to the former Woodward facility in Rockton. *"This beautiful building will serve as our world headquarters and contain our research and development functions,"* said Athans. It will house about 100 chemists, physicists and biologists.

"We're happy and excited to be here. We look forward to our future expansion in this area," noted Athans.



Chemtool President Jim Athans in front of blending kettles for water-based lubricants.

A Good Consolidation

W.A. Whitney Now Worldwide Manufacturing Site for MegaFab

Citing the high quality of the area's labor pool and supplier base, the region's location and available space at its Rockford plant, **W.A. Whitney's parent company, MegaFab, moved two production lines to Rockford** from its Hutchinson, Kansas plant this summer.

The consolidation will add five production jobs to W.A. Whitney and five to the local supplier base. The company employs 45 people at its 650 Race Street plant near downtown Rockford.

With the transfer of MegaFab's Piranha and Bertsch lines of metal-cutting machines, Rockford is now their worldwide manufacturing center. The company's international business has risen from 20 percent to nearly 50 percent, particularly in Brazil, Russia, India and China.

"We appreciate the confidence that our ownership group has in Rockford," said Al Julian, W.A. Whitney's vice president of marketing. He also cited the long-standing support of local government officials in keeping W.A. Whitney here for 102 years.



W.A. Whitney operator Lance Harrod tests a Piranha Ironworker, one of two product lines that was transferred to Rockford from Hutchinson, Kansas. The move retains 40 jobs and adds 5 for W.A. Whitney.

REMINDER

RAEDC Annual Meeting & Dinner

Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009

5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Giovanni's Restaurant & Convention Center
610 N. Bell School Road, Rockford

Paris Air Show Produced Strong Leads; Speak Up Now for 2010

"Awesome" is how Ron Jr. Gustafson, project manager of Clinkenbeard & Associates, described Rockford's performance at the 2009 Paris Air Show in June. Thanks to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the RAEDC and four companies attended and marketed this region's aerospace capabilities.

"People regularly stopped by the booth to say it was time Rockford appeared at this important air show, or they asked about the possibility of locating in the Rockford area," attested Gustafson. His company made prototypes for air show exhibitors.

Eric Voyles, RAEDC vice president of national business development, said that the feedback from attendees confirmed the quality and competitiveness of Rockford's aerospace cluster. He cited Wichita's 160 aerospace companies compared to Rockford's 130 firms. Voyles also reported that the team is following up on seven hot leads. Also working the booth were Sharon Stead-Galantino of DCEO and Russ Dennis of Leading Edge Hydraulics.

Rockford area companies interested in attending the next air show, Farnborough International Airshow, July 19-25, 2010 in England, should contact Voyles now at evoyles@rockfordil.com or 815.987.8118.



Some of the 142 aircrafts exhibited at the June 15-21, 2009 Paris Air Show.

From Russia (And Elsewhere) With Love; They're Checking Us Out!

Almost every other month an overseas delegation visits the Rockford region. They want to increase their international trade and make a Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the U.S. by opening a plant or office.

They come here because

1. they find our location ideal
2. they value our skilled workforce and
3. they've heard about Illinois' third international airport.

That's according to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Interim Managing Director Mary Roberts. And that's how she promotes Rockford every time she makes a presentation about Illinois for her Office of Trade and Investment.

She said, "Foreign companies create jobs here, so it's very positive to have FDI in Illinois. We have 1,523 foreign-based companies in our state and they have 5,500 locations here. That means they hire our people."

Here's a partial list of the countries that have visited the Rockford area in the last 12 months or plan to in the next 6 months, seeking to increase trade between their country and the U.S.A.

- Australia
- China
- Germany
- India
- Israel
- Italy
- Korea
- Sweden
- Turkey

When these groups come here, they want to meet Rockford companies that are also interested in international trade. They're looking for joint-venture partners, licensees and distributors. And yes, confirmation that this is the right place in which to invest in a facility. If you want to grow your business, take advantage of these opportunities to expand your sales globally. Contact the RAEDC's Eric Voyles at 815.987.8118 or evoyles@rockfordil.com and get your name on our FDI list now. He'll make sure you meet these FDI groups.



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Please forward to others who share your interest in our region's economic development. Be "green."

For more information on RAEDC programs or services, please call 815.987.8118, e-mail information@rockfordil.com or visit www.rockfordil.com.

The primary role of the Rockford Area Economic Development Council is to enhance wealth creation in the Rockford Region by marketing the area and helping employers retain and create quality jobs. The RAEDC works closely with many partners to serve as a one-stop resource for clients, to improve the competitiveness of the region and to engage the community in the work of economic development.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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