

Hancock County

Getting a Jump-Start from Clean Tech and Life Sciences



EnerDel expanded in Hancock Co. because of the abundant automotive talent and experience.

Already the home of major players in the life sciences, Hancock County extended its credentials in 21st-century manufacturing this year with the addition of clean-tech battery maker EnerDel.

In January, 2010, the company announced that it will locate its newest manufacturing operation in Hancock County, which at full build-out will create 1,200 new jobs.

The developer of lithium-ion batteries for hybrid, plug-in electric and electric vehicles will invest \$237 million to lease and equip more than 200,000 square feet in business park Axxess 70 at Mount Comfort Road.

“Demand for high-performance lithium-ion battery systems is expanding dramatically for vehicles of all sizes as well as the utility grid, and we are going to be fully prepared to meet it with a product stamped Made in America” said Charles Gassenheimer, chairman and CEO of EnerDel, parent company Ener1 Inc.

The new plant will give EnerDel the

capacity to produce battery packs for approximately 600,000 hybrid-electric vehicles. It will be financed through a \$118.5 million grant awarded under the federal stimulus package under a 50-50 cost-share program, of which EnerDel plans to spend \$60 million in 2010.

“Indiana is fast becoming the Silicon Valley of the 21st-century auto industry,” Gassenheimer said. “We’re here because of the talent, the automotive industry experience and the remarkable network of electric drivetrain companies that call

this state home.” The Indiana Economic Development Corp. offered EnerDel up to \$21.1 million in performance-based tax credits and up to \$200,000 in training grants based on the company’s job creation plans. Hancock County will provide additional property tax abatement and other incentives totaling approximately \$30 million.

Hancock County is also home to Freije Treatment Systems, a leader in green water treatment technology whose proprietary EasyWater system conditions hard water without the use of salt.

According to President and CEO Bill Freije, his company’s technology uses electronics to change the physical properties of the calcium and magnesium that cause scale so they are less “sticky” and go down the drain instead of adhering to pipes and water fixtures.

EasyWater treatment systems are used in residential, commercial and industrial applications all over the country. “We’re by far the leader in this type of green water treatment,” Freije says. “We have tremendous potential because of the green aspect and because it’s so effective.” In fact, his company is expanding its product line to develop equipment that uses its proprietary technologies for wider applications.

Freije currently employs 85 people at its Hancock County headquarters, which does not include manufacturing. He says that because of the company’s rapid growth, he anticipates adding another building to manufacture new equipment lines in the not too distant future.

On the life sciences front Elanco, a global animal health company, broke ground on its new worldwide headquarters in July 2009. Construction on the state-of-the-

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State-of-the-art Hancock Memorial hospital employs more than 500 people in the county.

“We know these specific skills and the companies that serve this industry translate very easily into other high-tech fields like logistics, biotechnology and life sciences. This is why these are the types of companies we are attracting today,” said Kelley.

All are important areas of focus for the county, considering almost 500,000 Hoosiers are employed in the life and health sciences in Indiana today and by 2014 more than 40,000 new science-related jobs will need to be filled. High-paying jobs in these extremely regulated and sophisticated industries attract talent and companies from the coasts and throughout the world.

The same is true for modern logistics, another prospering sector in the area, with more than 28 million square feet under roof and employing professionals trained in computerized supply chain management and specialized storage. Logistics operations in Hendricks County include third-party logistics companies like Magnum Logistics Inc., a leading logistics company named to the 2006 Inc. 500 and recognized as one of Indiana’s

fastest growing businesses.

“Hendricks County has an outstanding transportation infrastructure and is home to one of the premier manufacturing and distribution parks in the U.S.,” said James Sharp, chairman of Magnum Logistics Inc. and Magnum Express Inc. “Our Hendricks County location puts us within a single day’s drive of 70 percent of the U.S. population and 75 percent of the nation’s gross domestic product giving us a competitive edge that we can pass on to our customers.”

Founded in 1999, Magnum Logistics employs 120 professionals and plans to add up to 100 new jobs in the next five years. The \$30 million company is projected to become a \$100 million company within the next decade.

“There are three factors critical to our success: proximity to distribution and manufacturing, access to a talented management pool and a business-friendly environment,” added Sharp. “On top of affording us all three of those factors, Hendricks County’s economic development team was an excellent resource and could not have been more

helpful in guiding us through the incentive process.”

In addition to third-party logistics, several companies in the area rely on the abundance of warehouse space and proximity to all three major transportation sectors (air, rail, interstate) to provide their own distribution. From traditional and modern bulk to digital imaging equipment, temperature-sensitive life sciences and medical technology products, electronic and computer components, and food and beverage — the county is chock full of Fortune 500 companies like PepsiCo, Steel Dynamics and Gatorade, to name a few.

The second-fastest growing county in the state, Hendricks County maintains the quality and affordability of the area while offering easy access to the buzz of big city entertainment in neighboring Indianapolis. The county continues to invest in infrastructure improvements, parks and recreation, and education. And the return is award-winning schools, first-class shopping and quiet suburban neighborhoods, along with taxes that are consistently below the national average. •

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art facility marks the launch of Progress Park, a 52-acre business and life sciences development.

“This is a vital step in our goal to be a top global animal health company, and we look forward to a long, successful relationship with the city of Greenfield,” said Jeff Simmons, president of Elanco, a division of Eli Lilly and Co.

The global headquarters will encompass about 130,000 square feet on 20 acres, leaving 32 acres for additional development. The park, when completed, could accommodate up to 400,000 square feet of business space.

“The location of this facility on Greenfield’s north side helps open the door for other companies seeking to join the city’s emerging business growth,” said Greenfield Mayor Brad DeReamer.

In August 2009, Covance, one of the world’s largest and most comprehensive drug development contract manufacturing services companies, received tax incentives that should lead to an additional 315 jobs at its Greenfield Laboratories.

The company plans to pay an average annual salary of \$60,000, plus benefits, for jobs ranging from support staff and

technicians to scientists and management. Some of the jobs would support growth in Covance’s Biomarker Center of Excellence in such areas as nutritional chemistry and analytical services.

In 2008 Covance purchased the laboratories from Indianapolis-based Eli Lilly and Co. for \$50 million and an agreement that Lilly would give Covance \$1.6 billion worth of drug-development business over the next 10 years.

To build on these economic successes Hancock County created a tax increment financing district that encompasses eight business parks in and around the Mt. Comfort corridor. The county will widen Mt. Comfort Road to four lanes to provide better access to nearby Interstate 70. Preliminary engineering has already started, according to Dennis Maloy, executive director, Hancock Economic Development Council.

To provide a shot in the arm for downtown businesses, last year the Hancock Economic Development Council and the Greenfield/Hancock County Chamber of Commerce helped establish Greenfield Main Street Inc. By addressing design, promotions, organization and economic restructuring, the Main Street program gives small towns a formula to revitalize their downtowns, says Candace Hudziak, the organization’s president.

“It’s helpful for a community to latch onto something proven to be successful,” Hudziak, says. “I’m really glad Greenfield and the community have come out strong and supported us.”

“Last year we were still trying to get our legs under us,” she says. “This year we’re going to start working on each specific part of the program. We have a blueprint and a vision for 2010.”

Greenfield Main Street will be able to build on a strong base of cultural events. Each year Greenfield celebrates its famous native son with the Riley Festival, a four-day event that begins the first Thursday in October and celebrates the life and works of poet and author James Whitcomb Riley. The city also holds an eight-week summer concert series on the courthouse plaza.

Recognizing the importance of creativity within a community, the Hancock County Arts & Cultural Council works to support and promote the arts, education and cultural activities. An emerging arts district in downtown Greenfield boasts several galleries, a performing arts venue and a monthly Second Friday event to showcase local artists.

Hancock County’s exceptional quality of life has made it attractive to the clean tech and life science companies who depend on creative, well-educated workers to invent tomorrow’s technologies. •