



The October 2007 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.

CertainTeed Gypsum Wallboard readies for production in Marshall County

The CertainTeed Gypsum Wallboard plant in Moundsville is nearly ready to start work. The operation represents a \$150 million investment. The plant sits on a 100-acre site along W. Va. Route 2, near American Electric Power's Kammer-Mitchell Power Plant. CertainTeed will use gypsum, a by-product of AEP's new scrubber stack, to produce wallboard. The 750,000-square-foot gypsum plant is training 70 new employees and expects to begin production in early 2008. CertainTeed is owned by Saint-Gobain, the world's largest building manufacturer. Currently, CertainTeed operates 13 gypsum board plants in North America, plus the nearly-complete high-speed wallboard plant in West Virginia.

CAMC to add 180 new employees in 2008

Expanding services means Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC) will hire more employees. CAMC expects to hire 134 new employees in 2008. CAMC's parent company CAMC Health System plans to fill 24 positions at Teays Valley Hospital and another 25 at its Integrated Health Care Providers subsidiary, which operates surgery and urgent care centers in Kanawha County. Most of the new employees will be needed at CAMC General Hospital, where 24 new intensive-care beds will be added in 2008. CAMC Memorial Hospital is scheduled to complete its new five-floor Robert C. Byrd Ambulatory Building in Kanawha City by July 2008. Currently CAMC employs 4,800 people.

International Coal Group begins commercial production in Raleigh County

International Coal Group (ICG) announced the opening of commercial production at its new Beckley Pocahontas Mine in Eccles, W.Va. When it reaches full production in 2008, the Beckley operation will employ as many as 180 miners, preparation plant workers and office staff. The complex is expected to produce 1.4 million tons of coal a year. ICG is a leading producer of coal in Northern and Central Appalachia and the Illinois basin. The company has 12 active mining complexes.

Northrop Grumann opens National Work Force Center in Marion County

Northrop Grumann recently celebrated the opening of its new National Work Force Center in the Alan B. Mollohan Innovation Center, I-79 Technology Park in Fairmont, W.Va. Northrop Grumman has described the National Work Force Center as part of a new initiative to provide high-quality, cost-effective technology centers within the United States as an alternative to outsourcing jobs abroad. The company will hire about 50 to 60 new full-time employees for information technology positions in Fairmont.

Northrop Grumman Corp. is a \$30 billion global defense and technology company. Its 120,000 employees provide innovative systems, products and solution in information and services, electronics, aerospace and shipbuilding to government and commercial customers worldwide

Austrian company Lisec opens first West Virginia sales and service office

A new sales and service office for Austrian-based Lisec Group of Companies is opening in Kearneysville, W.Va. Lisec is a leader in the production of high-tech machinery and fully automated machinery lines in insulation glass production. The new office, called LGC USA Service of Glass Machinery Inc., marks Lisec's first in West Virginia. Initially the new office in Jefferson County's Burr Business Park will hire as many as 10 employees for sales, service, office and warehouse positions.

Klößner Pentaplast to expand plant in Raleigh County

The Klößner Pentaplast Group announced it will add to the polyester film production capacity of its facility in Beaver in Raleigh County. Polyester films are used for thermoformed packaging and food packaging applications. The expansion is expected to create 15 jobs. The target date for start-up is March 2008.

Klößner Pentaplast Group is the world's leading producer of films for pharmaceutical, medical device, food, electronics, and general-purpose thermoform packaging, as well as printing and specialty applications. Founded in 1965 in Montabaur, Germany, Klößner Pentaplast has grown from its initial facility to 20 production operations in 11 countries.

West Virginia tourism up by 6.1 percent

Two studies commissioned by the West Virginia Division of Tourism show that visitors to the Mountain State contribute billions of dollars to the state's travel and tourism industry. Travel spending generated more than \$3.9 billion in 2006, up 6.1 percent from 2005.

Day travelers spent \$1.9 billion, or nearly half of the state's total travel spending, on gaming and entertainment. Overnight visitors spent about \$1.2 billion on their trips in 2006. About 17 percent of overnight visitors were from West Virginia. Another 53 percent hailed from Ohio, Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

During 2006, visitor spending in West Virginia directly supported 44,000 jobs, with earnings of \$854 million. Travel spending generated the greatest number of jobs in accommodations and food services, arts and entertainment, and recreation.

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EyeMarker Systems named finalist for North American Global Security Challenge

Morgantown-based EyeMarker Systems Inc., has been named a semi-finalist for the North American Global Security Challenge 2007. The Global Security Challenge is the first annual business plan competition to find and select the most promising security technology startups in the world. CEO Wes McGee will travel in December to compete for a research grant at the international competition in London. The company is only one of five chosen from North America to participate. The Ocular Scanning Instrument (OSI) developed by EyeMarker Systems, is the world's first handheld, portable device capable of looking at markers in the human eye and determining if the person has breathed or absorbed toxins or nerve agents.

Wells Home Furnishings plans expansion

An expansion of 13,000 square feet is now in the works for Wells Home Furnishings in Charleston. The addition will connect the current warehouse and showroom, creating a 30,000-square-foot showroom space. Plans call for the expansion to be completed by fall 2008. Despite national trends of lagging furniture sales and declining homebuilding, Wells Home Furnishings recorded double digit sales increases in 2006 and continues to show positive sales growth so far in 2007.

Gov. Joe Manchin to head state delegation to world business forum

Gov. Joe Manchin will lead a delegation of West Virginians to the World Business Forum Oct. 10-11 in New York City. The forum will feature high-profile speakers such as former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, retired General Electric chairman Jack Welch, FedEx founder Fred Smith and former United Nation Secretary General Kofi Annan. Michael Basile, who planned the trip, described the forum as "the pre-eminent annual education event for business leaders worldwide." In addition to Manchin and Basile, the delegation will include nine business executives and three state government leaders.

State unemployment rate remains low

The state's unemployment rate in August was the lowest rate on record for that month. WORKFORCE West Virginia reported the state's unemployment average rate was 4.7 percent. About 1,600 jobs were added in the nonfarm employment sector. The goods-producing sector reported a gain of 300. The service-producing sector accounted for 1,300 jobs. Slight shifts have moved the numbers up or down since January. The reports show the results are the lowest month rates in more than 10 years.

WVEDA approves funds for four businesses

During its September meeting, the West Virginia Economic Development Authority gave final approval to the following loans:

- CGP Development Co. Inc., \$585,000, to finance a building in the Fairmont Industrial Park in Marion County. The building will be leased to Cadbury Schweppes America's Beverages. A large confectionery and beverage marketer, Cadbury Schweppes will use the building as a warehouse and distribution center for its north-central West Virginia customers. Cadbury Schweppes expects its current staff of 20 to expand to 40 within three years.

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- Mountaineer Industrial Services LLC, \$444,150, to finance property and building at Raleigh County Airport Authority Park in Beckley. Mountaineer is a start-up company in industrial machining, repair and maintenance. The business will provide machining and component repair services for customers in coal, natural gas, petro-chemical and other manufacturing industries.
- Ohio County Development Authority, \$2 million, to purchase property in Wheeling and finance a 30,000-square-foot freezer. The freezer will be leased to The Ziegenfelder Co., Inc. The 140-year-old Ziegenfelder Co. manufactures popsicles.
- Wincore Window Co. LLC, \$800,000, to purchase equipment to be used in its operation in Parkersburg in Wood County. Start-up company Wincore designs and manufactures custom vinyl replacement and new construction windows and doors.

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