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DURHAM, N.C. (AP) — A North Carolina-based maker of energy-efficient lighting elements is expanding and plans to add 575 jobs in the next three years.

Cree Inc. said Thursday it expects to add 275 jobs this year as it expands production of light-emitting diode chips at its Durham plant. The company plans to add another 300 jobs by the end of 2012.

Cree has about 3,500 full-time workers, including 1,500 in Durham.

The company reported in August that it was adding workers as it increased production at plants in Durham and China.

Cree is flush after a stock offering last month brought in \$434 million, and the company has plans for \$150 million in capital spending.

Shares rose 47 cents Thursday to \$37.10 on the Nasdaq market.

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