

Woodward Picks Rockford Area For \$200M Expansion

The Associated Press

LOVES PARK, Ill. (AP) — Energy and aerospace company Woodward Inc. plans to build a new \$200 million northern Illinois manufacturing campus, state and company officials announced Thursday.

The Rockford area campus will feature a 300,000-square-foot production plant and office center on 60 acres and is estimated to create some 660 jobs over the next five years. The campus will house Woodward's aircraft turbine systems business and will be the Fort Collins, Colo.-based company's second facility in the area.

Woodward officials said they'll break ground later this year and the first employees are expected to move in late next year.

The company will receive tax incentives from the state, according to Gov. Pat Quinn's office. That includes corporate income tax credits valued at about \$45 million. The company will also get funding for job training.

Woodward was started in Rockford in 1870 and makes and services a variety of energy control and optimization systems for companies such as Caterpillar and Boeing. In Loves Park, its systems are primarily for planes.

"The Rockford region's highly skilled workforce makes Illinois an ideal place for companies like Woodward that are looking to grow," Quinn said in a statement following a stop in Loves Park.

Woodward currently employs about 1,500 people in Loves Park and Rockton, and Quinn said the company plans to double that workforce by 2021.

"Ultimately, we decided to remain and grow in the Rockford region due to the strong support of Gov. Quinn, the proximity of the new site to our current campus and the quality of both the aerospace engineering and manufacturing talent," said Woodward chairman and CEO Thomas Gendron in a statement.

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