ExxonMobil To Expand 2 LA Chemical Plants

The Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — ExxonMobil said Thursday a $200 million project to expand two of its Louisiana chemical and lubricant plants will bring more than 400 construction and full-time jobs to the state over the next two years.

Company officials say construction on the chemical and lubricants plants in Baton Rouge and Port Allen will begin at the end of the year. When construction is completed in 2014, 45 full-time jobs will be added to the facilities which currently employ 2,600.

The project is expected to make the company's Baton Rouge plant the world's largest producer of finished lubricants, which is used in motor oils, gear oils and greases as well as specialized lubricants for aviation, marine and industrial applications. The expanded 8.3-acre plant will replace an existing manufacturing facility in New Jersey.

ExxonMobil already operates more than 30 facilities in the state. Company officials say expansion of the Port Allen site will include a new state of the art blending center and the two facilities will be integrated.

"Over the past three years, the corporation's capital expenditures in the state exceeded $930 million," said Paul Stratford, manager of the Baton Rouge chemical plant.

Gov. Bobby Jindal said the expansion demonstrates the state's continued commitment to retaining and growing Louisiana businesses.

"We're proud that ExxonMobil chose to expand right here in our state because of our world class energy infrastructure, strong business climate and incomparable workforce," Jindal said in a statement.

Officials said the expansion has been in the works since 2009 and the state will provide a $1.8 million modernization tax credit payable over five years to the company. ExxonMobil is also expected to use the state's enterprise zone and industrial tax exemption incentive program.

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