

WI Electronic Recycling Company Builds In AR

The Associated Press

ELKHORN, Wis. (AP) — An electronic recycling company will build its first plant in Arkansas because delays in getting permits in Wisconsin are costing it money.

Elkhorn-based DP Electronic Recycling has been trying for more than a year and a half to get permits to build in a Whitewater technology park, and it is losing about \$1 million in revenue for each month of delay, CEO Dale Helgeson told The Janesville Gazette.

Helgeson said it took about three months to get a permit in Arkansas, so the company is building its first plant there. It still hopes to build a plant and possibly its headquarters in Whitewater, he said.

DP Electronic Recycling plans to turn the cathode ray tubes, or CRTs, found in older televisions and computer monitors into floor tiles using a process developed by the Catholic University of America in Washington. The company has spent about \$120,000 so far testing the tiles and process, Helgeson said.

Ed Lynch, hazardous waste program chief for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, said the agency approached the approval process with caution because of toxins in CRTs but the process hasn't taken an undue amount of time.

"I think we're using a reasonable amount of caution because our mission, in part, is to protect the environment and public health," Lynch said.

Lynch said regulators have questions about the lead levels in CRTs and want to make sure the tiles are safe. DP Electronic Recycling must show the tiles don't contain more lead than similar products or leak lead into the environment.

Whitewater officials have looked forward to construction of a plant, which is expected to bring 80 to 100 jobs.

Community Development Authority Chairman Jeff Knight called the recycling process "revolutionary."

"It's innovative and brand new. . . . Sometimes federal and state law might not have caught up with innovation," he said. "My gut tells me this would be good for the community and good for the area."

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