



## News

### APG Meridian holds 'ground breaking' ceremony

By Tom MacCallum/Richmond County Daily Journal  
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APG Meridian, maker of Swedge Lock Fence, Gate and Railing products, formally announced its arrival Monday morning at a building south of Hamlet on Marks Creek Lane.

"We will be goodwill ambassadors for you," said Steve Kafin, chairman of APG, citing the cooperation he and Sam Kafin, president, received in locating in Richmond County.

He said the message is that businesses can build a business in the United States such as theirs with local cooperation such as they received.

"We want to return the favor," he said.

From the N.C. Department of Commerce on down, Kafin said APG had "nothing but great cooperation" and developed friendships in a business kind of way.



He said the difference that caused them to select Richmond County in locating the plant was the people they met in the area.

Sam Kafin said the aluminum fencing product that will be produced at the Hamlet plant is a patented process with no welding and no exterior screws or fasteners.

He said the company is a leading provider of the high-end aluminum fence products.

"We hope to become even bigger," Sam Kafin said.

Richmond County Commission Chairman Kenneth Robinette thanked the Kafin family for its confidence in Richmond County by locating here.

He said the county was friendly in its approach to being pro-business. Robinette said commissioners were constantly pro-active with economic development to expand the tax base and local economy.

Hamlet Mayor Cary Garner said his city was excited about the diversification APG will bring to the community in providing jobs and different opportunities to the citizens of the community.

Richmond County Development Team chairman Butch Farrah said APG will have a huge impact in the community. It will create 70 jobs.

Rick Sago, Richmond County director of development, said recruiting APG was a cooperative effort.

"Everyone pulling together paid off," he said.

APG is locating in the former Stanley-Bostich building in Hamlet and investing \$2.5 million over the next three years.

The Pompano Beach, Fla.-based company, which plans to be operational by Oct. 1, will produce its products at the 64,000-square-foot facility.

The jobs created will include skilled manufacturing positions, as well as positions in the distribution portion of the facility.

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While wages will vary by job function, the anticipated average weekly wage for the new jobs is \$11.95 an hour plus benefits. That's more than the Richmond County average hourly wage of \$11.57 — a figure that does not include benefits.

The announcement was made possible in part by a \$60,000 One North Carolina Fund grant. Other partners include the N.C. Department of Commerce, Hamlet, Richmond Community College, N.C. Southeast organization, Progress Energy and Piedmont Natural Gas.

APGs "swedging" technique produces a more structurally sound bond than the use of either welding or fasteners in the assembly process. Without the need for either, the system eliminates the potential for rust or corrosion that plagues other fencing systems, APG said.

Swedge Lock Systems is a division of APG Meridian out of Pompano Beach, Fla., and in production for more than 15 years. The products are used for home and commercial application.

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