



## Top Story

### Trinity announces \$43M expansion

By Tom MacCallum/Richmond County Daily Journal  
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Trinity Manufacturing Inc. has announced a \$43 million product line expansion at the company's Hamlet facility, county economic developer Rick Sago said Tuesday.

The announcement was made at the Richmond County Commission's mid-month meeting.

Trinity is a leading producer of chloropicrin and sodium hypochlorite bleach. Chloropicrin is used as a soil fumigant with such crops as strawberries, peppers, onions, tobacco, flowers, tomatoes and nursery crops.

"We are building a facility to produce the basic raw materials for our products from salt and electricity," said Chuck Davis, vice president of sales and marketing.

"The expansion will require 18 new employees and will guarantee and secure product supply to meet the growing needs of our customers," he said.



Sago said the facility now has 35 employees.

"Engineering and construction for the project will be done by BE&K Engineering of Birmingham, Ala., and we anticipate the startup of the new facility in August 2007," Davis said.

#### Significant

At \$43 million, Sago said the addition is the most significant industrial announcement in Richmond County in recent years. He said it was more than the last five industrial announcements combined, excluding electric generation plants.

"This expansion is a prime example of how important our existing industries have been to Richmond County's economic stability and how their success is critical to our future growth," said Kenneth Robinette, county commission chairman.

Commissioner Paul Wilson Jr. said, "We have been told all along that expansion from within our existing industry base is an indicator of a healthy economy. This is a confirmation that we are doing the right things in Richmond County."

N.C. Commerce Secretary Jim Fain said, "We are delighted Trinity Manufacturing Inc. is expanding its business in North Carolina. They have been an important part of Richmond County for nearly 20 years.

"The products Trinity makes are very important to a variety of industries, particularly agricultural and textiles, which are vital elements of North Carolina's economy. We congratulate Trinity Manufacturing and wish them continued success."

#### Water expansion

Richmond County has agreed to spend roughly \$1.8 million for water distribution improvements to serve the expanded facility, said County Manager Jim Haynes. The expansion will make Trinity the county's largest water customer.

Sago said that amounts to \$186,000 in water fees each year in addition to \$357,000 more in taxes paid to the county.

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"So the monetary benefits from this expansion — beyond the new employees — will be twofold with an increased tax base, which will generate property taxes for the General Fund, and increased water sales which will boost revenues in the Water Fund," Haynes said.

Commissioners approved a tax-incentive package Tuesday for Trinity. Sago said the property tax grant program will return a portion of property taxes paid by Trinity over a five-year period.

Revenue from the increased water sales will allow the county to justify the system improvements, Haynes said, as well as enable the county to serve other customers better.

#### Support

The project received support from the Golden LEAF Foundation, which committed \$140,000 toward the water project, he said.

Sago said the effort included assistance from the N.C. Department of Commerce, Richmond Community College, the N.C. Rural Center and Progress Energy.

The city of Rockingham was instrumental in working with Trinity on its wastewater discharge from the new facility allowing for its expansion, Haynes said.

Robinette said Richmond County was second to none among rural counties when it came to being the most aggressive with its economic development. He commended the cooperation shown by municipalities in the county, notably Rockingham and Hamlet, with such development.

"We have a well-run machine" he said. Sago said all those involved in progress in the county were all "moving in the same direction."

(Managing Editor Stacy Stenberg contributed to this report).

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