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Top Story

Viking Pools will create 50 jobs

By Tom MacCallum/Richmond County Daily Journal
Monday, August 14, 2006 11:50 PM EDT

A new plant coming to Richmond County will manufacture composite pools and spas, Rick Sago, county director of development announced Monday night at the meeting of the board of commissioners.

Viking Pools will occupy the county's last shell building on Enterprise Drive in the Rockingham West Industrial Park off Silver Grove Church Road.

The opening will represent the creation of 50 new jobs in the county and an initial investment of \$2 million.

Sago said construction will begin in the third quarter of 2006 with plans to be operational by the spring of 2007.

He said Viking has been in business for more than 30 years with operations in West Virginia, Florida, California and Texas.



"After entertaining offers from several other areas, we chose Richmond County for our new plant," said Todd Stahl, Viking president.

"The business-friendly atmosphere, quality of life and proximity to other major markets all played a role in our decision," he said.

"Years of hard work and determination by Richmond County and its municipalities is paying off for our citizens," said Kenneth Robinette, chairman, Richmond County Commission, and member of the Richmond Economic Development Corporation. "We are happy to welcome Viking Pools to Richmond County."

The company will open its new facility in a 40,000 square foot shell building ready to be adapted to Viking's use. Sago said, "This is the third shell building which has been transferred from the county for manufacturing."

The shell-building program is a cooperative effort between the county, Richmond Economic Development Corporation, the city of Rockingham and Pee Dee Electric Membership Corp., he said.

Sago said the county would study the possibility of constructing another shell building the same size or larger to prospective industry. He said it was still important to have such facilities available to recruit industry.

"The lead for this project came through the N.C. Department of Commerce's main office in Raleigh," Sago said.

The county is now working with the department of commerce and its Rural Center on a water improvement project which will increase the fire hydrant pressure at the plant.

Commissioners Monday night approved funds for that and other projects to improve water service to industry.

Commissioner Thad Ussery said, "We are happy that Viking chose Richmond County. This announcement reinforces the continued diversification of our manufacturing base."

Donnie Spivey, chief executive officer and executive vice president of PDEMC, said, "Our

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partnership with Richmond County and the city of Rockingham has been one which has produced jobs and improved the quality of life in the community we serve. We are happy to be a part of this cooperative effort and look forward to other opportunities to serve Richmond County.”

Rockingham Mayor Gene McLaurin said, “We are very happy to welcome Viking to Rockingham. This announcement is another example of how the cooperative efforts are paying off in additional investment and increased employment for our citizens.”

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