

MonoSol Announces \$39 million Expansion

Courtesy of the NWI Times Newspaper
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LA PORTE | A Northwest Indiana company is planning a \$39 million expansion of its operations in La Porte.

The city council Monday night approved a 10-year tax abatement on the \$5 million to be invested in a new 50,000-square-foot building along with \$34 million of new equipment at MonoSol.



The company came to La Porte in 2008 when it built a facility at the Thomas Rose Industrial Park on the city's east side.

MonoSol has been in business for more than 50 years with other manufacturing operations in Portage and England along with corporate offices in Merrillville.

Rob McGreal, vice president of human resources for MonoSol, said other sites were looked at for the expansion, but the company's reasons for choosing La Porte for its new investment include having the infrastructure already here and support of the company from the community.

McGreal said the La Porte site has workforce of more than 130 and another 37 jobs, mostly union operators, will be created from the expansion.

McGreal said four manufacturing lines with the potential to make most if not all of the MonoSol products will be housed in the new space.

He said the plastic cubes used to hold automatic dishwasher soap are among the water soluble film products made by MonoSol.

The company also makes water soluble films for use in areas like medical waste disposal and packaging for pesticides.

"It's a niche market but one we're proud to participate in and lead the world in doing," McGreal said.

The company already this year added a 70,000-square-foot addition to its La Porte operations, a move that created 26 new jobs.

In 2010, there was an \$18 million expansion at a site that now contains more than 200,000 square feet of building space.

La Porte Mayor Blair Milo said the continued investment by MonoSol is especially significant because the company's growth has occurred during tough economic times.

"It's an exciting moment to be part of," she said.

McGreal said construction should begin soon after the new year with completion scheduled in 2014.

In May, Japanese manufacturer Kuraray bought MonoSol. Kuraray currently supplies PVA film for optical uses including a polarizing film, an essential component of liquid crystal displays. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.