



FRANKLIN FAVORITE



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Package Company Further Diversifies Franklin Economy

A new company — Integrated Pharmaceutical Packaging — is preparing to open in Franklin in the former Tyco Electronics plant on Ky. 1008.

IPP President Steve Richardson said his company will receive prescription and over-the-counter medication in bulk from drug manufacturers, package it, label it and ship it.

“There are virtual drug companies out there that never see their product. They contract to have it made, and they contract to put it out on shelves. There is a great demand to have a packaging operation that is full service,” Richardson said. “We want our customers to worry about R&D (research and development), marketing and sales. We’ll handle the rest.”

Richardson worked in a similar business in Fountain Run, Ky. for four years. He brought several co-workers with him and plans to employ 10 at startup, possibly as early as the end of December. He hopes to add a second shift and 7 to 10 employees by the second quarter of 2009. Employment could swell to 25 to 30 by the end of next year, he said.

“I would like to get into the lab work aspect of it, and if we did, we would need chemists,” Richardson said. “The jobs we have now are good-paying jobs, between \$12 and \$14 per hour with full benefits.”

Richardson said he plans to ask the state Department for Employment Services for its assistance with the application process.

Richardson is overseeing a massive renovation project in 40,000 of the building’s 180,000 square feet. He is using local contractors and buying all of the materials here.

Our goal is to do as much as we can in Simpson County. We have our

insurance here. We hired an attorney here, and we will bank here. If someone can provide us with bottles and even labeling, we will buy that here, too.”

Richardson said his business is precise and meticulous. “There is no room for errors.” Security will be state-of-the-art and likely include vision scanning systems. And it must be extremely sanitary. Pharmaceutical packaging operations, like the drug makers, are closely monitored by the



Food and Drug Administration and Drug Enforcement Agency among others.

Richardson said he would have 75 percent of his equipment in house by Sunday. He will start with two lines — one of which can fill 200 bottles a minute — and hopefully add another three lines if business goes well. Ultimately, he hopes to use up the rest of the available space in the plant.

IPP will share the building with Blu Pharmaceuticals — a generic drug provider which has increased its business 20-fold since opening in Franklin about a year ago, according to President Bill Luster.

Like Blu Pharmaceutical, IPP moved to Franklin from a neighboring southcentral Kentucky location.

Integrated Pharmaceutical Packaging had a building picked out in Glasgow, but Richardson, who lives in Glasgow, knew Luster and decided to look in to Franklin. He liked what he saw.

“This just felt like the right place,” Richardson said. “We came down to look at the building and met with (Industrial Authority Executive Director) Dennis Griffin and folks in the community. The location is perfect. The more we thought about it, the more we knew it was the right fit.”

Luster, who moved his pharmaceutical company to Franklin from Bowling Green, agreed.

“When I think about the people in New York, they just can’t compete with this place. Franklin is right in the middle of two big hubs, Louisville and Nashville, and the labor situation is ideal. It’s a good place to do business,” Luster said.

“I was surprised,” Richardson said. “You have a lot of good industry here — diverse industry. Diversity is important in these economic times.”

“This is a fine community,” he added. “You are very industry friendly, yet you still have a smalltown feeling.”

Griffin said Franklin is fortunate to be adding jobs in these uncertain economic times, especially in December and January when others are shedding them.

“In today’s economic climate, this is great news for Franklin to have a new industry locate in the community and be hiring for new jobs at this time of year. It will be a great boost to our economy.”

Story by Charles Portmann