

Governor visits for plant expansion
Polyair announces addition of 19 new jobs during ribbon-cutting ceremony

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By FRANK JOHNSON



Photo by FRANK JOHNSON/*The Kentucky Standard*

ABOVE – Governor Steve Beshear, left, receives a tour of the Polyair Corporation facility in Bardstown guided by plant manager Rick Potter, center. The governor visited the factory to announce 19 new jobs secured, in part, by the Kentucky Business Investment program. BELOW – Polyair manufactures polyethylene sheets for use in protective packaging products and swimming pool covers.



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In announcing the expansion of the Polyair Corporation's plant in Bardstown, Governor Steve Beshear praised the industriousness of the county's citizens.

"It is a testament to the talented workforce ... we want to thank you for being here and making this company successful," Beshear said.

The governor, flanked by local officials, spoke to a small audience of plant employees on the factory floor against a backdrop of the company's product, rolls of polyethylene foam used in protective packaging products and swimming pool covers.

Bardstown Mayor Dick Heaton, Nelson County Economic Development Agency President Kim Huston and Nelson County Judge Executive Dean Watts attended the Monday ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the addition of 19 jobs and a capital investment of \$5.6 million.

"Nothing will do more to speed our economic recovery than jobs for Kentuckians," Beshear said. The jobs are a result of Polyair consolidating its foam production capacities to the Bardstown location following the shuttering of a Youngstown, Ohio, facility. Huston said the company's decision reflects confidence in the area.

"We had the opportunity to vie for this project. Our community put us ahead," she said.

Beshear also claimed the state's new incentive plan, the Kentucky Business Investment program, helped give the state a competitive edge. According to a press release from the governor's office, the KBI provided Polyair with \$750,000 that can be earned throughout a 10-year period through corporate income tax credits and wage assessments.

The press release also stated Polyair expects the incentives to allow for further job growth, producing up to 27 jobs.

Watts said the relationship between the community and the corporation has been further strengthened through the recent expansion.

"The Polyair plant has been a part of our industrial community since 1995 and we are very pleased that they have chosen Bardstown as an expansion site," he said.

After the ribbon cutting ceremony, plant manager Rick Potter gave Beshear and other officials a tour of the building's facilities. Potter explained the various stages of foam production, collection and storage.

Potter said Polyair's products primarily serve the industries of electronics, furniture and after-market automobile parts. According to company officials, Polyair is still in the process of transferring the additional equipment needed to get the plant's expanding capacity up and running.

Overall, the atmosphere surrounding the ceremony and the tour was positive, signaling that business leaders and politicians are hopeful of repairing the devastating impact caused by a bruising economic recession.

"It's not going to be a good year for Nelson County, Huston said. It's going to be a great year."