

It's a go, state approves Planet Friendly grant

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LIMA — The state approved more than \$156,000 in grants for Planet Friendly Polymers on Monday, clearing the way for a new Lima factory and the 60 or more jobs it will bring.

The Ohio Department of Development's Tax Credit Authority approved funding for the Lima project during a Monday morning meeting in Columbus. The aid includes a \$116,030 Ohio Job Creation Tax Credit and an additional \$40,000 through the state's Rapid Outreach Grant program, according to Jeff Sprague, vice president of Allen Economic Development Group.

"In terms of the project, this was a great one. The timing went relatively quickly and this really helps with those final infrastructure needs," Sprague said.

Planet Friendly Polymers' parent company, Maryland-based J. Terence Thompson LLC, plans to build a new factory in a section of the Warehouse Associates property on East Kibby Street. The company will take over 150,000 square feet of the facility to compound plastics used in storage trunks and footlockers.

The Rapid Outreach grant will be used to help pay for electrical upgrades needed to build a factory capable of melting and pelletizing plastic in what had previously been warehousing space used by Procter & Gamble. Along with the state Job Creation credit, the city of Lima is giving the company a new jobs tax credit, which returns a portion of income taxes collected from the company. The company will also receive training assistance through the recently launched Chemical Process Operations program as well as other state loans and incentives, AEDG President Marcel Wagner said.

The company collects scrap plastic left over from the manufacture of diapers and plastic shopping bags, forms it into pellets, then contracts with other companies to mold it into plastic cases used by the U.S. military and sold in stores.

The company plans to open in November with between 25 and 35 employees in three shifts. The jobs are expected to pay \$10 to \$15 an hour. According to the tax credit application, employment will climb to 60 jobs or more within three years.

News of those potential jobs had potential employees racing to get their applications in Monday, according to Quinton Thornton, regional account manager at Patrick Staffing, the company contracted to hire workers for the new plant. Thornton estimated that his office has received between 50 and 80 calls an hour Monday from people looking for work. By lunchtime, they had received more than 60 applications online.

Because of the number of applications, the company is asking people to use the online application, available at www.patrickstaffing.com.