

Bosch Rexroth Expansion a 'Reflection of Our Confidence' in Lehigh Valley

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Bosch Rexroth Corporation celebrated the latest investment in its long tenure in the Lehigh Valley on Aug. 11, opening an expansion to its North American hydraulics manufacturing campus in Bethlehem that will streamline operations and improve efficiency.

The international manufacturer, which put down roots in the Lehigh Valley nearly 60 years ago, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new building on its campus, a \$20 million, 50,000-square-foot logistics center.

"This investment is a reflection of our confidence in the team here in industrial hydraulics in North America, in the local team here in Bethlehem, in the Lehigh Valley, and it shows that we see an opportunity in North America," said Erwin Wieckowski, President & CEO of Bosch Rexroth North and Central America.

Based in Germany, Bosch Rexroth produces automation equipment for industrial and mobile uses. At its hub in Bethlehem, it designs and manufactures advanced hydraulic components and systems that power and control industrial machinery. The Lehigh Valley operations employ about 300.

Bosch Rexroth's expansion is just one of several recent investments that are solidifying Lehigh Valley as a leader in making and moving goods. Other recent expansions and additions include the production of pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, and food and beverages.

Adjacent to the company's industrial hydraulics manufacturing operations, the new logistics center will enhance Bosch Rexroth's ability to serve customers by improving lead times and increasing flexibility. Storage capacity will be increased by 50% with state-of-the-art systems for automated storage and retrieval.

Wieckowski said the facility will help the company work toward its goal of improving the competitiveness of North American manufacturing, by getting equipment and parts to customers in a timely manner.



"It's a very crucial part of our supply chain," said Frank Theil, Senior Vice President of Manufacturing.

The company began operating in the Lehigh Valley in 1967, in Easton, and later relocated to Bethlehem.

"Companies don't stay in a community that long by accident," said Kristin Cahayla-Hoffman, Vice President of Business Development & Attraction at Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (LVEDC). "They stay because they find the people, the resources, and the support they need to succeed. And they grow because a region grows with them."



"That is what makes Bosch Rexroth such an important part of the Lehigh Valley story," she said. "Our region has long been known for making and moving the products that power America, and beyond."

More than 700 manufacturers collectively produce an output of \$9 billion, ranking Lehigh Valley among the Top 15% of manufacturing markets in the nation, based on Gross Domestic Product.

Employment in manufacturing in the Lehigh Valley has grown three times as fast as the

nation since 2010. When those jobs are combined with employment in logistics, the industrial sector is the single biggest driver of jobs in the Lehigh Valley, with nearly 73,000.

"This is a tremendous vote of confidence in Bethlehem," said Sean Ziller, Bethlehem's Deputy Director of Community & Economic Development. "One of the best economic development outcomes a community can achieve is having an existing employer choosing to invest, expand, and grow right here in our city."

The Bosch Rexroth expansion was constructed by J.G. Petrucci Company, Inc. and designed by Spillman Farmer Architects. It was completed ahead of schedule and under budget.

"Bosch created a team of really good people for this project," said Joe Petrucci, Project Executive at J.G. Petrucci Company, Inc.

The new logistics center replaces a location that operated six miles away in Bethlehem Township.

(Photos by LVEDC)