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Sonoco Announces Major Facility Upgrade in Darlington County

Company to invest \$100 million in plant

COLUMBIA, S.C. – December 13, 2011 – Sonoco, a global producer of packaging products, today announced plans to upgrade its Darlington County plant. The \$100 million investment is expected to generate up to 10 new jobs, in addition to the more than 1,600 employees currently working for the company in Hartsville.

“We are extremely excited about this project. It is the single largest capital investment that Sonoco has made to our Hartsville manufacturing operations and in South Carolina,” said Sonoco President and Chief Operating Officer Jack Sanders. “In addition to maintaining the viability of our operations and protecting hundreds of existing jobs, the project will create new growth opportunities and new jobs.”

Sonoco will invest about \$75 million to add a new biomass boiler to its plant in Hartsville, replacing two aging coal-fired boilers. The new boiler will be fueled primarily by woody biomass created by regional logging activity, but can also run on natural gas. The boiler will produce about 16 megawatts of “green” energy that will be consumed by the manufacturing complex, as well as steam that is used in the paper making process. The company will also upgrade a machine that produces corrugated paperboard, as well as emission control technology on another boiler at the plant.

With expected receipt of the required construction permits this week, groundbreaking will occur in December 2011, with construction continuing until July of 2013. The boiler is expected to be operational by the fourth quarter of 2013.

“Sonoco is a world-class company and we are excited that they are making this large investment in Darlington County. This announcement not only indicates the company’s commitment to South Carolina – it also demonstrates that we are doing the right things on the economic development front to attract large investments like this one,” said Gov. Nikki Haley.

Employment activity during construction will peak at around 200, with up to 10 new jobs added, including about 30 indirect jobs due to the amount of biomass material that has to be collected and delivered to Sonoco. Sonoco has asked its contractor, McBurney, to work with the State Department of Employment and Workforce and local employment agencies to hire as many qualified, locally-based, skilled workers as possible.

“For more than a century Sonoco has played an important part in South Carolina’s manufacturing sector and we congratulate them on this new investment. Today’s announcement is another indication that ours continues to be a manufacturing state,” said Bobby Hitt, Secretary of Commerce.

Since the beginning of the year, South Carolina has recruited more than \$3.3 billion in investment and more than 12,000 new jobs in the manufacturing sector.

“This investment by Sonoco is a testament to the globally competitive workforce in Darlington County,” said Darlington County Council Chairman Billy Baldwin. “Sonoco’s investment is one of the largest industrial investments in the history of the county. The county council and the school board have responded to Sonoco’s commitment to Darlington County with a globally competitive performance-based tax incentive package. We thank the legislative delegation for providing this project the support of the S.C. Department of Commerce and ability to provide competitive tax rates.”

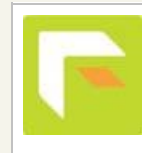


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South Carolina has a deep
history in aviation and

aerospace. From companies fitting traditional aluminum-skinned aircraft, to defense companies employing the latest technologies, more than 100 such companies call South Carolina home. We’ll be celebrating the future of aviation at the 2012 Farnborough International Air Show, July 9-15th where South Carolina delegates will be on hand to discuss why industry leaders like Boeing, GE, Northrop-Grumman and Lockheed-Martin come to South Carolina.

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"This new biomass boiler system is the culmination of Sonoco's ongoing sustainability efforts," said Robert Long, executive director of the Darlington County Economic Development Partnership. "Sonoco is a great corporate citizen that embraces their environment responsibility."

The Coordinating Council for Economic Development approved the company for a rural infrastructure grant of \$100,000, which will be used to improve roads used by the trucks going to and from the facility.

In an effort to minimize interruptions to local traffic, Sonoco worked closely with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and Darlington County to identify the best route to get the trucks into and out of its facility.

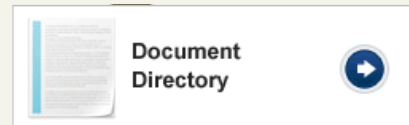
About Sonoco

Founded in 1899, Sonoco is a global provider of a variety of consumer packaging, industrial products, protective packaging and packaging supply chain services. With annualized net sales of approximately \$5 billion, the Company has more than 19,000 employees working in 340 operations in 34 countries, serving some of the world's best known brands in some 85 nations. Sonoco is a proud member of the 2011/2012 Dow Jones Sustainability World Index. For more information on the Company, visit our website at www.sonoco.com.

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