

sync[®] NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES FROM N.C. COMMERCE



Governor Cooper presents the ceremonial gift of a fine china plate engraved with the state seal to Pacon's CEO Mike Shannon (right).

Manufacturer Chooses Brunswick County for New Plant, Brings 299 Jobs

Pacon Manufacturing Corporation, a contract manufacturer, has selected Brunswick County for its new plant, creating 299 new jobs and investing \$37.6 million, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced April 5. The company will bring manufacturing to Navassa.

"Hurricane Florence dealt a powerful blow to this area just six months ago, but North Carolinians are strong and resilient and today we are here to celebrate the good news of good jobs," said **Governor Cooper**. "Pacon Manufacturing chose North Carolina because of our strong workforce, infrastructure and community support, and they are committed to working with us as we rebuild."

Pacon Manufacturing develops and manufactures wipes, pads, towels and liquids for the consumer, industrial and medical industries. Pacon's products range from disinfecting wipes to makeup remover pads to personal care wipes, and the



(L-R) Lumberton Mayor Bruce Davis, Rempac Owner/CEO Marc Bushell; Governor Cooper; and Channing Jones, Executive Director of the Robeson County Economic Development Commission, earlier today at Rempac.

Governor Cooper Visits Lumberton Manufacturer Today, Announces RIA Grant to Protect Plant from Future Storms

Governor Roy Cooper visited Rempac Foam Corporation's manufacturing facility in Lumberton today (April 16), where he announced a grant to help protect the business and its jobs from future floods and discussed ongoing efforts to rebuild from Hurricane Florence. During his tour, the governor met with company officials and employees and inspected the area where a state-supported project aims to make the facility more resilient.

Rempac's facility flooded during Hurricane Florence in 2018 and Hurricane Matthew in 2016, forcing the company to shut down the plant for long periods of time following both events. The Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA), an appointed board supported by professionals at the N.C. Department of Commerce, has awarded a grant of \$700,000 to the City of Lumberton to build an approximately 4-foot-high earthen berm around Rempac's 250,000-square-foot plant to prevent flood damage from future hurricanes. Commerce is working to secure additional funding for the project. The City will construct and maintain the berm on publicly-controlled easements.

The addition of the berm will support Rempac in retaining jobs and help position the company for future growth. The plant, which

company manufactures for the leaders in consumer-packaged goods. Pacon Manufacturing was founded in 1949.

"Pacon Manufacturing looks forward to this opportunity to partner with the people and resources of Brunswick County and the great state of North Carolina," said **Mike Shannon, Pacon's Chairman of the Board**. "We would like to thank the teams at NC Commerce and Brunswick County, among others, who have been instrumental in making this possible. This new facility in Navassa is a key component to our growth in the upcoming years."

"Manufacturers need workforce and infrastructure, and Brunswick County has both," said **Secretary of Commerce Anthony M. Copeland**. "I am proud to welcome Pacon Manufacturing's significant investment in North Carolina. Pacon is making a big bet on our state, and I know we have what it takes to deliver."

The North Carolina Department of Commerce and the Economic Development Partnership of N.C. (EDPNC) were instrumental in supporting the company's expansion decision.

Salaries for the new jobs will vary by position but will average \$31,273.

A performance-based grant of \$300,000 from the One North Carolina Fund will help facilitate Pacon Manufacturing's opening of its new facility in North Carolina.

In addition to [North Carolina Commerce](#) and the [Economic Development Partnership of N.C.](#), other key partners in the project include the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [North Carolina's Southeast, Brunswick County, Brunswick Business & Industry Development](#) and [Duke Energy](#)

[Read more.](#)



A new arrival at the Port of Wilmington.

North Carolina Ports' Third Neo-Panamax Crane Arrives in Wilmington

North Carolina Ports' third neo-Panamax crane arrived to the Port of Wilmington on Monday, April 8. The Zhen Hua 25 arrived to the port following a three-month journey from Shanghai, China.

The new crane is identical to the previous two neo-Panamax cranes North Carolina Ports received in March 2018. The addition of the cranes enables the Port of Wilmington to operate 14,000 TEU vessels - the largest ships currently calling the

manufactures a variety of flexible foam plastic products, sustained significant damage from Florence. The company has had a presence in Robeson County for 30 years.

"This innovative economic development grant will help Rempac, its employees and the Robeson County economy at a critical time," Governor Cooper said. "Rebuilding stronger and smarter means looking for ways to prevent future damage, help businesses continue to thrive and keep North Carolinians employed in good jobs."

Along with the grant to protect the Rempac facility, the RIA also recently awarded the City of Lumberton \$400,000 to help demolish and remove a former motel and restaurant flooded and severely damaged by hurricanes Matthew and Florence. Robeson Food, LLC will redevelop the site. The first phase will include the construction of three restaurants, and a proposed second phase will feature construction of a new hotel.

The two RIA-approved grants are funded by federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - Economic Development program funds available to local governments to help create and retain jobs.

"Helping people get back to business and back to work after a disaster is good for families, communities and our overall economy," said North Carolina Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland.

People out of work because of Hurricane Florence have also gotten help from N.C. Commerce's Workforce and Employment Security divisions.

In Robeson and other hard-hit counties, 405 people have been hired to help with clean-up and recovery using \$2.24 million in federal Disaster Employment Grant funds. Commerce's workforce team, in partnership with local Workforce Development Boards, places people into jobs with government agencies and nonprofits. In addition, more than 6,000 people in Florence disaster counties have gotten \$5.4 million in standard unemployment insurance through the Division of Employment Security, with 1,872 people receiving nearly \$1.6 million in benefits from the Disaster Unemployment Assistance program

United States East Coast. The installation process is scheduled to take two months.

TEU is an acronym for 'twenty-foot equivalent unit,' a common measure of volume in the shipping industry.

"The arrival of the third neo-Panamax crane is a continuation of a massive infrastructure improvements plan NC Ports has in place to enhance the terminal in Wilmington," said **Brian E. Clark, North Carolina Ports Chief Operating Officer**. "The advancements we're making with our cranes, container terminal and gate complex are paving the way for monumental growth at the Port of Wilmington and allowing us to efficiently accommodate our growing customer base."

North Carolina Ports' \$200 million capital improvements plan includes a wider turning basin, berth enhancements, the new neo-Panamax cranes and an overhaul of Wilmington's container terminal. The terminal renovations will double the port's annual throughput capacity to 1.2 million TEUs and triple its refrigerated container capacity.

The three neo-Panamax cranes were purchased for \$33.8 million and manufactured by Shanghai Zhenhua Heavy Industry Co., Ltd. (ZPMC). ZPMC is the world's largest heavy duty equipment manufacturer of port equipment. There are currently no domestic manufacturers of ship-to-shore container cranes.



(L-R) N.C. Commerce Chief of Staff George Sherrill; Caswell Award Winner Leonard Tyson; and Lockhart Taylor, Commerce Assistant Secretary for Employment Security.

Commerce Employee Leonard Tyson Saluted for 45 Years of Public Service



While in Robeson County today (April 16), Governor Cooper also participated in a ground breaking ceremony for a new terminal at the Lumberton Municipal Airport.



(L-R) Isolera Extracts CEO Jack Tatum with N.C. Commerce Assistant Secretary for Rural Economic Development Kenny Flowers at the April 5 ceremony in Granville County.

Isolera Extracts, Industrial Hemp Company Cuts the Ribbon in Oxford

N.C. Commerce Assistant Secretary for Rural Economic Development **Kenny Flowers** offered remarks at a ribbon cutting ceremony for Isolera Extracts in Oxford April 5. Company **CEO Jack Tatum** and local and regional officials were also on hand for the event.

Leonard Tyson, an employee with the Department of Commerce's Employment Security Division was honored for his many years of public service in a ceremony at the North Carolina Museum of History April 2.

Tyson received the Richard Caswell Award, one of twenty-one state employees with 45 years of public service recognized. The recipients, who work at nine state agencies, join the distinguished ranks of long-serving employees who have earned the award since it was established in 1998 in tribute to North Carolina's first governor.

Collectively, this year's award winners have devoted more than 945 years to public service.

"Many workers think about retiring as soon as they are eligible, but Caswell Award honorees demonstrate an extraordinary commitment and dedication to public service," said **Barbara Gibson, Director of the Office of State Human Resources**. "With their deep institutional knowledge and capacity to grow with our evolving workplace, they have contributed substantially to a remarkable scope of work across state agencies - all for the betterment of the people of our great state."

In addition to Gibson, the ceremony featured remarks from **Ronald G. Penny, Secretary of the Department of Revenue** and, at age 65 and with 30 years of state service, the most senior member of Governor Cooper's Cabinet. Awards were presented by leaders from the agencies where the honorees serve. **Steve Daniels, WTVD news anchor**, served as emcee.

The Richard Caswell Award acknowledges and expresses appreciation for noteworthy, extended dedicated service. The Office of State Human Resources administers the program.

Isolera Extracts' industrial hemp processing service will be housed in a 187,000 square-foot building formerly used by Burlington Mills. Granville County officials noted that North Carolina's long tradition of organic farming, along with its support for the industrial hemp industry and its strategic geographic location, were key factors in the company's decision to locate in the state.

Plans call for Isolera Extracts to be operational by the beginning of April. Initially, Isolera Extracts plans to process about 3,000 pounds of industrial hemp per eight-hour shift. Within six months, however, the estimate calls for a production level of about 10,000 pounds of industrial hemp each eight hour-shift.

On Our Radar

- [A Revolution Sweeping Railroads Upends How America Moves Its Stuff](#) (*Wall Street Journal* - April 3)

N.C. in the News

- [North Carolina trying to attract more 'cleantech' companies](#) *WRAL.com* - April 15)
- [UNC's Innovation Showcase spotlights ideas with impact potential](#) *WRAL TechWire* - April 12)
- [HAECO Americas expanding operations at PTI](#) *Triad Business Journal* - April 11)
- [Hendersonville city manager named NC Main Street Champion](#) (*Hendersonville Times-News* - April 9)
- [Mebane looking into joining N.C. Main Street Program](#) *Mebane Enterprise* - April 8)
- [State of the Region: Businesses urged to provide role](#) *Daily Reflector* - Greenville - April 6)
- [Tourism Experts: Wilmington's Diversity Contributes To Visitor Appeal](#) *WilmingtonBiz.com* - April 3)

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SYNC is North Carolina Commerce's electronic newsletter for local government officials, private-sector allies, state policy makers, and other economic development leaders. We offer unfiltered details about new economic development projects and events, useful news about your peers, and opportunities to synchronize with statewide programs and tools in order to advance economic development in your community. [Send your story ideas to the editor.](#)

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