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LG CHEM PLANT

Factory construction ahead of schedule

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LG Chem is accelerating toward the start of production in its Holland facility.

The South Korea-based advanced battery manufacturer will start production three months earlier than previously planned, an LG Chem official announced Tuesday.

The company completed construction of the majority of its factory space on 48th Street and received an occupancy permit for the building last week.

"We think Holland will become a hometown for advanced batteries on a global scale," said Kee Eun, business planning director for LG Chem Michigan Inc., a division of the massive global corporation LG Chem.

Eun spoke to the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce's monthly Early Bird Breakfast on Tuesday. He showed aerial photographs of the facility's construction, saying construction was ahead of schedule with the main part of the building now safe for occupancy. The adjoining plant that makes the electrolytes used in the batteries is nearing completion.

The planned start of production has been moved up three months, from April 2013 to January 2013, he said. The company has hired 30 engineers and 100 machine operators so far, with a total of just more than 300 to be hired by the end of the year. The

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engineers have had 10-12 weeks of training in South Korea.

Eun closed his remarks by thanking Holland for building an environment where the factory can thrive and the people seem welcoming to foreigners and their families.

"It's not only what we experience in the business domain — it exists in our private lives," Eun said, noting the warm welcome his children received at school.

And he said the company plans to be part of the community. "We at LG Chem don't just want a free ride in; we want to contribute."

His presentation was greeted with applause

from the Chamber of Commerce audience of business owners, non-profit leaders and government officials.

"They're on schedule — they're ahead of schedule — they're pleased the way things are going and they want to continue to invest in Holland," said Holland Mayor Kurt Dykstra. "That's three pieces of very good news for Holland."

In 2009, LG Chem announced a \$303 million investment at the 48th Street location. Facilitated by a \$151.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy, the 600,000-square-foot facility could employ up to 400 people.

President Barack Obama presided over the facility's groundbreaking ceremony in July 2010.

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