

Wentworth closing N.J. tool shop

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Wentworth Technologies Inc. is reshaping its injection blow mold toolmaking group, consolidating its U.S. operations and beefing up capabilities in Eastern Europe to further its global reach.

The company is closing its Jersey Mold & Tool shop in Millville, N.J., shifting North American injection blow mold production to its Vandalia, Ohio, Electro Form subsidiary.

Some production also will be done in Poland.

"To be effective in North America, you have to be more global," Ted Kuskowski, vice president of business development for Burlington, Ontario-based Wentworth, said in an May 6 telephone interview.

"You have to be able to follow our customers wherever they go."

The Vandalia site has more engineering and design capability than Jersey Mold had, is more centrally located and has on-site testing. The company plans to sell the Millville site.

Wentworth's PET preform and injection blow molding automated "supercell" manufacturing in Poniatawa, Poland, will begin making some components for Ohio-made molds, lowering costs for the Electro Form unit.

Wentworth has five facilities in Poland - with thermoforming in Zarnowiec, injection molding in Bydgoszez and mold making in Bydgoszez, Poniatawa and a newly opened site in Rseszow.

While competitors have looked to Asia for low-cost manufacturing, Kuskowski said his firm - and many of its customers - have done more investing in Eastern Europe.

The region not only has a low wage scale, it is adjacent to major markets in Western Europe. Poland also is a new member of the European Union and is investing to match its standards to those of its neighbors.

"We are very optimistic about the mold-making and plastic processing opportunities there," Kuskowski said.

The company has no plans to abandon its existing product lines or customers, he said. Its PET preform and injection blow molds group will continue without change at its mold-making site in Mansfield Woodhouse, England, and its sales and service unit in Singapore.