



Governor Bill Richardson Announces Manufacturing Facility to Bring 700 New Jobs to Los Lunas

Nation's leading cabinet maker to create high-wage jobs and new opportunities

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LOS LUNAS - Governor Bill Richardson announced today that one of the nation's leading cabinet makers will locate a new manufacturing facility in Los Lunas, employing approximately 700 New Mexicans. Merillat Industries, a division of Masco Corporation is planning to break ground on the \$36 million, 260,000 square foot facility during the first quarter of 2005, and plans to be operational by fall 2006.

"These good paying jobs with great benefits are a wonderful present to the people of Los Lunas and New Mexico," said Governor Richardson. "Merillat's decision says that our plan to move New Mexico forward is working. We're one of the top states for job growth and that's because we are cutting taxes, adding smart incentives, and investing in education, transportation and healthcare."

Jobs at the plant are targeted to pay between \$22,000 and \$26,000 annually; in addition the company provides a comprehensive benefit package. This wage is above Valencia County's average annual wage of \$20,500. Because of that the company will qualify for New Mexico's tax credit for high-wage jobs.

Secretary of Economic Development Rick Homans credited the New Mexico Economic Development Partnership with initially identifying the project, and for leading the successful negotiation efforts.

"The Governor's strategy has been to make New Mexico competitive, and then to go out and market our workforce, incentives, and quality of life," Homans said. "This week's two announcements totaling 850 new jobs is proof that the strategy is working."

Jim Colson, president of the New Mexico Economic Development Partnership, said cooperation between the state and local officials was a key part of making the project work.

He said the Governor met with and called company officials, and Los Lunas village officials, including Mayor Louis Huning and Village Administrator Philip Jaramillo, agreed to fast-track the planning and permitting process to meet the company's production schedule.

"This cooperation is what a company looks for when they are looking for a new location, Colson said."Merillat came to New Mexico, and they found partners at every level of government."

Merillat was founded in 1946 and is headquartered in Adrian, Michigan. Merillat is part of the MascoBuilder Cabinet Group, which has 15 manufacturing plants nationwide with more than 7,000 employees. Merillat is the number one cabinet choice in new construction.

Clay Kiefaber, Masco Group Vice President, responsible for the Masco Builder Cabinet Group lauded the pro-business climate that Governor Richardson has created. "New Mexico's competitive business incentives at both the state and local level, together with its high quality workforce, create an unbeatable package."

Parent company, Masco Corporation, is today one of the world's largest manufacturers of brand name consumer products for the home and family with approximately 61,000 employees.

"We've all been working hard to create new opportunity in New Mexico, and I am happy to see our efforts are paying off," Senator Michael Sanchez. "This new manufacturing facility will provide jobs and benefits for hundreds of residents in my district. I want to welcome Merillat to Valencia County, and I want them to know that I'll help them grow their business here."

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