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Allegro brings 45 jobs to Pickens

Maker of safety equipment plans to buy from local companies

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PICKENS — Not only will safety-equipment manufacturer Allegro Industries bring 45 new jobs to Pickens when its new plant opens next year, it also will bring added business to a variety of local companies already operating in the Upstate, leaders said Monday.

The comments ended a period of intense speculation about the new business, which had been referred to during negotiations as the "JS project."

Garden Grove, Calif.-based Allegro will spend $4.53 million to construct the 40,000-square-foot manufacturing, design, and research and development facility at the Pickens County Commerce Park.



JOHN C. STEVENSON / Staff

Allegro Industries President Thomas J. Johnston talks to residents Monday at the Pickens County complex.

Monday night, Pickens County Council put the finishing touches on the deal when council members approved two inducements offered to Allegro: the conveyance of the land for the facility; and the a fee-in-lieu-of-tax agreement.

Ray Farley, executive director of Alliance Pickens, said Allegro will "potentially support other Pickens County small businesses," and he added some suppliers could include metal fabricators and companies that produce injection-molded and blow-molded parts.

Allegro founder and President Thomas Johnston said the company would quickly turn to local producers because it's "not going to be practical to ship parts from California for very long."

Allegro will produce a variety of industrial safety products, including respirators, respirator accessories and ventilator products, according to the state Department of Commerce.

Pickens County won the Allegro plant over sites in Nevada, Georgia and Virginia, Johnston said.

Allegro co-owner Tony Ferroni is already based in Virgina, said Johnston, a California native who also announced that he and his family — wife Laura and daughter Lindsey — will relocate to Pickens County.

Johnston said his daughter has been accepted at Clemson and will be a part of the freshman class next year.