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Growth prompts new SenDEC site

By TOM ADAMS

SenDEC Corp.—with its facility bursting at the seams—plans to move down the street to a former Paychex Inc. building in Perinton by the end of 2004.

SenDEC has notched a 20 percent jump in employment this year and logged record sales in fiscal 2004.

The 26-year-old company will vacate the 23,000-square-foot site—at 151 Perinton Parkway—it has leased since 1995 and will lease a 60,000-square-foot building at 72 Perinton Parkway at the corner of Route 31F.

The company will spend \$524,000 to renovate its future home, which Paychex left 18 months ago after it purchased the former Corning Inc. site in Henrietta. The work has yet to begin.

“We’re hoping to be in the new building no later than December,” SenDEC president and CEO Kenton Fiske said. “We’d prefer November, but we’re not sure that’s doable.”

SenDEC has added 14 employees since January. Its total employment is 83—in Perinton and at its products division in Wayne County. Most of the new jobs have been in production but also include inspectors, engineers, production control and purchasing.

“We’re on a much faster pace than we thought we would be,” said Thomas Tette, secretary/treasurer. “As the business continues to grow, I anticipate (employment growth) to grow even faster.”

A contract electronics manufacturing and engineering service provider, SenDEC has thrived while many other companies have struggled in the recent economic environment. It posted record sales of \$13.9 million for the fiscal year ended July 31, up 25 percent from \$11.1 million in fiscal 2003. Its previous high was \$12 million in revenue in 2001.

“We don’t compete on high-volume work,” Fiske said. “We can’t compete with overseas labor. Having the design engineering background as part of the company is a real plus.

“We think outside the box. When we look at a product, we don’t (say), ‘That’s the way it’s being done so that’s the way we’ll continue to do it.’ If it makes sense to continue to do it that way, we will. But



File photo

SenDEC president and CEO Kenton Fiske

if we see value that we can add by doing it differently, we’ll do that.”

The company already has exceeded its budgeted \$317,000 for new equipment in 2004, CFO Tette said. It is on track to spend another \$1 million on equipment in 2005 and \$2.1 million over the next three years.

A third automated surface mount is among SenDEC’s recent buys. Fiske wanted to wait until after the upcoming move to install it, but the growing workload has forced the company to put it into partial use.

“Prior to the third line, we had been running both lines that we had 18 or 19 hours a day, and part of the weekend,” Fiske said. “There were some new opportunities that we thought we might get, and when we did that analysis, we said we wouldn’t be able to accommodate them without another line.”

Offices will rim the new location, which will include a training room and engineering lab. Its prototype area, now 400 square feet, will increase to 1,700 square feet, Fiske said. Among the assignments for the prototype unit is to find ways for companies to reduce product costs.

SenDEC provides printed circuit board design and assembly, electromechanical

assembly and complete product and box build for medical, military, industrial and commercial firms.

Box building involves the complete packaging of products that are delivered to companies, SenDEC vice president/general manager Craig Hoffman said.

“We’re now doing the final products,” Hoffman said. “It has been a part of the company forever, although until recently on a very small scale.”

The company’s contract manufacturing is done in Perinton. It includes prototype operations, the making of printed circuit boards and box building.

“Our strength has been our diversification,” Fiske said. “We have a fairly substantial and loyal customer base, not only with a product that we’ve been building for them, but they’re also creating new products. Because of our quality reputation, it’s a natural for them to stay here.”

SenDEC does most of its business within New York, but also sells nationwide and, with its Internet products, worldwide.

“We have a unique position in that we can design the product and manufacture it,” Fiske said. “Companies are comfortable knowing that they can leave it here and, if there’s a problem, we have the designers that designed it to solve it.”

Fiske, a former design engineer at Xerox Corp., co-founded SenDEC in 1978.

Its initial location was on West Avenue in Fairport. It eventually was moved to Baird Road in Fairport, then in 1995 to Perinton Parkway. Its products division, which employs 14, was shifted in 2001 to Macedon. There are no plans to consolidate Macedon operations into the new facility in Perinton.

SenDEC’s maintenance meters, tachometers and engine monitors are made in Macedon, and sold in the lawn and garden department at Sears, Roebuck and Co. The meters track equipment running time and alert operators to periodic maintenance such as oil changes, lubrications or muffler replacements.

The company’s newest innovation is a go-cart meter, which will be introduced early next year, with production slated for January and the launch for February.

The meter is mounted on the steering wheel of the go-cart and monitors engine and ex-

haust temperature, and lap count, Fiske said.

The upcoming move, Fiske said, will take longer than the 1995 move, even though the former Paychex building can be seen from the current facility.

“There’s a lot more equipment,” he said.

“There are a lot more people. It’s going to be staged over a period of weeks, as opposed to one weekend.

“First of all, we can’t be shutting down

for that period of time. We have to make sure that, within the transition of the move, one of the lines is up and running before we take the next one down.”

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