



FULLSTEAM AHEAD

TEXT BRIAN FOSTER
PHOTO SABRINA WILSON

Rockmart's latest manufacturing success story, MIURABOILER, shows us why there's more to "green" Japanese thinking than a dollop of wasabi

In a recession such as the one Americans are now experiencing, a single company can have a huge influence on the economic health of a region. Fortunately for some of those most affected by the slow-down, one foreign manufacturer is hoping to do just that as it builds its North American home here in Northwest Georgia.

Based in Japan, Miura Boiler, the world's largest industrial boiler manufacturer, opened the doors of its first U.S. plant in



important area suppliers.

"I think we've had a big impact on the local economy," says Miura purchasing and procurement specialist, Ken Wright. "The metal and steel fabrication shops, stamp and die shops, are getting a lot of business from us. A lot of our local suppliers were working three, four-day weeks. Now most of them are up to five."

In its first year of production at the Rockmart plant, Miura has added 50 employees to its ranks and plans to increase that total to 300 in the next couple of years. Many of these positions will be for highly skilled welders and electricians, whose lines of work have been hit especially hard in the last year.

If past success is an indicator, Miura's potential for growth in North America is very promising. The company, founded in 1927 with headquarters in Matsuyama, Japan, controls roughly 65 percent of the market share in Japan alone, and is the top boiler manufacturer in all of Asia. "Miura group has now grown into an entity achieving annual sales of over 60 billion yen (\$680 million)," writes company CEO and chairman, Shozo Shiraiishi. The new plant in Rockmart is hoping to increase these already impressive sales figures in the coming years, as it grows its production capacity from 100 boilers annually in 2009 to 1,000 by 2012.

The stat sheet for Miura's boilers is rather impressive. As the industry leader in green

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the spring of 2009, just off of Highway 101 in Rockmart, and has been a positive player in the region during its first few months of operation. Not only does a large corporation like Miura help to whittle down the unemployment line, but it also provides a huge boost in the bottom lines of some

technology and innovation, Miura has set itself apart from competitors by satisfying the new needs and standards of industrial entities that are becoming increasingly aware of their negative environmental impacts, as well as the economic benefits of sustainable practices. *(continued on pg. 40)*



(from left) Miura purchasing and procurement manager Ken Wright, president Mark Utzinger, plant manager Vince Broome



In turn, the boilers being produced at the Rockmart plant are the most efficient in the world. In terms of boiler size, Miura is building boilers up to a third smaller than competing models of similar capacity. "Think pickup truck instead of tractor trailer," Wright says.

Common in industrial boilers is a long start-up time. While initial engagement to full steam production often takes a couple of hours for most boilers, Miura has reduced the cold start time for "water-to-steam" production to just five minutes. And in an

the average dollar savings Miura customers enjoy in steam production is approximately 20 [percent] over other boiler designs." And with Miura's advanced diagnostics system, one that automatically sends data to Miura from the respective customer's facility, any inefficiencies can be quickly diagnosed and corrected.

The 'green' benefits offered by Miura Boilers include not only reductions in oil and space consumption, but also the lowest NOx output in the industry and reduced CO2 emissions. Garnering the

So far this year, Miura's lone American plant has produced—or is in the process of producing—large capacity boilers for giants such as Coca-Cola and Pepsi, even numerous hospitals nationwide, including Duke University's. And all of this while using the skilled labor provided by many of Rome and Northwest Georgia's metal fabricators and suppliers.

With plant capacity to increase tenfold in the next three years, area suppliers, as well as freight distributors, hope to see a positive turn in their businesses.

And though American manufacturing jobs are seeing more losses to outsourcing (as a 'cost-cutting method'), some foreign companies are beginning to see the value in a skilled American workforce. Miura follows a number of foreign companies, such as Pirelli Tire and Suzuki, that have found the Southeast not only a hospitable place to set up shop, but specifically Northwest Georgia. The impact felt goes beyond those working in the offices and on the factory floor, but to the many local businesses that support them. To this end, Miura seems to have a bright future ahead, here and across the rest of the nation, with its face-forward approach and its resolve to help the region's economy forge full-steam ahead into the 21st century.

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seal of approval by the U.S. Green Building Council, a standard-setter in the new green economy, Miura is on track to become an industry leader in boiler innovation and production here in the United States.

In just its first few months, Miura Boiler's Rockmart facility and its contractors are already reaping the benefits of the Japanese company's forward-thinking approach to economic and environmental sustainability.

...THE BOILERS BEING PRODUCED [AT MIURA] ARE THE MOST EFFICIENT IN THE WORLD. "THINK PICKUP TRUCK INSTEAD OF TRACTOR TRAILER," SAYS WRIGHT.

age of uncertainty and fluctuating fuel costs, the option of alternative fuel types on which to power equipment is priceless. Miura's LX Series boilers can run off of either natural gas or propane, while its EX models give customers even greater options including natural gas.

Time and energy efficiency help most businesses where it counts, and Miura estimates that "based on today's fuel costs,

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