



Idaho lures Calif. business, even in down times

Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Friday, October 10, 2003 -

OROFINO, Idaho — The recruitment of a California company to a new business center here is proof that Idaho's pro-business climate pays off, even in tough economic times, state officials said.

The 30,000-square-foot center, financed with state, federal and local money, will be home to up to 150 workers for Seismic Tech.

The jobs are important in this area, which has had double-digit unemployment since a mill closed three years ago, throwing over 200 people out of work in a county of less than 8,000.

"I'm very proud because we're seeing the results," Gov. Dirk Kempthorne said.

Seismic Tech, a subsidiary of Plumber One of Carson, will make hand-assembled, individually tested earthquake-activated shut-off valves for home and commercial gas pipes. Production is scheduled to begin in January.

The cost of doing business in Idaho is markedly more favorable, not even counting the fact that his lease in the Orofino business center will be subsidized for five years, Plumber One Chief Executive Alan Moskowitz said.

Kempthorne also pointed to the decision earlier this year by Buck Knives Inc. to move from the San Diego area to Post Falls after a half-century in California. The company said Idaho offered 60 percent lower utility rates, 40 percent lower worker's compensation premiums and up to 30 percent lower wages and benefits.

The \$445,000 the state provided to foster the business center is only the latest investment made in Clearwater County. The state contributed \$360,000 to local hospital expansion, \$100,000 for library improvements and \$500,000 for water quality improvements.