

Calumet Pallet and PEN Products Partner at the Westville Correctional Facility

A new joint venture partnership is announced between PEN Products and Calumet Pallet, Inc. at the Westville Correctional Facility in Westville, Indiana. PEN Products, a division of the Indiana Department of Correction, utilizes offender labor to provide goods and services to both the private and public sector of Indiana.

Calumet Pallet, a Hammond company, provides both new and used pallets for businesses all across northern Indiana and the Chicago area. Calumet Pallet, started by Al Bridegroom in 1982, is located at 2640 Calumet Avenue in Hammond, IN. Starting from an operation in his garage and one pick-up truck, Calumet Pallet is today a multi million dollar company, employing over 100 and shipping over 1.7 million pallets annually. Jeff Bridegroom, Calumet Pallet's Vice President, is proud of Calumet's history and expects the partnership with PEN Products to assist Calumet in further growing their business. When asked about the partnership, Jeff Bridegroom stated, "We are proud to be a part of this program. We hope that we can help the offenders, their families, and the public in general, as we help the offenders to learn to earn a living and get on the right side of the law."

In the partnership, PEN Products will repair broken pallets brought onto the grounds of the Westville Correctional Facility. The operation will provide jobs for up to 60 offender workers teaching them valuable job skills and an opportunity to prepare for employment after their release.

When asked the expectations of the partnership and its affect on PEN Products, Director Mike Herron stated, "We expect the Calumet partnership to increase offender employment. Calumet will have a steady and reliable workforce and PEN Products will come closer in achieving its mission to employ offenders providing meaningful job skills and a work ethic, preparing for their reentry into the community."

About The Department of Correction

The Department employs over 8,000 employees and houses 24,000 adult and juveniles in 32 facilities, ranging from minimum to maximum custody, prison camps, juvenile facilities and work release centers. The Department's home page on the Internet can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/indcorrection>. The Department's Re-entry Site can be found: <http://www.reentry.in.gov>.