



George County Board of Supervisors
Community Development Office
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Enviva breaks ground on huge wood pellet plant in George County

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The largest wood pellet plant in the United States is now officially “under construction” in the George County Industrial Park located on Highway 198 outside of Lucedale, Mississippi.

A silver shoveled groundbreaking ceremony was held on Monday, October 21 for the new \$140 million plant, which will directly create 90 full-time jobs and is estimated to indirectly create approximately 300 permanent jobs in the timber and transportation industries.



“This groundbreaking in George County is like a stone being thrown into a pond. Its ripples will be felt throughout the area for years to come. Enviva’s decision to locate operations in George County is great news for the entire state,” Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant said to a huge crowd of state, county, and community leaders at the ceremony. “I appreciate the Enviva leadership team for investing in our state and creating these job opportunities for the residents of Lucedale, George County, and South Mississippi.”

Bulldozers and heavy equipment have been on site for several weeks clearing and preparing the 125-acre site for underground utilities and foundation construction. More than 300 workers are expected to be hired during the plant’s construction.

Enviva’s Chairman and Chief Executive Officer John Keppler explained that, during its first year in full production, this state-of-the-art plant is expected to produce approximately 700,000 metric tons of wood pellets.

“The Lucedale plant is an important part of our growing manufacturing footprint in Mississippi that enables us to meet the increasing demand from our international customers. Our investment here is only possible because of the leadership of Governor Bryant and the hard work and support of the community and officials in George County. Together, they were instrumental in helping us secure the key infrastructure components for this project,” Keppler said.



Enviva owns and operates eight plants strategically located in the southeastern United States which produce more than 3 Million metric tons of wood pellets annually. It is the world’s largest producer of industrial grade wood pellets, which provide sustainable, low-carbon heat and power, replacing fossil fuels at power plants in Europe and Asia.

Locally, the George County Board of Supervisors anticipates Enviva Pellets Lucedale to become the third largest private employer and “Top-Five” highest property tax payer in the County within two years of full operations.

“This is the type of development we want for George County’s Industrial Park,” Supervisor Larry McDonald, Board President explained. “This construction marks the largest private business expansion inside the Industrial Park in the last 25 years. We are proud to have a global leader in biomass energy as a tenant in our park. Getting to this groundbreaking today was a true team effort.”

Vital assistance to the County was provided by: Atmos Energy, City of Lucedale, MS Export Railroad, Mississippi Power, Mississippi Development Authority, Multi-Mart Water System, Singing River Electric Power Association, and the South MS Planning & Development District (*see attached Partners List for details*).

Enviva’s Lucedale plant will also be the first new large-scale consumer of low-grade southern pine trees and other soft-woods in the George County area in more than a decade.

“This project’s benefits go beyond the plant’s solid job numbers. This plant will also directly support the regional timber industry. The local timber market is facing almost historic low prices while the timber supply literally grows every day. The Enviva plant will provide an entirely new market for local foresters and timber haulers,” McDonald said.

The Lucedale plant will help fill the gap left by a pullback in the forest products industry due to the closure of several large paper mills.

The regional wood basket is growing faster than timber is being harvested. State projections indicate this trend will continue and the volume of timber is expected to increase every year even with the addition of Enviva’s Lucedale plant.

“As the world’s largest producer of wood pellets, we embrace our stewardship role in forest production by encouraging the use of sound and scientifically proven forestry practices to improve forest health and productivity within the forest landscape across the South,” Keppler added.

Construction of Enviva’s Lucedale plant is expected to take 15 to 18 months. A majority of the plant’s jobs will be filled approximately six months before the Lucedale plant begins operations. Once hiring begins, residents are encouraged to review all open positions on Enviva’s “Career Page” at www.envivabiomass.com/careers.

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George County Industrial Park & Enviva Lucedale Plant

Strategic Project Partners

- **Atmos Natural Gas** - developing a 600 mcf/hour natural gas line to serve Enviva Lucedale and the entire George County Industrial Park
- **City of Lucedale**- working closely with the County to expand wastewater treatment for the Enviva Lucedale Plant and future growth at the Industrial Park
- **George County High School/Career Tech** - the Career Tech program anticipates developing new workforce programs providing students skill sets for the Enviva Lucedale plant
- **George/Greene County Foresters** - anticipates 300 indirect jobs will be created for local timber growers, chippers, and haulers due to the demand for wood pellet production
- **Mississippi Department of Transportation** - improved safety and transportation along Highway 198 East with road widening, new intersections, and a bridge expansion to accommodate 200 daily log truck deliveries to Enviva Lucedale
- **Mississippi Export Railroad** - upgrading 10,000 linear feet of current railroad track and installing an additional 5,000 ft. of new railroad line to serve Enviva Lucedale
- **Mississippi Power** - developing a 25 MW electrical substation to serve Enviva Lucedale along with the entire Industrial Park and surrounding communities
- **Mississippi Development Authority** - providing millions in state grants for the project to increased water storage/capacity, fire protection, and wastewater production
- **Multi-Mart Water System** - increasing system's current storage capacity by three times (3x) to serve Enviva Lucedale and the expanding water system territory
- **Singing River Electric Power Association** - provided both an "zero interest" loan through USDA and a "low interest" loan to assist George County's expansion of the Industrial Park to meet land requirement for the new site
- **South MS Planning & Development District**- providing grant administration support for the EDA Highway 198 Improvement Grant and two state grants for the site development