

Lee Industries to hire 75, expand production in Catawba County

Charlotte Business Journal - by Ken Elkins

Date: Wednesday, June 29, 2011, 10:36am EDT



- Ken Elkins
- Senior staff writer
- Email: kelkins@bizjournals.com

Who says the furniture industry is dead in the Hickory area? **Lee Industries Inc.** announced this morning that it will hire as many as 75 workers for a high-end furniture business as it expands into the former Conover Chair building in Conover.

Lee will spend \$2.5 million to buy the building and start production there.

Manufacturing in Conover should begin later this year, says **Bill McKinney**, Lee's chief financial officer.

Lee is headquartered on West 25th Street in Newton, on the north side of town, near Conover. The addition becomes the company's fourth production facility in the area. Lee operates three sites in Newton that employ 490.

As an incentive for Lee, the town of Conover is helping the company acquire the Conover Chair building. Details on the value of the incentive package weren't immediately available.

Lee will apply to have the plant certified as an energy-efficient facility, McKinney says.

The company was founded in 1969 by Bill and **Dottie Coley**. It makes an extensive line of upholstered furniture, from chairs to sleeper sofas. Its products are carried by **Crate & Barrel** and other independent stores, such as Luxe Home Couture on East Boulevard in Charlotte.

Lee's furniture has been featured in such magazines as *Architectural Digest*, *Elle Décor*, *Better Homes*, *House Beautiful* and *Southern Living*.

Got a tip for some regional business gossip? Send it to kelkins@bizjournals.com. Ken Elkins covers regional business news for the Charlotte Business Journal. To read more of his Outside the Loop blog, [click here](#). You can also follow Ken on Twitter

[@CBJRegion](#).