

IZZY CREATES 85 INDIANA JOBS



Office chair manufacturer izzy (yes, it's spelled like that) plans to expand its plant north of Middlebury, Indiana, creating 85 new jobs over the next two years and boosting its annual payroll by \$3.8 million. The town has been particularly hard hit by the downturn in the Recreational Vehicle industry. The region saw its unemployment rate spike to 15.3% in December, up a whopping 10.6 percentage points from December 2007. Some county officials, who learned of an additional 600 RV layoffs earlier this month, say the number now is likely closer to 20 percent. The expansion is scheduled to begin as soon as April, with 45 new jobs created in the first year and the full 85 over two years. Grand Haven, Michigan-based JSI, izzy's parent company, plans to close a plant in Belton, Texas, and invest about \$580,000 in expanding the Middlebury plant, which now employs around 140 making chairs under the Harter brand name. The Elkhart County Council voted Saturday to support a five-year tax phase-in for the expansion, saving the company \$23,000. The company also will receive state incentives including job-training funds and tax credits.

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