

Gibbs closing Texas plant

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Gibbs Die Casting Corp. announced it is closing its plant in Texas and will transfer its production to its plants in Henderson.

"The consolidation is a result of the declining market share of the traditional US auto makers and the downturn of North American auto sales," the company said in its announcement.

The move will consolidate all of Gibbs' North American production to Henderson.

The move will increase employment here by about 50 positions, Debby Alexander, Gibbs' director of human resources, said Friday.

Gibbs said the closure of the plant in Harlingen, Texas, and consolidation of production here should be complete by the end of February. The company said there would be no interruption in shipments to any customers.

Gibbs opened the plant in Harlingen, located 30 minutes from the Mexican border, in 1999 with the intention of producing parts for General Motors and other customers in Mexico and Central America.

Alexander said the closure will affect 63 permanent employees and 25 to 35 temporary workers who have been working at the Texas plant.

Gibbs employs more than 1,000 people here at its headquarters and three manufacturing plants. It closed its Federal plant here earlier this year, eliminating 63 temporary workers' positions, and closed its Power Train plant here two years ago.

It also has production facilities in Brazil, Hungary, Korea and China.

Gibbs produces aluminum and magnesium castings and other products for the automotive industry. The company was founded here in 1965 by Bob Gibbs and Nick Gibbs, and since 1969 has been owned by Koch Enterprises Inc. of Evansville.