



# opportunityreturns

*Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow*

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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## **GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES FOREIGN TRADE MISSION TO CANADA TO HELP ESTABLISH NEW MARKETS FOR ILLINOIS PLASTIC BUSINESSES**

***Eight Northeast Region Plastics Firms Will Benefit from State-Led Trade Mission to Toronto***

SPRINGFIELD - In an innovative effort to help stimulate more foreign trade opportunities for Illinois businesses, Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced that the state would be escorting eight Northeast region plastics industry companies on a foreign trade mission to Canada. The Illinois Plastics Trade Mission to Canada, which gets underway today in Toronto and will run through Wednesday, comes as a part of *Opportunity Returns*, the Governor's soon-to-be-unveiled regional economic development plan designed to create jobs and spur economic growth in the Northeast region and throughout the state.

"As the world becomes a smaller place, opportunities to do business in foreign markets are increasing. For Illinois companies to meet their full growth potential, we need to help introduce them to as many new markets to do business in as possible. For the plastics industry, the Plast-Ex trade show in Toronto is the place to be to meet new customers and broker new deals. When we talk about revitalizing the Illinois economy by expanding economic opportunity, this is what we mean," Governor Blagojevich said.

The Plastics Trade Mission offers each of the eight Illinois export ready companies a two-day program of individual business appointments with pre-qualified prospective business partners and market exposure in Canada. In fact, each company on the trade mission will have at least nine, pre-qualified, individual business appointments while in Toronto. The companies will also benefit from a full-range of business facilitation services, including market research, business briefings, networking events and logistic support. The Plastic Trade Mission to Canada is scheduled around Plast-Ex 2004, the Canadian Plastic Trade Association's largest trade event, held once every three years. Following the two days of one-on one appointments, Illinois participants will have the opportunity to attend the show. The Plast-Ex show occupies over 300,000 square feet and has 500 exhibitors. More than 12,000 plastic industry makers attend Plast-Ex and rely on the event to source essential products and services in Canada's \$22.5 billion plastics industry.

The companies participating in the trade mission to Toronto are: Converting Systems, Inc. in Addison; G.A.I.M. Engineering Inc. located in Bensenville; Durex Industries in Cary; Star Thermoplastic Alloys & Rubbers in Chicago; H. Sattler Plastics Co., Inc. in Chicago; American Plastics Technology Inc. in Schiller Park; Ex-Tech-Plastics Inc. in Richmond; and Norros Corp. in Wheaton.

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“We’re thrilled to take part in this trade mission. Canada has a huge plastics industry and we’re very optimistic that the contacts we’ll make on this trip will allow us to establish a foothold in a market that is a great place to do business. It’s clear that the Governor understands the importance of opening new markets for Illinois businesses and we’re looking forward to this opportunity,” said Skip Glatt, President of G.A.I.M. Engineering Inc., a manufacturer of products utilized in plastic injection molding.

The Illinois Trade Office of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) is partnering with the U.S. Commercial Service in Toronto to stage the Plastics Trade Mission to Canada.

“There is a world of opportunity for Illinois businesses to tap into global markets, but the relationships that need to be formed to facilitate these deals are often difficult for companies to forge on their own, especially by small to mid-sized firms. Our Illinois Trade Office has nine foreign offices across the world - from Shanghai, China to Brussels, Belgium - and their mission is to do just that. This is an example of the state’s resources being used in an innovative way to accomplish an objective that will reap very tangible benefits for Illinois companies and the regional economy,” DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

The *Opportunity Returns* regional economic development plan is the most aggressive, comprehensive approach to creating jobs in Illinois’ history. Since a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development just doesn’t work, the Governor has divided the state into 10 regions – finding areas with common economic strengths and needs, and developing a plan with specific actions for each region. Each plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from. The Governor has already unveiled plans for six of the ten regions – Northern Stateline, Northwest, Southern, North Central, Southwest and West Central regions. He will announce the plans for the East Central, Southeast, Central and Northeast regions in the coming months.

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