



Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor / Jack Lavin, Director

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Cheryle Jackson
312-814-6700
Laura Hunter
312-814-2354
www.illinoisbiz.biz

Illinois Named Top State For Economic Development In 2002 *Illinois Tops Site Selection List For The Second Year In A Row*

CHICAGO – Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today was awarded the 2002 Site Selection Governor's Cup, an annual award given by the magazine to the top state in the nation for business development. The 48-year-old Atlanta-based magazine's yearly analysis is regarded by corporate real estate analysts as "the industry scoreboard."

In addition to the honor for the state, Chicago was named as the top metropolitan area for economic development for the second straight year. Eleven Illinois communities were listed among the top 100 small towns for corporate facilities including Danville and Effingham, which finished 6th and 7th respectively.

"On behalf of the people of Illinois, it is an honor for our state to be named as the top state in America for business development by Site Selection for the second year in a row," Blagojevich said. "The rankings clearly show that despite tough economic times, Illinois is a great place to do business. This award is a testament to the highly skilled workers and strong communities that provide companies with a competitive edge in today's global economy."

The Governor's Cup ranking is based on the number of new and expanded facilities announced and recorded in a database maintained by Norcross, Georgia-based Conway Data, which publishes Site Selection. Illinois recorded 835 such projects in 2002.

"Illinois' strong performance in the 2002 Governor's Cup facilities race demonstrates that even in a weak economy, companies still are investing in new and expanded facilities," says Mark Arend, editor of Site Selection magazine. "And 835 of those projects were in Illinois last year, according to our proprietary New Plant database. The state's economic development team did a great job in making Illinois the top state for new commercial facilities."

"Illinois' success over the last two years rests on the shoulders of the strong work ethic of Illinois workers," said Jack Lavin, Director of the recently re-named Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). "Our labor force is among the most effective in the world, and our renewed focus on forging new partnerships between the public and private sectors and between business and labor will be critical components in the future success of the Illinois economy."

Among the new projects that located and/or expanded in Illinois during 2002 were Champion Labs in Albion, General Mills in Belvidere, Sysstrand Presta Engine Systems in Danville, Rayovac in Dixon, Unilever in Pontoon Beach and Wrigley in Chicago.

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