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Pexco builds injection molding platform with latest acquisition

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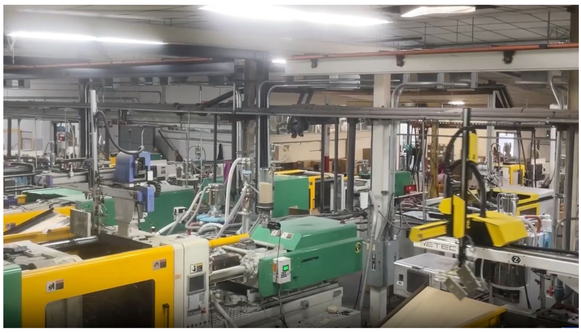

Pexco's purchase of Recto Molded Products and Legacy Extrusions in Cincinnati expands its injection molding capabilities to include engineered and commodity thermoplastics, in addition to fluoropolymers and ultra-high-performance polymers. (Pexco LLC)

Pexco LLC is making injection molding a larger part of its business, with its acquisition of Recto Molded Products Inc. representing the third step in a molding expansion that now gives the company about 80 presses.

Atlanta-based Pexco acquired Cincinnati-based Recto and Legacy Extrusions in a deal that closed Sept. 9. Terms were not disclosed.

The acquisition adds about 27 injection molding presses ranging from 55-500 tons and six extrusion lines, bringing Pexco's overall manufacturing footprint to more than 180 extrusion lines, 80 molding machines and 1 million square feet of manufacturing.

"Injection molding is already a large part of Pexco and will continue to grow," Chief Commercial Officer Jacob Haas told *Plastics News*. "The build-out has been deliberate, and Recto is the third step in it."

Pexco began building that platform in 2022 with its acquisition of Cincinnati-based Performance Plastics Ltd., a precision injection molder founded in 1982. The operation, now known as Pexco Injection Molding, specializes in tight-tolerance components made from high-performance materials.

Its capabilities include molding fluoropolymers and materials including polyetheretherketone, Torlon polyamide-imide and Ultem polyetherimide (PEI), along with insert molding and industrial CT-scanning metrology.

Pexco expanded the molding platform to the West Coast in August 2024 with the acquisition of Yorba Linda, Calif.-based Precise Aerospace Manufacturing Inc.

PAM injection molds, compression molds and transfer molds high-performance resins for aerospace, defense, medical and electronics applications.

Recto gives Pexco something different.

"Recto, acquired this month, fills the remaining gap," Haas said.

While Performance Plastics and PAM concentrate on high- and ultra-high-performance materials, Recto adds molding capacity for a broader range of engineered and commodity thermoplastics.

Those include thermoplastic polyurethane, thermoplastic elastomers, PEI, acetal, nylon, polycarbonate, polybutylene terephthalate, acrylic, polypropylene, high impact polystyrene and polyethylene, as well as proprietary compounds.

Recto serves industrial OEM customers in markets including warehouse automation, conveying and inventory management systems and building and construction.

The company also has a full-service tool room and capabilities including prototyping, machining, automation, assembly, pad printing, hot stamping and finishing.

Building a Cincinnati molding hub

Recto Molded Products Inc. has about 27 presses at its facility in Cincinnati. (Recto Molded Products Inc.)

The Recto acquisition also gives Pexco a larger concentration of molding operations in Cincinnati.

Recto and Legacy operate from an approximately 90,000-square-foot facility directly across the street from Pexco Injection Molding, the former Performance Plastics operation.

Haas said the proximity gives Pexco two complementary molding businesses that can share engineering talent, tooling expertise and training resources.

One specializes in fluoropolymers and high-performance materials, while the other processes a much broader range of engineered and commodity resins.

Pexco also plans to hire in Cincinnati.

The company is recruiting process and manufacturing engineers, tooling and mold-making workers, machine operators and technicians, Haas said.

"Our goal in Cincinnati is straightforward: to be the employer of choice for skilled plastics manufacturing talent in the region," he said.

Pexco did not disclose current employment at the Recto and Legacy operation or how much it plans to invest there.

Haas said Pexco will continue adding equipment and capabilities as customer programs justify the investment.

"Recto has been manufacturing since 1919, and a big part of what we acquired is the people who built that hundred-year reputation for quality and engineering support," he said.

Pexco is investing in training and career development and can offer employees opportunities across what Haas described as a network of 15 facilities.

"An operator or engineer who joins us in Cincinnati now has a career path across 15 facilities and a materials portfolio spanning commodity resins through fluoropolymers and ultra-high-performance polymers," he said.

Extrusion remains a major business

The deal also adds Legacy Extrusions, founded in 1996, which operates six extrusion lines and makes custom plastic profiles.

Legacy and Recto share the Cincinnati facility. Pexco declined to identify the seller or disclose whether the companies were under common ownership before the acquisition.

The six Legacy lines bring Pexco's extrusion network to more than 180 lines.

Pexco has expanded that business through a series of acquisitions in recent years.

In October 2024, it acquired Green Brook Township, N.J.-based custom extruder K. Jabat Inc. Three months later, Pexco acquired Wisconsin Plastic Products Inc. of Plymouth, Wis., which produces custom profiles up to 36 inches wide.

Pexco also expanded its plastics machining operations in June 2024 when it acquired a machining and assembly operation in Wallingford, Conn., from Clayens NP Group. The plant specializes in CNC machining, milling, multi-axis turning, annealing, vapor polishing and assembly.

Haas said Pexco's expansion into molding doesn't represent a move away from extrusion. Instead, the company wants to offer customers a wider choice of processes and materials.

"OEMs increasingly want one partner who can take a part from design-for-manufacturing and tooling through molding, assembly, finishing, and packaging and who can recommend the right process and the right resin rather than defending the only one they own," he said.

Pexco ranks No. 22 in *Plastics News'* latest ranking of North American pipe, profile and tubing extruders, with estimated annual sales of $370 million.

PN estimates Recto's annual injection molding sales at $10 million. Pexco declined to disclose sales for Recto or Legacy or the purchase price.

The Recto and Legacy deal was Pexco's 16th acquisition since 2018, according to the company. Pexco remains in acquisition mode, particularly for engineered plastics businesses that add manufacturing technology, end-market expertise or geographic reach.

Pexco is owned by private equity firm Odyssey Investment Partners LLC, which reacquired the company in 2022 after previously owning it from 2012-17.

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