

SHAW LOCAL *News Network*

Gotion gives updates on Manteno plant



Workers tend to Pack Line A at Gotion Illinois in Manteno on Oct. 1, 2025. The battery manufacturing plant has plans to expand its workforce to 450 jobs by the end of 2025, with the goal of reaching 1,400 jobs in 2026. (Tiffany Blanchette)

During the Manteno Village Board's Committee of the Whole meeting on Nov. 12, Mark Kreusel, Gotion Illinois' vice president of manufacturing and general manager, gave an update on the plant's progress.

The plant is a \$2 billion investment, covering 153 acres with 1.5 million square feet of operations. It is designed to adjust its production toward market demands, and Gotion is currently operating five production lines.

"There's flexibility built into the manufacturing lines that we have there," Kreusel said. "So they can either make an energy storage product or they can make an EV product. Up to

three different products can run down the same line. As an example, one of the EV lines will also be making our mobile charger.”

In addition to the mobile chargers used for EVs, the plant is also manufacturing energy storage systems for commercial and industrial, and residential.

“Businesses can use those for activities like energy saving or an additional bump to the power needs that they need in their facility,” Kreusel said.

Employee update

Through a slide presentation at the meeting, Kreusel gave an update on the number of employees currently working at the plant and a breakdown of where they’re from. The plant has 300 employees working and is projected to have 450 by the end of the year at the site at 333 S. Spruce St.

- 19% of the workforce (49 people) live in Manteno
- 62% of the workforce is from within Kankakee County
- 80% are from within 40 miles of the plant.

In addition, the hourly wage ranges from \$22 per hour for non-skilled workers to \$44 per hour for technicians.

“That’s kind of been our goal is to get most of our workforce from the local area, so we’re following through on that,” Kreusel said.

Economic impact

Kreusel reported that local taxing districts saw the largest drop in property tax rate on record, according to the Manteno Township assessor, and an additional \$1 million was collected in property taxes for the site over 2024. The Manteno School District No. 5 collected \$1.2 million in 2024 compared to \$544, 290 in ‘23, while the Village of Manteno and the Manteno Fire Protection District collected \$335,328 in ‘24 compared to \$151,657 in ‘23.

Safety

The Manteno Gotion site produces LPF batteries, the safest chemistry and the most updated in the industry.

“You can puncture this battery, and there’s really no flames, no fire there,” Kreusel said.

“The battery does warm up, and there’s some steam that comes out, but within 30 minutes, it’s back to basically the ambient state of the surroundings. We’ve been working

very closely with the fire department ever since I've been here, and we're currently working and meeting all the 2024 fire codes for battery manufacturing."

Local commitment

Gotion has contributed approximately \$450,000 in fiscal year 2025 to the Manteno community. That includes the following:

- \$105,000 in equipment and fire training
- \$130,000 for Rivian patrol vehicle
- \$10,000 donation to Manteno Schools
- Oktoberfest, local clubs, boosters events, and Chamber-community sponsorships.

Not everyone is enamored with Gotion's site in Manteno and its relationship with the community. Manteno resident David Kuiken spoke before the meeting and voiced his displeasure of the plant, over its alleged ties to the Chinese Communist Party. Kuiken, a veteran, said it's disrespectful to veterans who fought in the Korean and Vietnam wars.

"I'm just beyond myself as far as trying to wrap good things around this," he said. "... I don't care what Gotion gives to our village, what sponsorships they hold. The only presentation I want to see from Gotion is a farewell card."