

DOW CHEMICAL

Midland proposal could net new jobs

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Staff Reporter

A proposed manufacturing facility in Midland could bring 1,200 new jobs to areas around central Michigan, including Mount Pleasant.

The Dow Chemical Company announced last week that Midland is the preferred site for its new manufacturing plant for Powerhouse solar shingles. The unemployment rate in Isabella County is 9.6 percent — a number some say could be reduced with the addition of the new facility.

As Mount Pleasant is 26 miles from Midland, Dow Director of Public Affairs Kate Nigro said jobs are likely to extend to Mount Pleasant residents.

"The expected growth (of jobs) will be in the manufacturing, commercial and technical areas," she said.

Nigro said Dow hopes to take advantage of Michigan's manufacturing base and workers experienced in the field.

Officials are still working to secure funding from local, state and federal authorities, she said, but details are not yet available.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation may give Dow \$140 million in incentives for the development, Nigro said, to support the addition of green jobs.

"Alternative energy and green jobs are being viewed as one of the key industries to bring back jobs lost," said Brian Anderson, president of Middle Michigan Development Corporation.

Job creation, he said, is one of the main reasons officials have been pushing for production of these types of facilities.

Anderson believes the plant will also attract more people to the area.

"With so many great neighborhoods and schools, it would be safe to assume many new hires to Dow Chemical would choose to live in Isabella County," he said.

The hiring process will likely start toward the end of this year and updates will be available at dowinmichigan.com.