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Chip company bringing more jobs to Beloit

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BELOIT (WREX)- A popular potato chip company in Beloit gets recognition for something besides its crunchy snacks.

Governor Jim Doyle celebrated the Frito-Lay factory's economic growth and green initiatives. The recognition means a lot to the city. Beloit has the highest unemployment rate in Wisconsin.

The latest number from July shows nearly 18% of people living there don't have a job, so any promise of company expansion brings hope.




"These plants compared to what they were 30 or 40 years ago are very different places," Governor Doyle said. Now the plant is rolling out another change and this one's bringing more than increased Cheeto production. The factory has a nearly \$29 million expansion and modernization project in the works. It will give 24 people a job and maintain 500 more. "In this economy right now, maintaining jobs is as important as growing jobs," Gov. Doyle said.



The potato chip maker also gets kudos for going green. It's now part of Wisconsin's Green Tier Program, which recognizes companies committed to recycling and saving energy. "When you fry a product, obviously what you're doing is frying moisture out of that product, so we're able to use that steam just like you would use an irregular steam boiler to capture it. Then we heat the plant pretty much like you would heat a home," said David Reamsnyder, Vice President of Frito-Lay's Midwest Region.

Over the past five years, Frito-Lay has decreased its natural gas emissions by 27% and water consumption by 50%. Those initiatives not only save the environment, but also the city. "Whenever we can reduce our operating costs, obviously it allows us to keep our prices low, provide high quality products and re-invest capital in the business to grow the business," Reamsnyder said.

The state of Wisconsin will give Frito-Lay \$2 million for the project, provided by a block grant. For more information on how to apply for a job at the plant, you can visit www.fritolay.com



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