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Infinia thinking global, acting local

Kennewick-based solar company to hire 100 workers next year

PRATIK JOSHI

HERALD STAFF WRITER

Infinia Corp. is preparing to make big strides as a global business.

The Kennewick-based solar technology company will soon start commercial production of its 3-kilowatt solar power generator at a new 30,000-square-foot facility under construction at the Vista Field Industrial Park.

The company plans to hire more than 100 workers once production begins early next year, said J.D. Sitton, Infinia's president and chief executive officer.

Production staff will begin moving into the leased space in early December. The company hopes to produce about 60,000 units a year, Sitton said.

It's a big move to start mass producing a product that will change the world, he said.

The Infinia system uses mirrors to focus sunlight on one end of the company's patented Stirling engine to convert the sun's heat to electricity. One unit produces enough power for the average needs of a U.S. household, generating up to 9 megawatt-hours of power annually.

Infinia also recently hired three top-level executives — Patrick Rooney as chief



Bob Brawdy | bbrawdy@tricityherald.com

Crews with O'Brien Construction Co. work on a new 30,000-square-foot manufacturing facility to be leased by Infinia Corp. near West Hood Place and North Quay Street in Kennewick. Infinia plans to begin production of its solar generators at the plant early next year. Adam Hall, senior projects managers with O'Brien Construction, said a second warehouse for leasing purposes also is being built on the 5-acre lot.

accounting officer; Gabriel Tashjian as vice president of commercial operations and managing director for Asia, Africa and the Middle East; and Howard Monk as vice president of operations — to focus on global business.

Infinia is exploring markets in Europe, Asia and the southwestern United States. The

company is looking at commercial buyers, including municipal utilities interested in running a solar energy farm.

Volatility in the fuel market has helped generate interest in Infinia's technology, which offers an alternative to solar photovoltaic panels to harness solar energy. "It exceeds our

expectations," Sitton said.

Infinia is also working on other marketable products for its Stirling engine, including a system for use as an auxiliary power unit in cars and large trucks.

This year, Infinia got more than \$57 million in funding from private investors. It also will get more than \$11 million

from the federal government to develop a technology to help store solar energy for future use and to develop a small, efficient jet fuel-based power generator for the Army.

► Pratik Joshi: 582-1541; pjoshi@tricityherald.com; Business Beat blog at www.tricityherald.com