

Companies go back to work amid virus outbreak



Protection and prevention measures in place to ensure worker safety

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Companies at Weifang Hi-Tech Industrial Development Zone in East China's Shandong province resumed production in mid-February, with epidemic prevention measures for the novel coronavirus introduced and business confidence in terms of future growth in the zone remaining high.

Shandong Yinlun Heat Exchange, a company specializing in the development of refrigeration technology, resumed production on Feb 10, with production at almost full capacity.

"We have restored 80 percent of our production capacity," said Wang Hongjiang, director of the production and operation department at Yinlun. "Most workers on our production lines are Weifang locals."

Wang said that six workers from other regions had been kept in quarantine for two weeks for medical observation in line with government guidelines.

In the fight against the novel coronavirus, Yinlun has established strict control measures before resuming production.

They cover disinfecting working areas, checking on the proper use of facial masks, employee temperature monitoring and providing staff meals.

Yinlun has nine parts suppliers in Weifang, eight of which have



Workers wearing masks assemble engines at a plant in Weichai Power, a Weifang-headquartered industrial leader. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

80 percent

of Shandong Yinlun Heat Exchange's production capacity has been restored

resumed production. The final one will be back soon, according to Wang.

Weifang Hi-Tech Industrial Development Zone, a national economic zone, is providing all necessary support to local companies.

"The zone has provided two lots of facial masks to us. They've also coordinated support for the resumption of our production lines," Wang said.

Yinlun received orders valued more than 130 million yuan (\$18.49 million) for the first quarter of 2020, an increase of 30 percent year-on-year. The company said it has taken measures to fulfill those orders from key clients such as Weichai, Foton and Caterpillar.

"We can serve orders worth 115

million yuan to 120 million yuan based on our current capacity," Wang said. "Our production is expected to be back to its normal level in March."

Weifang Special Steel resumed its production in early Feb, and is hoping to overcome shortages of labor, raw materials and logistics services in order to maintain growth in 2020.

"Demand for steel is rigid so we do not worry about a lack of orders once our partners are back to normal

in the upcoming months," said Li Yan, deputy general manager of Weifang Special Steel.

"We had a good performance in January," Li said. "We have stocks but they are already on order by partners. They will be delivered once logistics resume normal operation."

The zone has set up strict measures for companies resuming operations and epidemic prevention and control, and strengthened measures for worker health management. Local authorities

are also striving to serve company demand for masks and disinfectant, zone officials said.

"We reported companies' problems such as raw materials and parts shortages to the Weifang government so the upper-level government can make coordination and arrangement as a whole," said Li Yu, deputy director of the department of industry and information at the zone's economic and development bureau.

Nie Yujin contributed to this story.



A resident in a car scans a QR code to register his health information at the entrance to his community in Weifang Hi-Tech Industrial Development Zone. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Information system helps chart local residents' state of health

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Weifang Hi-Tech Industrial Development Zone is taking advantage of its well-developed information system to battle the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pneumonia.

The zone, in cooperation with Weifang Software Park Service Center and Weifang Big Data Center, released an online health reporting system on Feb 4. Through the system, residents can report their health condition online every day, which will help the local government's virus prevention work.

According to the system's developer, users fill in their personal

information, residential address, family member information, travel history and basic household information during first use. It then takes just 30 seconds every day to report their health condition.

To attract more residents to use the system, the zone is using information distribution channels including television broadcasts and official WeChat accounts to inform locals about it.

The official WeChat account of the zone's publicity department, named Weifang Hi-Tech Media, released a notice on Feb 4 to guide locals on using the system. The notice drew more than 100,000 clicks in a short period, according to local officials.

The zone has also established WeChat groups for individual residential communities to keep every resident in contact.

Government staff members and community workers are required to contact householders to double-check their residential information so every resident in a community can receive notices about the online health condition reporting system.

In Xincheng subdistrict, a total of 449 WeChat groups were established in just one day to include all residents in 228 residential communities. Those WeChat groups ensure residents can report their health conditions actively and efficiently,

according to local officials.

For residents who failed to make the first report on time, community workers would visit their homes to assist them, according to the zone.

"Our system recorded a peak at 3 pm on Feb 4. More than 40,000 people made reports in an hour," said Wang Shuaishuai, director of research and development at Weifang Hi-Tech Zone Information System Development, Operation and Maintenance.

Guo Ping, board chairman of Weifang Hi-Tech Zone Information System Development, Operation and Maintenance, said: "We will continue to upgrade our system to serve people's varying demands. For instance, the system will allow people to fix false information. Special demand from certain communities will also be served."

Yin Tingting contributed to this story.

Production resumes for much-needed ambulances

By YUAN SHENGGAO

BAIC Motor Corp and 10 of its subsidiaries, including Foton Motor Group, will donate 58 Toano-branded negative-pressure ambulances to the China Charity Federation, in an effort to support the fight against the novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic nationwide.

The donation ceremony took place in Weifang, Shandong province, on Feb 13, with the first batch of eight vehicles delivered to seven hospitals in Hubei province.

In the fight against the virus, negative-pressure ambulances, which allow fresh air in but not out before being properly treated, is much-needed in transporting patients. The negative-pressure ambulances are also equipped with life-support equipment such as a respirators and an automatic external defibrillators.

Work resumed at Foton Shandong Multifunction Plant's negative-pressure ambulance production line, a subsidiary of Foton Motor Group, in the Weifang Hi-Tech Industrial Development Zone on Jan 25, the first day of the 2020 Lunar Chinese New Year.

"We talked to every member of the Communist Party of China in our company about the situation and importance of our tasks (to expect them to take a leading role in ensuring smooth

resumption). We also took an all-around approach to virus prevention in a bid to alleviate workers' concern in the workplace," said Zhang Jimin, head of Foton Shandong Multifunction Plant.

Though staff members were ready to work, another problem constrained the plant — it did not have enough parts to assemble ambulances because its suppliers had stopped production. Its inventory could support the production of no more than 20 vehicles at that time, according to Zhang.

Foton Shandong Multifunction Plant then sent business representatives to key suppliers' production lines to ensure products were sent out as soon as possible. It also sent its own vehicles and drivers to other regions in China to transport parts rather than waiting for a third-party logistics service providers.

In the quality control process, the company said it used infrared thermal imaging for the first time, to increase the efficiency in final products testing.

By Feb 13, the company had received orders of more than 800 negative-pressure ambulances, many of them from big cities such as Shanghai and Guangzhou, Guangdong province.

Zhou Jinjiang and Feng Yucheng contributed to this story.



Dozens of donated Toano-branded negative-pressure ambulances are ready to head for Wuhan, Hubei province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY