

South Montgomery
County Woodlands



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP

News

Montgomery County commissioners on Monday approved 10-year tax abatements for two Houston-based corporations that are moving their headquarters to The Woodlands.

US Oncology, one of the largest cancer treatment and research networks in the nation, is erecting an eight-story, 204,000-square-foot office tower at the intersection of Woodlands Parkway and Woodloch Forest, near the Town Center district.

Meanwhile, Petroleum Wholesale/Sun Development is relocating its national offices from the FM 1960 Champions area to a three-story, 63,622-square-foot building at Technology Forest Place, off of Research Forest.

Combined, the two privately-held companies will stimulate the local economy with some 650 jobs and an annual payroll of more than \$47 million, according to County Tax

Assessor/Collector J.R. Moore. Once the abatements expire a decade from now, the county's annual tax revenue from the two businesses will total more than \$273,000.

Commissioners gave their unanimous approval of the abatements during their regular meeting at the county Administration Building in downtown Conroe.

"These are two quality companies," County Judge Alan B. Sadler said. "They really will be an asset to Montgomery County."

Ron Bourbeau, chief executive officer of the South County Woodlands Economic Development Partnership, said the pending arrival of US Oncology and Petroleum Wholesale reflects a continuing upward trend of business growth in The Woodlands area.

"We're delighted with the county's support regarding these projects," he said.

"During the last eight years, the work force in south Montgomery County has risen from 20,000 to more than 60,000."

In operation for 35 years, Petroleum Wholesale distributes gasoline and other related products to retailers through the southern half of the United States, including all the way to California, according to Stuart Lapp, the company's general counsel. Petroleum Wholesale also operates 60 truck stops, travel centers and convenience stores under the Sunmart brand, he said.

"We're growing, and now we're out of space at our current headquarters," Lapp said. "We're already on the north side of Houston and we saw this as an opportunity to move into The Woodlands. It was there that we saw what we needed."

Lapp expects occupancy to take place either in late 2008 or early 2009.

Incorporated in 1999, US Oncology currently has 500 of its employees spread around three buildings in the Greenspoint area of north Houston. Kimberly Rutherford, director of corporate communications, said the company looked at other locations in the Houston area, but selected The Woodlands because of its convenience to the majority of its employees.

"It was the most centralized location for most of our employees," Rutherford, who also lives in The Woodlands, said. "It also offered the environment we wanted to create for them."

US Oncology's headquarters will include a seven-story parking garage, she said. Its headquarters could be the first of four office buildings built at the 4.6-acre site.

"We have a contract for more space, if needed," Rutherford said, adding that move-in to the first building is scheduled for the first quarter of 2009.

US Oncology is a business service provider for the more than 1,000 oncologists who participate in its network, including 85 outpatient cancer centers in 32 states. Its cancer research services have played a "pivotal role," Rutherford said, in the approval of 24 of the last 30 federally-

approved drugs for use by cancer patients.

"In the past four years, we've experienced tremendous growth," US Oncology President Bruce Broussard said. "Our new corporate facility will provide the needed room for our continued growth, as well as create a state-of-the-art work environment for our employees."

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Abatements awarded

Company Petroleum Wholesale US Oncology

Product Gas wholesaler Cancer treatment/research

Employees 100-150 500

Annual payroll \$5.5 million \$41.5 million

Proposed building 3 stories 8 stories

Construction cost \$16.3 million \$33.8 million

Office space 63,622 204,063

Opening Late 2008-Early 2009 Early 2009

*-County tax revenue \$77,134 \$197,700

*-estimated annual after 10-year tax abatements

Information provided by Montgomery County Tax Assessor/Collector's office.