

Lake of the Ozarks Regional Economic Development Council starts Business Visitation Program

Osage Beach, Mo. (date)—The Lake of the Ozarks Regional Economic Development Council (LOREDC) is embarking on a new marketing program to assist the area's existing employers in meeting the challenges they face in today's economy. The program will involve visits to local businesses in Camden, Miller and Morgan counties to seek input on key issues affecting their business, and to learn how LOREDC can proactively assist companies in pursuing growth opportunities or addressing economic challenges. To facilitate this effort, AmerenUE's Mike Chell, a Business Development Executive from St. Louis, provided a two-part training program designed to equip LOREDC marketing committee members with the tools needed to make the visitations, including a comprehensive business survey for statistical analysis.

"We expect this business visitation program to provide significant benefits to area business owners and managers," said LOREDC president Mike Kenagy of the Lake West Chamber of Commerce. "The business data and other information gathered in the visits will enable us to put substantive programs in place quickly to help our area businesses respond to the challenges they face."

Lori Hoelscher, Marketing Chairperson for LOREDC and Customer Service Advisor for AmerenUE, said the business contact program offers a structured approach to identifying business needs, and that will help LOREDC more-effectively create business support programs designed to address those needs.

Kenagy and Hoelscher noted that the program also provides a great opportunity to acknowledge the value existing employers contribute to the lake-area communities.

A sampling of businesses throughout Camden, Miller and Morgan counties has already been targeted to participate in the program. Letters will be going out to the managers of those companies explaining the program further and letting them know who from their community will be in touch to set up the visit. All visits will be completed by August 2008, and statistical information compiled. This information will then be given to participating businesses as well as area community leaders at a luncheon this fall.

The following community professionals will be organizing the contacts within their respective communities; Steven Craig, Wayne Morgan, Trish Creach, Chuck Chorpening, Nancy Viselli, Jay Fisher, Tim Jacobsen and Mike Kenagy.

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