ASHTA Chemicals makes

"For more than 50 years, ASHTA has continuously improved its manufacturing processes, safety performance and environmental compliance while delivering these vital products to its customers," said José Valdés, ASHTA's CEO.

By Amy Jones

ASHTABULA TOWNSHIP - Changes are coming to ASHTA Chemicals. In June, the company announced a $60 million investment that would result in a two- to three-year project that will replace its current manufacturing process with a more economical, environmentally friendly process that will both retain and add jobs, boosting the economy.

ASHTA, which produces and sells chlorine, potassium hydroxide products to warehouses in both the U.S. and Canada, creates products that ultimately find their way into every home. From cleaning products to paint to fertilizer to batteries, these products impact families everywhere, and it is ASHTA's mission to produce them.

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impact in community

in a responsible, safe manner.

The decision to transition from the mercury cell technology that has for years served as the method of producing chlorine to membrane cell technology was a result of that mission. According to President Brad Westfall, it is a change that should have a positive impact on not just the environment, but the company as a whole.

"Safety in the workplace and protecting the environment are our company’s most important priorities, and we have a strong record of operating within our environmental permits and working hard to minimize both water and air emissions from our facility. We recently made an announcement about a significant investment in production technology that will eliminate mercury from our production process. While that investment decision was driven partly by environmental considerations, there were many other factors involved that weighed just as or even more heavily. Certainly environmental pressures (i.e. regulations) can add to costs and potentially negatively impact job and earnings growth, but we are keenly aware of and deeply committed to protecting the environment as we produce what we believe are important products that make people’s lives better," Westfall said.

Moving forward, the success of companies like ASHTA ultimately benefit the community around them. For ASHTA, success is measured not just economically, but in how they get there.

"ASHTA’s plant has operated in this community since the 1960s and this event is a celebration of our commitment to our customers and our employees and a thank you to the many stakeholders who have made this possible," said Brad Westfall, ASHTA’s president, during an event announcing the investment.

"ASHTA, like most for-profit companies, is in business to generate positive earnings for its shareholders and to make an acceptable return on their investment in the business. In the process of doing that, however, our top priorities are the safety and security of our employees, compliance with environmental permits and regulations, and making products that always meet or exceed mutually agreed to customer requirements. There is no room for making products unless we make them safely and of the highest quality and there is no good purpose in making profits unless we generate them safely, ethically and while protecting the environment. While that is our mission, converting our production technology, thereby positioning our company for future growth, is currently our most important strategic objective," Westfall said.

He continued, "ASHTA has a terrific workforce of dedicated and highly skilled men and women. It is absolutely one of the things that we are the most proud of and it is unquestionably what sets us apart from our competition. We are only as good as our people, and with that knowledge, we work hard to create an atmosphere of open communication, empowerment, ownership and alignment."