

Manufacturer of electric vehicle charging stations picks Libertyville for HQ



EVBox, a global manufacturer of electric vehicle charging stations, announced Tuesday it will open its first North American headquarters at Innovation Park in Libertyville.

(Paul Valade | Staff Photographer, 2017)



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A global manufacturer of electric vehicle charging stations and charging management software will open its first North American headquarters and production facility in Libertyville.

EVBox, a division of France-based Engie SA, will lease about 60,000 square feet at Innovation Park Lake County, the former Motorola Mobility campus on Route 45, the company announced Tuesday morning.

The company also has offices in New York City, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Because of its central location, the Libertyville headquarters will enhance the company's North American presence, according to the company announcement.

"This new location means that EVBox will be in closer proximity to its American customers -- allowing both communication and production to be quicker, smoother and more environmentally friendly," the statement reads.

Operations will start this summer. EVBox initially expects to produce 200 DC charging units each week, which will create between 80 and 120 jobs.

Maryland-based developer BECO Management Inc. bought the sprawling 1.2 million-square-foot Motorola campus in 2014 and transformed it into Innovation Park, a multi-tenant workplace.

EVBox toured 33 U.S. cities before choosing Libertyville, according to Chris Epstein, president of BECO Midwest.

The company estimates there will be more than 6.5 million new electric vehicles on U.S. roads by 2025.

"The new factory and headquarters demonstrate EVBox's commitment to eMobility and helping achieve a zero-emission future," according to the announcement.

Libertyville officials welcomed the influx of new jobs to the community.

"EVBox is an innovative firm that requires skilled labor, a creative environment and access to a large transportation network," Mayor Terry Wepler said.

According to company literature, EVBox was founded in the Netherlands and broke through in 2010 when the market for electric vehicles was in its infancy. It became the sole supplier of public charging infrastructure in European cities including Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Monaco.

The company has grown from five founding members to more than 500 employees and continues to expand in central Europe. It's 13th global office opened Feb. 6 in Warsaw, Poland.

Interest in Innovation Park is replacing the memory of Motorola, which stunned the village when it left for Chicago. The last of 2,500 Motorola employees departed the sprawling Libertyville campus in 2014.

BECO refashioned the campus to offer an "experiential" environment offering a health and wellness program consisting of massage, yoga, mediation and nutrition, for example, in addition to a fitness center.

"While those with vested interest in downtown Chicago have proclaimed 'the death of suburban office' or 'the millennial workforce is now urbanized,' that is noise unsupported by the facts unfolding on the ground throughout suburban Chicagoland," Epstein said.

Other pending activity at Innovation Park includes Medline Industries' lease 150,000 square feet of office space and the relocation of global headquarters by Valent Bioscience and Intermatic Incorporated, according to Epstein.