

# The Register-Herald, Beckley, West Virginia

October 13, 2013

## Analabs Inc. is going organic

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**Register-Herald Reporter**

— A local business is almost doubling its size in a move that officials hope will create jobs for southern West Virginia.

Analabs Inc. of Crab Orchard recently had a ground-breaking ceremony to celebrate the expansion of the business to include organic analysis.

“We do environmental analysis and drinking water analysis,” Vice President Kelli Harrison said. “Mostly things for regulatory compliance. The EPA and DEP do different types of analysis. People like coal companies, sewage plants, drinking water facilities, landfills and even car-washes have regulations they have to follow. A business with a parking lot might have to have a stormwater permit. They are required to do analysis and turn that analysis in to the state to show that they meet certain water requirements.

“There are two different types of analysis: organic and inorganic analysis. Primarily we have always been an inorganic laboratory. What we’re adding on which is a whole other half, is organic analysis. That’ll be doubling our capacity as a laboratory.”

To be able to do organic analysis, Analabs is adding 7,000 square feet that will add four new laboratory spaces, a large training room, office space, and a “clean room” for low-level mercury analysis.

“In order to accurately do low-level mercury analysis, you have to have a clean room with an air-lock,” Harrison said. “You can only wear certain things in the room. Everyone has traces of mercury on them. In order to meet a low-level of detection in this type of analysis, you have to make sure that you’re not bringing mercury with you when you come in.

“There’s a lot of cleanliness that goes into it and you have to clean several times per day. You can’t let things get exposed to the other parts of the lab. There’s no other lab in West Virginia that does that. All of the clean room, low-level mercury analysis goes to Ohio right now.”

Harrison says construction crews are putting down the cinderblocks for the expansion now and hope to be finished by March 2014.

“I know this is something that we’ve wanted for a long time,” she said. “In our area there’s not a lot of technical jobs and our hope is that this will provide more technical jobs for the area. With the coal industry being a little off-kilter right now, we’re hoping that this will be something positive.”

Harrison also says there are very few labs in West Virginia that have the abilities to do the testing that Analabs can do.

“There are probably only two, actually,” she said. “We needed some additional laboratories that could do that. We also hold a national certification so we can also do analysis for other states. We can bring work from outside of West Virginia into West Virginia and do that here. That brings work into our state that would normally be done in another state, which is always a good thing. It just depends on how much work we can bring into our lab versus other labs in other states, as far as competition goes.”

Harrison says Analabs also works to help out local communities in any way it can.

“We donate to lots of schools, athletic organizations and things like that,” she said. “I think we’ve donated to every basketball team, cheerleading squad and football team in Raleigh County over the last several years.”

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