

## Name from Lockport's past resurfaces

Business First of Buffalo - June 22, 2007 by Thomas Hartley Business First

The old Lockport company was known as VanDeMark Chemical Inc. for all except the last eight years.

Now, under a new owner, the former name is back.

Buckingham Capital Partners II LLP, a New York City investment firm, has acquired Isochem Inc., the name the old VanDeMark Chemical was given when Paris-based Groupe SNPE acquired the company in 1999, and reinstated the VanDeMark name.

The price of the stock transaction was not disclosed.

The company, which has 93 employees and is located at One N. Transit Road, produces phosgene, phosgene derivatives, and custom and proprietary chemicals for the worldwide pharmaceutical, agri-chemical, polymer and fine chemical industries.

Annual sales top \$25 million.

Buckingham Capital in the last two years has acquired control of eight profitable U.S. businesses, including Fuller Brands and CPAC Imaging, with aggregate sales topping \$220 million.

Michael Kucharski, VanDeMark president and CEO, said the ownership change "marks the launching of a new and improved VanDeMark."

Under its French owner, the company grew beyond being a manufacturer of specialty chemicals for the domestic market. Expansion at that level will continue as will a focus on research and development, Kucharski said. No significant increase in the workforce is seen.

"We not the same little old family-owned VanDeMark company supplying domestic customers that we were. We are now an international player," he said.

"About one-third of our business is in the U.S. and North America, one-third is in Europe and one-third is in the rest of the world."

Kucharski said that since 1999, about \$20 million was invested in the company. About 50 percent was spent for new production machinery and equipment, and another 50 percent for safety and security upgrades.

The company became VanDeMark Chemical in 1951 when it was founded by Alan VanDeMark. VanDeMark was a salesman for Niagara Chlorine Products, a company that occupied the site since the 1930s.