

## Axium takes part of former Alcoa site

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Axium Foods in South Beloit has leased about 120,000 square feet in the old Alcoa Building in Beloit.

The manufacturer will still be based in South Beloit, but apparently needed the extra space for warehouse and distribution use.

Beloit City Manager Larry Arft said the company has been moving into the building, at 1 Reynolds Drive, over the last few weeks.

“They’ve put in a sign request to put up a sign out front to get their trucks to and from the building,” Arft said. “The facility is still headquartered in South Beloit. They were running out of space, and they decided to move distribution to the city.”

The building is about 422,000 square feet and split up into three attached buildings. Brian Kaiser, acquisition and facilities manager for Kaiser Property Group, the owners of the former Alcoa building, said the lease is short-term right now, but both sides are working on a long-term agreement.

Alcoa Aluminum Deutschland, Inc. announced in December 2008 that it was ending production at the Beloit plant. About 250 employees worked at the company at the time it closed down.

Kaiser Property purchased the building in December 2009, and invested in a multi-million dollar renovation project. Despite closing in early 2010, Alcoa leased the building from Kaiser until July 2010. Kaiser painted the entire exterior of the building, redid the landscaping including replacing asphalt with rock. Old lighting was replaced with energy efficient lighting.

The company marketed the building to sell to a business for the last few years. Kaiser said no other businesses are leasing any space in the building, but they’ve had a lot of inquiries from several companies interested in the property.

“The activity has been pretty good now for about the last year,” he said. “We’ve had showings and viewing on the property pretty regularly.”

Axium Foods is a creator and manufacturer of snack food brands. It has created its own brands Pajeda’s Tortilla Chips and Mystic Harvest Tortilla Chips. Its headquarters are in South Beloit at 239 Oak Grove Ave.