Fond du Lac - Mercury Marine says it's adding 170 new workers at its Fond du Lac plant this month.

Officials say they're boosting production because of high demand for Mercury's most popular outboards, and they need workers to help meet the demand.

Various positions are being offered. Many jobs have a starting wage of $14.90 per hour.

The company's director of Human Resources, Denise Devereaux said, "We're really excited to be adding over 170 people to our organization here in Fond du Lac, primarily on our 2nd, 3rd, and what we call 6th shift, which is our three day weekend shift, and it's really in the area of machining, die-cast, assembly, and in our skilled trades positions."

Devereaux says a round of job fairs started two weeks ago.

Eighty-four of the 170 positions have already been filled. The goal is to have all the hiring done by the first of the year.

Devereaux says the new hires are starting right away, to keep up with a surge in production that caught the company off-guard.

"The marine industry has improved slightly, but it's primarily driven by the product problems that we have going on in place that are really ramping up in 2013, as well as the popularity of our new 150-horsepower four-stroke engine that we put in the marketplace last year," said Devereaux.

Mercury Marine says it has added about 1,100 employees since 2009, when it moved its Stillwater, Oklahoma, operations to Fond du Lac.

Back in September, the company broke ground on two construction projects valued at $20 million for product development and engineering, component manufacturing, and fabrication. Those expansion projects are scheduled to be completed in 2013.