



New Mazda center opens Company invests \$1.6 million to rebuild engines in Chesterfield

Thursday, May 08, 2008 - 12:08 AM

Mazda has opened its new technical center in Chesterfield County.

Technicians were busy yesterday working on rotary engines when Mazda opened its doors to local officials and the media for a tour of the site.

The company is making a \$1.6 million investment in equipment and upgrades at the center, where it rebuilds rotary engines for the RX-8, a sports car.

Mazda announced in February that it had chosen Chesterfield for the center. The company is based in Japan but is one-third owned by U.S. automaker Ford Motor Co.

"This is the only operation of its type in North America," said Robert Davis, the company's senior vice president for quality, research and development. The company has hired 20 people to work at the center, which also houses a technical call center and will have training programs for the company's dealers.

The 133,000-square-foot facility on Ruffin Mill Road has lots of room for expansion. Davis said that will depend on market conditions.

"Our remanufacturing here is primarily for rotary engines," he said. "We're looking to expand in the future, maybe to transmissions and even other automotive parts." -- John Reid Blackwell

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