

American Metal Market

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Welspun's new ERW mill to start output in Jan.

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CHICAGO — Welspun Tubular LLC plans to begin production at its new electric-resistance welded (ERW) steel pipe mill in Little Rock, Ark., in the second week of January, according to a company executive.

The Little Rock mill is in the final stages of commissioning now, with internal trials planned for early December and an American Petroleum Institute (API) audit slated for the first week of January, Joel Johnson, Houston-based Welspun Global Trade LLC's senior vice president of sales and marketing for the Americas, told AMM in an e-mail.

The new mill already has two orders in hand for material from 6 inches to 20 inches in diameter and is bringing on personnel for training and commissioning, Johnson said. A new coating mill is expected to begin operating in March as planned ([amm.com, Feb. 1](#)), he added.

The company has said that the new mill will represent an investment of about \$100 million and will create about 200 jobs ([amm.com, Feb. 23](#)).

Welspun's Little Rock ERW mill will have capacity of between 175,000 to 225,000 tons per year, depending on the diameter and wall thickness of the pipe being made at the facility, Johnson said. It will be capable of making material with diameters between 6 inches and 20 inches, in lengths from between 20 feet and 80 feet, and in grades up to X80, he said.

Johnson told attendees at AMM's fifth annual Steel Tube and Pipe Conference in Houston last year that the drivers behind the ERW mill project were increased demand for smaller-diameter pipe related to shale activity and the gathering systems they require ([amm.com, Feb. 7](#)).

Welspun Tubular, a division of Mumbai, India-based Welspun Corp. Ltd., already operates a large-diameter line pipe mill in Little Rock. That mill was mostly designed to make material for big pipeline projects that require larger diameter pipe.