Lesco consolidates manufacturing

Lesco Inc. has reported it will close and sell its Elyria, Ohio, plant and consolidate equipment manufacturing at its Sebring, Fla., facility.

The Cleveland-based Lesco also said it expects to raise prices on many products to boost profits.

The spreaders, sprayers and turf renovators made at Elyria will now be produced at the Sebring plant, where the company makes walk-behind and riding mowers for golf courses, Lesco said.

Meanwhile, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer James I. FitzGibbon said Lesco had increased sales of $15,335,000 in the first quarter, which ended Feb. 28, and lost $1,833,000, or 45 cents per share. In 1988, Lesco had sales of $14,454,000 and a loss of $754,000.

"Our first quarter is traditionally the slowest of the year and not expected to generate earnings," FitzGibbon said. "The higher loss in this year's first quarter, despite increased sales, is due largely to costs related to the opening of new Lesco Service Centers, the addition of Lesco sales trucks, and current overhead required to meet future increased customer demand for product." He said the price increases are due to general cost increases experienced throughout the industry, and Lesco's increases are expected to have a positive impact on profits the rest of the year.

FitzGibbon said sales improved for the quarter at the 42 "stores-on-wheels."