

## Business Services Industry

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# Greg Aanes Furniture and Western Solar both move, expand

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Greg Aanes Furniture, a local furniture manufacturer, has completed its move into an 8,000-square-foot manufacturing and showroom facility at 2109 Queen St. and Western Solar, a local provider of solar electric, solar hot water, and solar space heating systems, will move into the furniture maker's old 4,000-square-foot location at 319 E. Champion St.

Greg Aanes, owner of Greg Aanes Furniture, said manufacturing chairs is about 95 percent of what the company does and the move will eventually allow him to expand in additional designs and types of furniture.

"Frankly, it was wearing on me that we did not have the capability for new designs or to expand into other furniture lines," Aanes said.

Aanes said he moved the chair manufacturing side of his business to the Queen Street location in early 2008 and just recently moved over his office and showroom.

"This was a planned relocation and a planned design so that the shop is all one system, as opposed to the old location where everything just grew organically," Aanes said.

Aanes admitted that now seems like a bad time to do an expansion, but his plans were already under way in August 2007--right before he noticed the beginnings of the recession. While the recession has slowed buildout of the new location, Aanes remains upbeat.

"I'm optimistic," Aanes said. "I am a businessman. If I didn't have that quality, I wouldn't be doing this."

Aanes said he is also excited about Western Solar moving into his old location.

"They've got some cool ideas over there," Aanes said. "Rather than just have an office, they want to actually have some visibility and a showroom where people can come see and get educated about what they're doing."

Jack Hardy, president of Western Solar, said his company is working to move and keep up with growing demand at the same time. He said he hopes to be open on Champion Street by April 15 with a grand opening and open house toward the end of April.

Hardy, who has been running Western Solar out of his home for the past six years, said business expansion is driving his move.

"Right now renewable energy is a growth industry, whereas other industries are contracting," Hardy said.

He said the company needed more warehouse space for solar equipment, expanded offices and a showroom to display different solar energy setups. The company will also benefit from the increased visibility, Hardy said.

"A lot of people are getting interested in solar energy these days," Hardy said, "because the prices for some solar equipment have come down and incentives have gone up, so it is much more affordable."

For more information about Greg Aanes Furniture, call 733-9101 or visit [www.gregaanesfurniture.com](http://www.gregaanesfurniture.com). For more information about Western Solar, call 319-6273 or visit [www.westernwashingtonsolar.com](http://www.westernwashingtonsolar.com)

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