

“Spingiamo”

Zilmet USA moves forward with a new manufacturing facility in Andrews

BY JOANNA HAYES

SCOTT JACOBSEN, general manager of Zilmet USA, knows his favorite Italian word: “spingiamo.” It means “we push,” which aligns with one of Zilmet USA’s core values—“Always Moving Forward.”

Zilmet, a global organization that manufactures tanks and other plumbing products, was founded in Italy in 1955 by Ugo Benettolo. The company later transitioned to the next generation of leadership under Paolo Benettolo, who expanded Zilmet’s reach to more than 100 countries. His vision eventually led to Zilmet’s entry into the U.S. market, where Jacobsen would play a pivotal role.

Jacobsen forged a partnership with the Benettolo family in 2012. At that time, Zilmet’s footprint in the United States was minimal. Over the past 13 years, the company has experienced tremendous growth and in July 2025, Zilmet USA



JJ Strickland, a Zilmet USA employee, demonstrates what sets the company apart, its attention to detail. Each tank is painted on the inside and carefully inspected.



The 150,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility in Andrews.

PHOTOS BY JOANNA HAYES

opened its first manufacturing plant in the U.S., a 150,000-square-foot facility in Andrews in Georgetown County.

Finding the right location

Zilmet USA’s search to establish a manufacturing facility in the U.S. began in Rhode Island, where the company operated a distribution center at the time. After an extensive search, the company ultimately focused on South Carolina, where six sites were considered. Jacobsen had always known Georgetown County was a great area from years of visiting, but a turning point came when the company’s leadership connected with Ronald Carter, Santee Electric Cooperative’s manager of Economic Development & Government Relations. Jacobsen says he knew it would be a great partnership.

“Ronald Carter and Santee Electric were instrumental to the deal,” Jacobsen says. “I don’t think we would be here if it wasn’t for Ronald and how he reconfigured what we needed to make this space work. He made it happen.”

The 150,000-square-foot facility Zilmet USA now occupies was built as a result of Santee Electric’s economic development efforts. One of Santee Electric’s core values is concern for community, and economic development aligns with that mission by bringing industries and jobs

Zilmet USA

- ▶ Manufacturer of expansion tanks and other plumbing products
- ▶ Founded in Italy, located in over 100 countries
- ▶ Established Zilmet USA in 2012

Core Values

- ▶ **Moving Forward in all we do:** Improve upon yesterday. Keep moving the business forward.
- ▶ **Easy:** Be easy to do business with people, keep it simple
- ▶ **Relationships:** Relationships matter, both internally and externally. Find shared goals between partners.
- ▶ **Balance:** Maintain balance in work and play. Find balance in shared goals. Balance gives you perspective.

to our communities to make them better.

“We were very transparent with them throughout this whole process—what we could and could not do, and how long things would take,” says Carter. “My goal is always to do what’s best for the company.”

That transparency helped solidify trust and move the project forward.



Zilmet USA ensures that there are no defects in its products. Rachel Bluefort, is showing how to check for deformities.



Scott Jacobsen (left), general manager of Zilmet USA, and Ronald Carter, manager of Economic Development and Government Relations of Santee Electric, at Zilmet USA's Andrews manufacturing facility, the company's first in the United States.

PHOTOS BY JOANNA HAYES

Building the brand and community

Zilmet is the largest manufacturer of plumbing products in Europe and continues to expand its presence in the U.S. The company's focus has been on building its brand domestically, down to the details, such as packaging and adding the Zilmet logo to every tank. Over time, these efforts have paid off and Zilmet has become a major name in the U.S. industry. Primary partners include plumbing wholesalers and water well distributors. Today, Zilmet serves more

than 250 customers—20 times more than when the company first entered the North American market in 2012.

Jacobsen says in an aggressive industry, Zilmet stands apart because of its determination to go the extra mile.

"We try harder, we follow up with customers, we push and most importantly—we listen. We focus on understanding customer needs and will customize as needed to deliver the right solutions," he says.

Being based in Andrews has made

Zilmet USA an even stronger player in the market, according to Jacobsen.

"We do not have one regret in choosing Georgetown County," he says "I love it here. The people have been great, and the community is great."

Another major selling point for Zilmet USA establishing its manufacturing headquarters in Andrews was the Georgetown Center for Advanced Manufacturing at Horry-Georgetown Technical College. Zilmet has three employees currently enrolled in courses there, with plans to continue training through these programs.

"When we visited the tech school with our owner, Paolo, he looked at me and said, 'We have nothing like this in all of Italy.' That's when we knew this would be a huge asset for us," says Jacobsen.

Always moving forward

Zilmet USA currently has 32 employees, with plans to keep hiring as needed. Twenty-eight of those are based in Andrews. Jacobsen believes that one of the key factors to Zilmet USA's success is hiring great people and taking care of them.

"We want people to be here," he says. "My favorite core value is 'Always Moving Forward.' We want to be better today than we were yesterday, and better tomorrow than we are today."

For Zilmet USA, that's exactly what 'spingiamo' means—keep pushing forward.



Zilmet USA is proud of its automated manufacturing process. Zilmet USA employee, Sharon Windley, runs this machine daily.