

Satellite provider adds jobs in Alvin

By **JOHN TOMPKINS** | Posted: **Thursday, October 6, 2011 2:00 am**

ALVIN — Dish Network is looking for 220 workers to expand its Alvin call center because the company expects more demand for satellite programming this fall.

The company hosted a job fair at the call center Tuesday to draw candidates for the positions. The jobs should be filled by winter, said Aaron Johnson, Dish Network communications manager.

“This time of year we find there is an uptick in demand,” Johnson said.

There are 11 Dish Network call centers in the United States. Some of those also will be hiring 100 to 200 workers each during the fall.

Dish Network is offering more services, including a deal with Blockbuster to provide movies, television shows and games by satellite and renting DVDs by mail, he said. The company currently has about 14 million subscribers.

“We’re just preparing our call centers in Alvin and throughout the country for that demand,” Johnson said.

The added workers will be a good economic boost for Alvin during at a time when the national economy is struggling, said Larry Buehler, Alvin’s economic development director.

“It’s more people living here, it’s more people eating here,” he said. “It’s more sales tax for our community and our infrastructure. It’s all positive.”

When the Dish Network call center in Alvin opened in 2006, the company projected it eventually would have 550 employees at the site, he said. Now they have more than 1,000, Buehler said.

“They’ve been a great corporate partner,” he said.

It’s not known what overall economic impact the added workers will bring, Buehler said. The city estimates when Dish Network had 600 employees it meant \$12 million in local sales and about \$1.3 million in sales tax revenue, he said.

Before opening the center, Alvin granted the company a seven-year, \$205,000 tax abatement for the 60,000 square-foot customer support center off Highway 35.

John Tompkins is senior reporter for The Facts. Contact him at 979-237-0154.