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NanoMech Gets National Attention

By Rob Keys

It's been about two months since U.S. Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner chose Springdale's NanoMech as the setting to reveal data that supports the Obama administration's desire to make a research and experimentation tax credit permanent.

That visit, which received coverage from a host of national outlets, has been a boon for NanoMech, a nanotechnology manufacturer with a plant and laboratories in Springdale and additional space in Fayetteville.

CEO Jim Phillips said the response from customers, investors and others has been "off the charts."

"We have a lot things that were in motion that have really picked up speed," Phillips said.

One of those things is TuffTek, a coating for carbide tools and wear parts. Phillips believes TuffTek could become the equivalent of GORE-TEX and/or Teflon in terms of widespread use and familiarity.

As supporting evidence, Phillips said three of the world's largest tool companies have visited NanoMech since Geithner's visit.

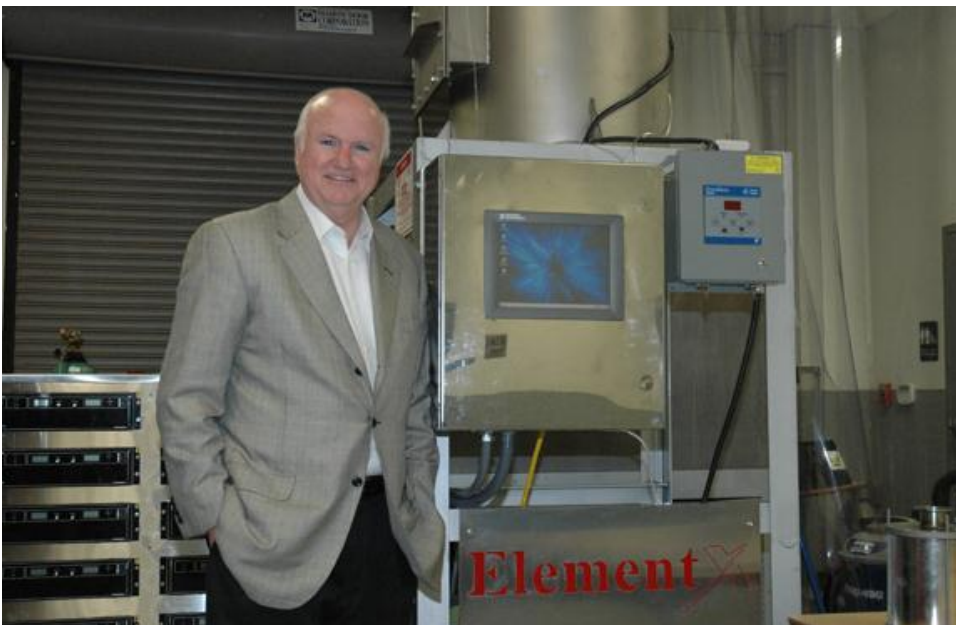
"That's where we're knocking it out of the park," Phillips said.

Over the course of an hour-long interview, though, Phillips spoke with equal zeal about other products like ElementX, NanoGlide and nGuard. Plans to devote space to the production of each of NanoMech's products, in fact, are almost constantly evolving.

The result is a mood of unchecked enthusiasm that permeates NanoMech's Springdale facility.

This is true despite the fact Phillips said pitching the benefits of the company's technology isn't as sexy as when he touted the potential of cell phones and high-speed Internet during previous stints at Motorola and other companies.

"Talking about machine tools can be like watching a fence rust," Phillips said, smiling, "but we're going to fix it to where that fence doesn't rust for 100 years."



NanoMech CEO Jim Phillips stands next to a reactor used to make ElementX, one of the products that's received heightened attention since a March visit by U.S. Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner.