

CHATSWORTH, Calif., Jan. 13, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- When the Northridge earthquake struck the San Fernando Valley on January 17, 1994, NATEL suffered major damage. The microelectronics manufacturer's headquarters was devastated by the 6.7 magnitude earthquake, one of the worst earthquakes in U.S. history.

The Northridge earthquake killed 61 people, injured thousands and damaged \$40 billion of property, unleashing some of the strongest ground motion ever recorded. The loss of life and property destruction also led to significant changes in building design and risk mitigation.

This month, on the earthquake's 20th anniversary, January 17, 2014, NATEL plans a special commemorative event. This event, at the Chatsworth California headquarters at 11am, will include an earthquake preparedness drill, a donation of disaster relief items to The American Red Cross and a moment of reflection, to honor their employees and other survivors for their resilience. NATEL's commemoration also shows their commitment and support to the region they still call home. NATEL's observances are among many planned throughout southern California to mark the 20th anniversary of the earthquake.

Not letting the earthquake knock his NATEL family down, President and CEO Sudesh Arora told his team, "We refused to let the earthquake shake our spirits or close us down. This January 17 will be a day of reflection at all our locations, especially our

Chatsworth

headquarters. We celebrate the amazing spirit displayed by our employees in 1994. NATEL also re-affirms our commitment to our community, which suffered so significantly after the earthquake. We take pride in being part of the regional recovery."

On the morning of January 17, 1994, employees showed up at NATEL already shaken from their losses at home, and feared the loss of their jobs as well. While other area businesses closed locations and laid off employees, Arora told his employees, "I guarantee your jobs, and you will have a steady pay check within three weeks." Customers were fearful of doing business in California and some left, but Arora was able to reassure many of them, thanks to the resilience of Californians.

Kristrun Lowrey remembers, "We will rebuild" being echoed throughout those early weeks. NATEL never shut down. Through the exceptional leadership of Arora, his spirited and dedicated NATEL family made it possible for the company to resume production at a new location in less than three weeks. This resilience became an inspiration for the company, which has added 120 employees in California since that time.

In 1995 when they moved into their current building, the company invested millions to retrofit the building to withstand an 8.5 magnitude earthquake. Arora said, "If an 8.5 magnitude earthquake ever happens, I would be more concerned about my city than my building and I do not want to bear the burden of the loss of any of my employees due to just doing the bare minimum in construction. We invested \$2 million in seismic retrofits alone, all for the safety of our team and commitment to this community."

"NATEL's headquarters remain in Chatsworth. Today we have two major facilities here that serve as the home base for NATEL operations in other U.S. and international locations. NATEL continues to expand, but our roots are deep in California," said Arora.

ABOUT NATEL

NATEL is a major independent manufacturer of a wide variety of electronic products, providing low to high volume production for its customers. As one of the largest and oldest privately held EMS Companies in the U.S., NATEL is known for high-reliability, error-free manufacturing that

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delivers solutions to customers in the medical, defense, transportation and industrial fields. Through a recent acquisition of EPIC Technologies, NATEL is favorably positioned among second-tier EMS manufacturers to "make amazing things happen." NATEL holds and maintains industry specific certifications that include ISO/TS 16949, ISO 13485, and AS9100. Its MIL-PRF-38534 Class H and K certifications certify NATEL's expertise in designing and manufacturing microelectronic assemblies for space and mission-critical defense programs placing it in an elite group of aerospace industry manufacturers. NATEL, headquartered in Chatsworth, CA

, has locations in California

, Nevada

, Ohio

, Tennessee

and Colorado

and, internationally, in Mexico

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