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## L.L. Bean to expand to Chicago area

FREEPORT, MAINE

L.L. Bean is announcing plans to expand its retail presence outside of the Northeast.

The Freeport-based outdoor gear and apparel outfitter said Monday it plans to open a store in the Chicago area this September. It would be L.L. Bean's first store in the Midwest.

The 30,000-square-foot store will be located at the Arboretum at South Barrington, a mall that is now under construction in Chicago's suburbs.

L.L. Bean officials say the expansion into the Chicago area is part of a larger retail expansion strategy. The company plans to grow to 32 stores by 2012.

It already operates about a dozen retail stores and about 15 factory outlets throughout the Northeast. L.L. Bean also mails more than 200 million catalogs a year.

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