

Firm makes it big in micro- technology

WHEN IT comes to micro-engineering, a Knutsford company is making giant strides.

Oliver Engineering, based on the Parkgate industrial estate is set for a major breakthrough in the use of fibre optics — the transmission of light through tiny optical fibres.

The company has joined forces with an American firm to market an exciting new product which will make installations such as oil rigs far safer.

The company is using fibre optics to replace traditional electrical micro-switches in pressure switches.

Safer

By replacing the electrical components and wiring, with an Oliver-designed fibre optic micro-switch, the risk of sparking or of electromagnetic interference is removed, making the device inherently safe.

The Oliver Switch, measuring 2cm by 1cm — a mere fraction of the conventional electrical micro-switch — is the result

of 18-month's research into fibre optics as the company's Parkgate factory.

It can be set to monitor a given pressure and when that pressure is reached can send the information to up to a kilometre away, in total safety.

World leader

Mr Spencer Nicholson of the company, said: "It can be used on oil rigs or in any situation where fluid pressure is being measured.

"It can also be fitted to our products such as temperature switches or to sense any form of movement.

"This is very new technology, and a very unique application of fibre optics. In time it could make us a world leader in this field."