GM Recalling 900 Workers In Michigan

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DETROIT (AP) -- A bright spot has surfaced in a sea of negative auto sales statistics for General Motors Corp.

The company said Friday it will recall 900 workers and restore the second shift at a factory near Lansing, Mich., because of increased sales of its Buick Enclave, Saturn Outlook and GMC Acadia large crossover vehicles.

Spokeswoman Sherrie Childers Arb said the laid-off workers will come back to the plant in Delta Township starting Aug. 24, with the second shift continuing indefinitely.

"It's an uptick in market demand," she said.

The company also says it has canceled plans to shut down the Spring Hill, Tenn., plant for an additional week in August because of increased demand for the Chevrolet Traverse crossover.

All the large crossovers seat eight and are built on car underpinnings so they are lighter and more efficient than sport utility vehicles.

At the end of May, GM had only a 46-day supply of the Enclave, 53 days worth of the Outlook, and a 59-day supply of the Acadia, according to Ward's AutoInfoBank. It had a 104-day supply of the Traverse, the top seller of the four vehicles.

Industry analysts say a 60-day supply is optimal to provide enough of a selection, but not so much that large incentives will be needed to move vehicles.

Enclave sales were down 9 percent for the first five months of the year and Acadia sales were off 33 percent, but the U.S. auto market as a whole was down 37 percent for the same period.

All four crossovers were designed to catch buyers fleeing from sport utility vehicles with better handling and fuel economy than the truck-based SUVs.

The Enclave, for instance, gets up to 17 miles per gallon in the city and 24 on the highway, compared with a gas-powered Chevrolet Suburban SUV, which gets 14 in the city and 20 on the road.

The added shift at the Lansing Delta Township plant is good news for U.S. GM workers, thousands of whom have been laid off for up to 13 weeks this spring and summer because the company temporarily shuttered their factories due to the nationwide auto sales slump.

Overall, GM sales are down 42 percent so far this year.

GM last week announced that it would extend some of the closures further into the summer due to slumping demand for some vehicles.

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