

GM Offers Buyouts To 2,000 Skilled Tradesmen

Dee-Ann Durbin, AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — General Motors Co. is offering buyouts to several thousand skilled trades workers at 14 plants around the U.S.

The company estimates it has 2,000 more skilled trades workers than it needs right now. Skilled trades workers do jobs that need special training, like electrical work and welding.

The buyouts come following the automaker's announcement last month that it plans to hire 1,000 engineers and researchers over the next two years as it adds staff to work on the next generation of electric vehicles.

For the skilled trades workers, the company will pay eligible employees \$60,000 to retire with full benefits. Younger workers will have the option to take the \$60,000 in exchange for giving up retiree health care and other benefits.

GM spokesman Chris Lee didn't know how many workers will get the offers.

Eligible workers will be notified by Dec. 23 and will have to leave the company by March 1.

Nine of the eligible plants have closed or are scheduled to close, which would put those workers on a temporary layoff from GM but would give them the right to transfer to other openings in the company. Those are assembly plants in Wilmington, Del., Shreveport, La., Doraville, Ga., and Pontiac, Mich.; metal stamping plants in Grand Rapids, Mich., and Mansfield, Ohio; and engine and transmission plants in the Michigan cities of Flint, Livonia and Ypsilanti Township.

The other eligible plants include Spring Hill (Tenn.) Manufacturing and Janesville (Wis.) Assembly, which have been closed but could reopen if GM needs them. Offers are also being handed out at three open Michigan plants: Grand Blanc Weld Tool Center, Orion Assembly and Pontiac Stamping.

GM has frequently used buyouts to trim its work force as it tried to match output to its falling U.S. market share. Around 66,000 U.S. factory workers have taken buyouts or early retirement offers since 2006.

The last buyout GM offered was in the summer of 2009, right after it emerged from bankruptcy protection. Six thousand workers took that offer. GM now has around 53,000 hourly production workers in the U.S.

GM Offers Buyouts To 2,000 Skilled Tradesmen

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

<http://www.impomag.com/news/2010/12/gm-offers-buyouts-2000-skilled-tradesmen>