This Week's Job Market: Some Good, Some Bad

230 to be laid off from NC Slim Jim plant

GARNER, N.C. (AP) — ConAgra Foods Inc. is laying off 230 workers from a Slim Jim production facility in North Carolina that was damaged during a deadly explosion in 2009.

The Omaha, Neb.-based food manufacturer has notified state officials in a letter released Monday that the layoffs will take place in the middle of April. ConAgra has previously said it will close the North Carolina site in late 2011 and transition production to a facility in Ohio.

The 2009 explosion at the plant in Garner killed four people and caused parts of the building's roof to collapse. Investigators have said contractors were purging gas lines at the time of the blast.

About 750 people worked at the North Carolina operation when the explosion occurred. ConAgra is donating the facility and land to the Town of Garner.

Level 1 Fasteners to expand, create 30 jobs

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. (AP) — Level 1 Fasteners is planning an expansion that will create 30 jobs.

Media outlets report that the company has purchased the Huntington Industrial Center from the Huntington Municipal Development Authority for $3.5 million.

Mayor Kim Wolfe announced the deal Monday.

Level 1 Fasteners owner Jack Bourdelais says the company will move into the 30-acre complex within the next four months.

Huntington-based Level 1 Fasteners manufactures high-performance fasteners for the U.S. Navy and its subcontractors. It also produces fasteners with aerospace, aircraft, medical and oil drilling applications.

Eaton expanding site in Roxboro, adding 120 jobs

ROXBORO, N.C. (AP) — Manufacturing firm Eaton Corp. is expanding its facility in Roxboro while creating 120 jobs over the next four years.

Gov. Beverly Perdue said Monday that Eaton will invest $23.3 million as it prepares to meet the needs of its global automotive customers. State officials say the company already has 3,400 employees in 12 locations throughout North Carolina.

The average job will have a salary of about $36,000 per year, above the Person County average. State business recruiters have promised incentives of about $1 million if Eaton meets its job creation targets in the coming years.

Eaton has operated the facility in Roxboro since 1965. It is currently focused on manufacturing components to help improve vehicle fuel economy.

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200 people to lose jobs at Knoxville facility

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — About 200 people will lose their jobs when logistics company ends operations in Knoxville after a canceled contract.

According to the Knoxville News Sentinel, GE Energy is ending its contract with New Hampshire-based TMSi at a Knoxville distribution center that serves as a hub for distributing electrical products.

A news release said the move was because of "transportation cost and service time reduction to their customers due to the central transportation hub in Nashville."

The release thanks employees for their good work over the years.

Va plant to build 1,500 new rail cars

ROANOKE, Va. (AP) — An idled Roanoke freight-car manufacturing plant is planning to restart production for an order of 1,500 coal cars for Norfolk Southern.

Under FreightCar America's $100 million contract, the company plans to hire about 200 workers at its Roanoke plant, according to Gov. Bob McDonnell's office.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch reports that the Chicago-based company delivered more than 10,000 new freight cars in 2008, but production fell to about 1,500 as of Sept. 30.

FreightCar America's customers include Norfolk Southern, CSX, BNSF and Union Pacific railroads.

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