

# GM Cancels Shifts Due To Fire At Major Supplier

David Runk, Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — General Motors Co. canceled production shifts at assembly plants in Flint, Mich., and Lordstown, Ohio, and made changes at several others because of a fire at an auto parts plant in Michigan that makes interior components for a number of automakers, the company said Thursday.

Other GM plants affected by Wednesday's fire include Arlington, Texas; Detroit-Hamtramck; Lansing Delta Township in Michigan; Fort Wayne, Ind.; and Oshawa Consolidated in Canada. GM said it was running shorter shifts, rescheduling production and changing overtime plans at plants.

"General Motors is working to manage production issues at numerous plants," GM said in a statement. "We are working closely with the supplier to look at alternatives in an effort to resume production as quickly as possible."

Engine and stamping plants also may adjust their schedules, GM said.

The blaze began Wednesday evening at Magna Atreum in Livingston County's Howell Township, about 45 miles northwest of Detroit. It is a unit of Aurora, Ontario-based Magna International Inc.

On Thursday afternoon, firefighters cleared the way for Magna personnel and repair crews to start assessing damage and working toward a restart of operations.

About a quarter of the production floor and about 40 percent of the total plant was affected by the fire, said company spokeswoman Tracy Fuerst. She said firefighters did an "outstanding" job in halting the blaze and limiting the damage.

Magna officials are now at work figuring out how long it will take for production to resume and whether other Magna plants can fill some of the gap, Fuerst said.

"Those discussions are taking place right now," she said. She said the cause of the fire remained undetermined.

GM production in Lordstown, Ohio, which has about 4,150 hourly workers building the Chevrolet Cruze compact car, was suspended indefinitely effective Friday morning. At Flint Assembly, GM said most of the 2,100 employees building Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra HD trucks will stay home Friday. Production at the Flint plant was expected to resume Monday, GM said.

Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler LLC said Thursday they didn't have production issues related to the fire, but were monitoring the situation. Chrysler said the parts plant makes interior components for its Toledo North Assembly Plant in Ohio; and plants in Windsor and Brampton, Ontario.

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Magna employees were evacuated when the blaze was discovered, and no injuries were reported. Production was temporarily halted at the 187,000-square-foot plant that employs about 450 and makes dashboards, consoles, door panels and other parts for GM, Ford, Chrysler, Nissan and Mazda vehicles.

Nissan said the plant makes console components for the Armada SUV, assembled in Canton, Miss. The company said there is enough stock on hand to avoid any immediate effect on production.

The Associated Press left a message with Mazda seeking information on whether its operations would be affected.

"We consider our suppliers part of our extended family, so we're very grateful that no one was injured," Chrysler said.

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*Associated Press reporter David N. Goodman contributed to this story.*

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