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The Associated Press

SOUTH MILWAUKEE, Wis. (AP) — Caterpillar Inc. says it is placing about 260 production employees at its South Milwaukee plant on indefinite layoff because of weaker demand for mining equipment.

The layoffs represent about a third of the more than 800 workers represented by the Steelworkers union at the plant. The layoffs go into effect June 24.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reports the layoff notices come just three days after members of United Steelworkers Local 1343 ratified a six-year labor contract.

The Peoria, Ill.-based company earlier announced plans to lay off production employees at the plant. The company says customer orders for mining equipment made at the plant are weaker than they were a year ago.

Caterpillar says the layoffs will bring production in line with demand.

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