



NOTICES SENT AGAIN: US Steel Corporation informs Granite City workers about possible consolidation, plant idling

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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GRANITE CITY - US Steel Corporation sent notices to Granite City Works employees Tuesday about possible consolidation of its North American Flat-Rolled operations.

The US Steel Corporation is examining consolidation of its North American Flat-Rolled operations and this may temporarily idle its Granite City Works steelmaking operations and most finishing operations in Granite City. The notices were sent to 2,000 employees at the Granite City Works under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act.

Granite City Mayor Ed Hagnauer said he did speak with the general manager of the local US Steel plant before the announcement and he said they are doing the same thing they did last February and by federal law, they have to give employees 60 days notice to idle things.

“Last April, when they announced they weren’t going to idle the plant, everybody was hoping things would get better,” Hagnauer said. “We have had unfair trade practice and oil prices killing them and orders for the type of steel we make here have slowed down. We are hoping this can be averted. We have to prepare for it with job training for those who might be idled and trying to bring in jobs to the community other than steel jobs and have a little more diversity.”

In a corporate release, the company said they routinely adjust production at its operating facilities to reflect market fluctuations.

The company said that the potential consolidation is a result of challenging global market conditions, including fluctuating oil prices, reduced rig counts, depressed steel prices and unfairly traded imports.

United States Steel Corporation, headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pa., is a leading integrated steel producer and Fortune 500 company with major operations in the United States and Central Europe and has an annual steelmaking capability of 22 million net tons.

Hagnauer said he constantly talks to congressmen and senators about leveling the playing field for United States Steel.

“At some point we are going to have to do that,” he said about congressmen and senators. “We look out of the corner of our eye every day not knowing what will happen. We hope this will be averted for the families. We can’t take that for granted and have to be prepared. Once the field is leveled, the steel industry will grow and boom again.”

Following is a statement from Madison County Chairman Alan J. Dunstan on the announcement by the U.S. Steel Corporation on the idling of the Granite City Steel Works.

“Last April, when the U.S. Steel Corporation announced it would not be idling the Granite City Steel Works as was previously announced, I shared the belief of other officials and community leaders that we had averted a situation that would have negatively impacted thousands of families and the economy of Madison County.

“Unfortunately, the business environment that existed when U.S. Steel first considered idling the Granite City Steelworks has not changed. Unfair trade practices, fluctuating oil prices and inferior steel imported from South Korea, Mexico, Turkey and elsewhere have put our country’s steel producing companies – and our hard-working, skilled steel workers – at a distinct disadvantage and have taken us to where we are today, the possibility of the plant’s closing and another devastating blow to the men and women employed at the plant, the thousands of people employed at satellite businesses, and their families.”

Dunstan said he is still hopeful the idling of Granite City Steel Works can be averted, but if the plant is idled, he and the county officials will do everything possible to assist the affected workers.

“As this situation unfolds, I will join with Granite City Mayor Ed Hagnauer, our representatives in Congress and our U.S. Senators in the continued attempt to level the playing field for the United States’ steel industry.

“This announcement comes at a time following several years of steady economic growth in Madison County and the creation of thousands of new jobs. At the same time we are working to ensure the long-term viability of the Granite City Steel Works, we must continue to focus on economic development in Madison County, the creation of new jobs and an environment where new businesses want to locate and existing businesses can grow and prosper.”

Haganauer said what happened on Tuesday is something Granite City always prays doesn’t happen, but it does seem never ending.

“We have to reach a hand out to our people and families and offer to help them,” he said. “I will be contacting Madison County Chairman Alan Dunstan and seeing what we can do about work training in the county if this idling does happen.”