

Pulp truth

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Please copy Pulp Truth front and back and distribute it during non-work time using your Contract Action Teams, steward system or Rapid Response network. Be sure to leave copies in lunchrooms, break rooms, etc. We want to hear what's happening in your workplace. Send your news to lbaker@usw.org

Contracts that Reopened in July

If your local is not listed here, please contact PT editor Lynne Baker at lbaker@usw.org to have your contract listed.

Appleton Papers, Appleton, WI., July 2
International Paper, Statesville, NC, July 2
Mid-Atlantic, Montgomerville, Pa., July 2
New York Folding Box, Stanhope, NJ, July 2
Georgia-Pacific, Blue Rapids, KS, July 3
Monadnock Paper, Bennington, NH, July 3
Newark Group, Mobile, AL, July 3
Georgia-Pacific, St. Marys, GA, July 8

Art Kraft Container, Tullytown, PA, July 8
Island Container, Wheatley Heights, NY, July 17
Heritage Container, Brooklyn, NY, July 17
Delta Corrugated, Palisades Park, NJ, July 17
Norampac, Maspeth, NY, July 17
P.C.A., Valdosta, GA, July 17
Rock-Tenn, Lynchburg, VA, July 17
Smurfit-Stone Cont., West Point, VA, July 17
Green Bay Packaging, Ft. Worth, TX, July 18
Smurfit-Stone Cont., Philadelphia, PA, July 18
SCA Tissue, Cherokee, AL, July 23

USW Assists Graphic Packaging in Getting Tax Credits

Our union assisted Graphic Packaging International, Inc. in obtaining economic development tax credits from the State of Michigan and the City of Kalamazoo for a \$27 million planned expansion of the company's Kalamazoo operations.

More than 500 employees work at the site. Our union represents the hourly workers. The expansion is expected to add

up to 160 local jobs.

The Kalamazoo operations include a coated-recycled paperboard mill and a production facility where folding cartons are manufactured for a wide variety of food, beverage and consumer products packaging.

This is another example of how a union can help a company succeed in today's tough global marketplace.

Rising Price of Crude Oil Prompts Temporary Shutdown

As of Aug. 1, **Graphic Packaging** is shutting down its No. 2 machine, which produces coated unbleached kraft paper generally used in the production of beverage cartons, at its **West Monroe, La., mill**. The rising price of crude oil has caused higher costs for key mill production inputs like fiber, natural gas and petro-based chemicals. To compensate, the company is idling certain older, higher-cost assets. Whether or not the machine is started up in January will depend on the company's assessment.

Producing about 100,000 tons of paper annually, the machine is operated by a 24-person crew. Local 364 President Al Hamby told *The News Star*, "As of now, they're not laying anybody off, but they aren't guaranteeing anything in the future. If they lay off the employees, they would be hard to replace because they are skilled, experienced workers. It's hard to just go out on the street and find 24 people who can operate one of these machines. So if they plan to restart the machine, they'll probably need to keep them."

Canadian Government Gives Energy Rebates to Paper Companies

To help paper companies compete, the Canadian government gives quarterly energy rebates to pulp and paper mills in Ontario that purchase a minimum of 50,000 megawatt hours annually and commit to increased energy efficiency.

Companies participating in the \$140-million, three-year Northern Pulp and Paper Electricity Transition program have

already received over \$51 million in total. Nine mills are currently participating. The rebates are designed to help lower a company's energy costs by 15 percent.

In June, Domtar's Ontario pulp and paper mills in Espanola and Dryden received C\$4.3 million in electricity rebates to help lower their energy costs.

(Continued on next page)

Canadian Government Gives Energy Rebates (continued)

Other steps the Canadian government has taken to address electricity costs include encouraging large power consumers in the forest sector to undertake self-generation power projects through the Forest Sector Prosperity Fund and Loan Guarantee program; extending the rate cap on Ontario Power

Generation's non-prescribed supply; having a co-generation power procurement program under the Ontario Power Authority; and having an Ontario Power Authority program to compensate companies for load shedding and shifting during high cost power peaks.

Latest Health & Safety Incidents in the Paper Industry

Unfortunately, this is turning out to be a record year for health and safety incidents. It could be because U.S. manufacturers are emphasizing production at all costs in order to compete with other manufacturers in low-wage nations like China.

One of our members had a fatal accident at around 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 22 at **Haverhill Paperboard in Haverhill, Massachusetts**. According to *The Eagle-Tribune*, the victim, Lloyd "Butch" Benjamin, 49, a member of Local 204, fell about 25 feet from a ladder and struck his head. He was working inside the plant at the time of the incident and was taken by ambulance to the local hospital where he was pronounced dead. Kim Nibarger from the USW Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Department is conducting an investigation of the incident. Al McDougall, coordinator of the USW Emergency Response Team (ERT) program is assisting the family. Haverhill Paperboard is part of the Newark Group, which has USW members at 11 of its mills.

Local 2-21 members Trudy Broman and Paul Nelson, who work at the **NewPage mill in Escanaba, Mich.**, were on top of a tank that once had sodium chlorate in it that they were assigned to wash out with water. An explosion occurred—the cause is unknown at this time—and Broman sustained severe third degree burns on 50 to 60 percent of her body. She was

in critical condition and was transported to a hospital in Milwaukee. Her doctors were concerned about the condition of her lungs and she has a long road of recovery ahead of her. Nelson sustained second-degree burns on his hands and is recovering from his injuries. HSE representative Kim Nibarger is investigating the incident, which occurred July 8, and ERT representative Duronda Pope is assisting the family.

USW member Grady Olson of Local 2-469 was seriously injured when his right arm was caught between a roll of paper and a powered "paster roll" in a paper coating machine at the **Appleton Paper facility in Appleton, Wisconsin**. Brother Olson is recovering from the July 11, 2008, accident at Appleton Medical Center's intensive care unit.

Around 1:30 p.m. on July 15, Local 449 member Peter Conley, who works at the **Huhtamaki Paper facility in Waterville, Maine**, became dizzy and ultimately lost consciousness while he was at work. After a protracted rescue effort, he was taken to a local hospital and later was transported to Maine Medical Center in Portland, Maine. Conley is in the cardiac intensive care unit and his family has been told he suffered massive damage, probably due to a stroke, with ancillary heart damage. HSE assistant director Dave Ortlieb is conducting the investigation and ERT representative Hilary Chiz is assisting the family.

Don't Forget to Register for Health & Safety Conference

It's not too late to register for the USW Health & Safety conference being held in Pittsburgh Aug. 18-22 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center and Westin Convention Center hotel.

There will be over 42 workshops covering such topics as Permit Required Confined Space, Introduction to Systems of Safety, Hazards of Noise Exposure, Introduction to USW's Triangle of Prevention Program, Hazard Mapping Your Workplace and Hours of Work.

Besides the workshops there will be plenary speakers and

time for union-only and joint company meetings. This is a joint labor-management conference, so you are encouraged to invite management representatives from your workplace to attend. On Aug. 18 there will be a union-only session. The joint labor-management sessions start Aug. 19. The conference adjourns at noon on Aug. 22.

The deadline to register for the conference is Friday, Aug. 1. To register on-line and for more information on hotel reservations, flight arrangements and the conference fee, go to www.usw.org.

Increased Energy Costs Force 106-year-old Mill to Close

Increased costs for natural gas and electricity to run machinery and excess industry capacity for 100% recycled paperboard prompted **The Newark Group Inc.** to decide to shut down the 106-year-old **Haverhill Paperboard Corp. in Haverhill, Mass.**, Aug. 29.

Cost of raw materials, such as waste paper, have doubled for the mill because China continues to import greater amounts of paper for its new mills; the increased demand causes the cost to rise ever higher.

Plant officials are moving the Haverhill operation to a facility in South Carolina that powers machinery by burning coal, which is substantially cheaper.

The plant closing affects 174 full- and part-time employees. Plant managers have said that even if the employees

worked for free they still could not keep the plant running.

Dennis Clifton, president of Local 4-204, which represents about 140 workers, told *The Eagle Tribune* the mill closing is a "bad situation all the way around. It's not a good feeling, and like everyone else, I have house and car payments and the bills keep coming in. It's a bad situation for our employees and for the city, which stands to lose a lot of tax money."

Clifton said he understands the reasons for closing the plant. "I've heard it spends \$35,000 a day on fuel. The union has programs that might help, unless the company has this closing etched in stone."

Haverhill takes recycled paper and turns it into solid multi-layer products, such as book covers and foldable cartons for the food and gift industries.