

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWC Requests \$2.3 Million in Federal Funds In Response to Alcoa Plant Closure

AUSTIN— The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) today announced that the agency has requested a \$2.3 million National Emergency Grant (NEG) from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to assist hundreds of workers impacted by the closure of the Rockdale-based aluminum plant owned by Alcoa Inc. NEG funds will be used to provide job-search assistance and training for more than 900 workers.

“Due to the significant number of workers affected by the Alcoa layoff at the plant in Milam County, TWC has requested emergency funds to bolster our efforts to help these laid off employees find jobs,” said TWC Chairman Tom Pauken.

Workforce Solutions Central Texas, the local workforce development board funded by TWC, is taking the lead for outreach and services for locally affected workers. The NEG funds also will provide assistance to any affected workers from more than 20 local Alcoa suppliers.

“Such a significant layoff requires additional resources for job-search services and training,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Ronny Congleton. “TWC has turned to the Department of Labor for funding to increase our response.”

TWC Rapid Response provides short-term, immediate assistance with layoffs or plant closures affecting a significant number of workers. Workers will receive assistance with job-search activities on WorkInTexas.com, TWC’s online, job matching Web site. Other services include information on high-demand occupations, as well as stress management and financial management seminars.

“TWC Rapid Response services are available to Texas employers and workers prior to and during any layoff,” said TWC Commissioner Representing the Public Andres Alcantar. “Intensive job-search and training services help workers return to work more quickly.”

In August 2008, Alcoa announced plans to close down six production lines, and subsequent announcements included notification of a complete plant closure with 918 total jobs lost.

“These NEG funds will be used to provide skills upgrades for the affected workers making them more competitive for high wage jobs,” said Workforce Solutions of Central Texas Executive Director Susan Kamas. “These resources are needed for our customers, many of whom received unexpected layoffs.”

The impacted workers are members of United Steelworkers Union, Local 4895.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the services it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.