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January 11, 2019

Kimberly-Clark Neenah Nonwovens Begins Layoffs in March; Fox Valley Workforce Development Board Leads Rapid Response Efforts

The Fox Valley Workforce Development Board has been notified of the impending closure of Kimberly-Clark Corporation's Neenah Nonwovens Facility, located at 1111 Henry Street, Neenah. The notice from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development indicates positions will begin to be eliminated March 15-29 and a final closure is expected on or about May 31. This permanent closure will impact approximately 74 employees.

The Rapid Response effort for these employees will be led by the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board, a 501(c)3, responsible for leading efforts to re-train and re-employ workers laid off in Winnebago County, as well as the counties of Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Waupaca and Waushara. The Board is working with local K-C leadership to schedule an employee outreach session, which will include an overview of the services offered by the Board and the local Job Center, as well as information on unemployment insurance. The employees will also be evaluated for job readiness and begin the process of finding their next role.

“Nearly every employer along the I-41 corridor is seeking skilled labor to fill their open positions and many of these employees will no doubt find new roles very quickly,” said Anthony Snyder, CEO of the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board. “Our first step will be to evaluate them on their skills, determine if any are eligible for re-training programs and then work with them individually to create fresh resumes and plan a job search strategy.”

According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, in November 2018, Winnebago County’s unemployment rate was at 2.3%. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, this is below the State of Wisconsin unemployment rate of 3%.

“Because this is not an immediate closure, the Board will work with company leadership to create a transition plan for these employees which will allow the Neenah plant to complete any remaining orders and allow for an orderly wind-down of operations,” said Snyder. “It’s a balancing act whenever there’s an announced future closure. We have a mandate to do everything we can to help the soon-to-be displaced worker, but also ensure the employer is able to meet its obligations to its customers.”

Depending on the needs of the 74 permanently laid-off employees, the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, may offer basic computer classes or a private job fair. The Board may also enroll them in a number of more significant training programs paid for by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), a federal program of the U.S. Department of Labor created to serve eligible adults, youth and dislocated workers.

“Every Rapid Response is different depending on the number of workers impacted, the skills level of the employees and the flexibility of the employer,” said Snyder. “At this time, K-C has been very open to working with us to make this a smooth transition.”

The Fox Valley Workforce Development Board leads a number of workforce and job search programs in its six county area. The Board’s services are open to all residents. To find out more, please visit one of the six (6) Job Centers in Berlin, Fond du Lac, Menasha, Oshkosh, Waupaca or Wautoma, or visit our web site at www.foxvalleyjobcenters.com.

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Fox Valley Workforce Development Board (FVWDB) is a not-for-profit working to build a world-class workforce in northeast Wisconsin. Serving six counties — Calumet, Green Lake, Fond du Lac, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago — FVWDB collaborates with a number of state and local agencies to help job seekers gain the skills needed to find employment, and to help businesses find the highly skilled workers they need.

FVWDB is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Service Provider.

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