

Bulletin

ISSUED BY UE LOCAL 332 • 159 Main Street • Hudson Falls, NY



UE - The Union For GE Workers

October 13, 2013

GE Stonewalls UE Information Request

On Wednesday and Thursday last week, UE and GE negotiators met in the plant conference room and made little progress toward the ultimate goal of turning around the company's "intent announcement" to close the plant in September 2014. In a series of letters to the company, UE Local 332 requested all information that GE possesses on its plan to move our work to Clearwater, Florida. In short, UE needs to review all of the studies, reports, memorandums, and all documents that GE used before deciding to make the September 18 announcement. UE leaders told GE that we want all of the same information that its business leaders reviewed when making their decision on our plant.

But, after five bargaining sessions, GE has failed to provide this information and has only handed over a series of short summary numbers to explain their "rationale." During meetings last week, UE Northeast Regional President Peter Knowlton told GE why the union needs this information, saying "It's like the union is buying the plant – we need all of the information about the plant and company costs, so we can construct a proposal which will convince GE to continue operating in Fort. Edward."

"It's like GE is trying to sell a house, but is refusing to allow UE to have an appraisal done," Gene Elk, UE International Rep, explained. Even the small amount of information GE provided

"It's like GE is trying to sell a house, but is refusing to allow UE to have an appraisal done" – Gene Elk - UE

to us doesn't add up. In a one-page document provided by GE, the company claimed that a boiler upgrade initiative developed through "shop floor discussions" only saved \$25,000 per year. GE's one-page document made the savings claim, but the company provided no supporting evidence to prove it. The UE Local 332 Executive Board told GE that it misstated the savings and supplied the company with a detailed accounting of the project, which proved that the boiler upgrade saved \$54,040 in 2013. Without supporting evidence and documents, the company's numbers cannot be trusted.

"Non-competitive" – GE Fails to Prove It!

"We can't accept GE's claims as the gospel truth," Elk explained, "that's why we have to review all of their studies and reports so we can see if their claims are correct." In its announcement to close the plant, GE emphatically claimed that Fort Edward is "non-

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competitive.” But when asked by the union to support this claim with hard evidence, GE only supplied another one-page document which disclosed three lost capacitor orders to Cooper Industries. Those orders represented a total loss of only \$35,000 in revenue and GE’s claims

GE only showed us three lost orders which represented a total loss of only \$35,000 – Their evidence on competition is “underwhelming.”

on those order do not come close to providing real evidence that the plant is “non-competitive.” Elk said that GE’s evidence “is underwhelming.”

UE Criticizes Company Waste

Based upon information disclosed by members , UE told GE on October 10 that it wasted almost \$10,000 in wages this week on a rack order originally requested by a West Coast customer. Management first asked workers to assemble a rack job with brown insulators, then told us to remove the insulators, and replace them with grey insulators. Finally, members were told to remove the grey insulators, because they were needed for an entirely different job. The entire order representing about a weeks worth of work for 7 employees was shelved for the time being. UE Local 332 bargainers plan to raise other instances of waste and poor management as negotiations continue next week.

Company and Union bargainers agreed to meet next week on October 16 and 17. Representing UE Local 332 in bargaining this week were: President Scott Gates, Business Agent Angel Sardinia, Vice-President Carol Dudley, Recording Secretary Kim Little, Chief Steward Mark Rock, Executive Board Members Sonny Goodman, Roger Harrington, Jason Brown, Chris Little, and Bruce Ostrander.

Big Front Gate Rally October 18, 2-4 pm

Join Us and Meet:

**UE President Bruce Klipple
Members from UE Locals
Community Supporters
Area Labor Unions
Elected Officials**