



MICHIGAN CORDWAINER TO ELIMINATE 450 JOBS WORLDWIDE

West Michigan shoemaker Wolverine World Wide, manufacturer of Hush Puppies and Merrell footwear, will cut 450 jobs worldwide and likely close its Rockford tannery. Wolverine said the job cuts in the US, Canada, Europe, Asia and the Dominican Republic would result in a pretax annual savings of up to \$19 million. The Rockford tannery, which employs 90, sits on 15 acres in downtown Rockford. It is one of only a handful that still operate in the US. The company said it would likely outsource the leather tanning work to Asia, to be closer to footwear production. The tannery closure would likely happen by the end of 2009. The restructuring will mean 70 new jobs to west Michigan, as Canadian distribution operations transition to Michigan facilities. Wolverine's other brands include Bates, Sebago, Wolverine, Caterpillar, Harley-Davidson and Patagonia.

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