

IBM CUTS MORE THAN 1,400 JOBS, AND MAY JUST BE CUTTING MORE



Just before Christmas of '08, rumors began to swirl that tech giant IBM was going to be laying off some of its workforce. The rumors said that these were going to be big layoffs.

When asked, managers and secretaries at the IBM Corp. replied with "no comment." It became more and more apparent, however, that these rumors were more than just rumors. On Wednesday of last week, more than 1,400 employees in IBM's Software Group lost their jobs, according to Lee Conrad, the national coordinator for Alliance@IBM, a union-backed employee group.

Most of the jobs cut came from North Carolina, however, Conrad said he "believes there's more cuts in the works."

Several employees in East Fishkill, New York, have already been let go, and on Friday of last week, pink slips were issued to certain employees on a five-day work week. Alternating-shift workers will be notified this week if they have been laid off. IBM might want to get through the lay-offs before February 1, as a new state law will begin then, requiring companies to give 90 days' notice before engaging in mass layoffs. "IBM is not saying anything," about the layoffs according to Conrad. "What's especially upsetting is that IBM has its hand out for public money, but they're unwilling to let communities know what the number of job cuts are. They have an obligation to say how many job cuts there are when they get taxpayer money." Last December, New York taxpayers made the first payment in a deal with IBM that is supposed to create and maintain jobs through to 2011. "IBM did receive a disbursement of \$45 million," said Empire State Development Corp. spokesman Warner Johnston. "At that time, they had met all of their job goals." The goals Johnston spoke of were to not lay off any permanent, regular full-time IBM East Fishkill employees for five months, starting in July.

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