

granted

SURPRISE LAYS OFF IN AZ



It's one thing to work for the city of Surprise. It's another thing when the city of Surprise surprises you with a layoff notice. For those of you who are not up on the towns with ironic names the city of Surprise is located in the state of Arizona. In order to do its own budgetary surprise the city has decided to lay off a total of 33 jobs. The jobs that are going to be cut come from departments such as public works, the Parks and Recreation Department, firefighters, and the police department. On the bright side, in the case of the fire and police layoffs, no actual officers and firefighters will be cut but instead their support staff will be trimmed back in order to make ends meet. In this case it is not the usual story causing the workers to be laid off. They are not worried about a massive hole in the budget and they are not really worried other long-term prospects. At least they would have been if it hadn't been for an audit. The city was recently audited and it was found to have misappropriated several million dollars of funding. The money, which was inappropriately used to create new structures for the city, has not only created a \$3 million deficit but it has swept away the city's entire \$13 million reserve fund. The audit results were not clear on exactly how the city managed to mis-use this amount of its funding without noticing the problems or making any moves to correct them prior to they're discovery during the audit. For the time being the city believes that the job cuts will save about \$2.9 million in the current year. They are also part of a more aggressive overall plan to save an average of \$4.3 million each year for the city. The city hopes to take the savings and not only get out of the hole created but rebuild its reserve funding for future use. This is not the first time that the city had turned to getting rid of employees as a way to deal with financial woes. In the month of March of the management of the city of Surprise offered a voluntary buyout package all of its employees. The program was not exactly what we consider stunning success. Only eight employees except the buyout offer at that time. Since 2009 the city has cut back on more than 100 full-time positions, not including the current round of layoffs. City workers have also had to do without raises for the past three years. A total of 33 jobs are going to be cut and with a total of only 700 workers on the payroll the city is not cutting even 10 percent of the workers on the payrolls not even enough to qualify as a mass layoff action under the current federal guidelines, but they are cutting a significant number of workers. A move to merge the two city's fire departments is currently underway and that may show some additional cost savings, abating a portion of the layoffs.

<https://blog.granted.com/>