

ALPHA NATURAL RESOURCES CUT 130 JOBS



Alpha Natural Resources

Some of you, most likely those of you who work in the power industry or those of you who live in one of the two patches of the country that is serviced by the coal powered plants of the company, has heard of Alpha Natural Resources. For those of you who have not heard of the company here is a look at how the company **describes itself**, "Alpha Natural Resources is one of America's leading producers of coal, which is an essential part of our daily lives. From generating light and heat to helping make the steel that goes into our roads, bridges and buildings, coal powers our future. In fact, coal generates 40% of the world's electricity and powers almost 70% of global steel production." While it looks like the company is getting ready to shut down some of its mining operations in a bid to stay profitable in the energy production arena. The company is getting ready to cut back on a significant number of workers, about 130 miners in total, when it brings two of its mines out of the operational status and into a state known as idle. When a mine is idled it is not claimed to be void of workable resources, or unsafe to be in, but the company has decided that at the current moment it is not worth the cost of perusing more natural resources in that location at this time. The process is traditionally used to allow a mining company to move to a location where the digging is easier or the sources are more abundant. For the workers at the facility it is the same as the mine closing. The company will be idling not one, but two mines. The first mine on the list is the Twilight Mine in Boone County and the second mine in the Bee Tree Mine in Raleigh County. Both mines were, in their prime, considered to be very large mines. While the majority of the workers were notified of their impending jobless status on Friday, though some were given notifications on Monday instead. These cuts are more than enough to qualify as a mass layoff action. For those of you who are not familiar with the idea here is a look at how the federal government **defines** a mass layoff, "actions that result in workers being separated from their jobs. Monthly mass layoff numbers are from establishments which have at least 50 initial claims for unemployment insurance (UI) filed against them during a 5-week period. Extended mass layoff numbers (issued quarterly) are from a subset of such establishments—where private sector nonfarm employers indicate that 50 or more workers were separated from their jobs for at least 31 days." The notice is designed to help workers and the surrounding community to prepare for the cuts, and in this area the concerns are running high. The mine was one of the town's major employers and the workers and owners of many other facilities in the area, such as shops and restaurants, are concerned that with the mine out of business they will be next.

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