

## WESTINGHOUSE CUTS 198 JOBS



In these volatile economic times it can seem like no one is safe. Even workers who provide what are generally considered vital services can find themselves out of a job if the circumstances are right and lately they seem to be for an increasing number of companies. Today the company we are going to be looking at job cuts to is the Westinghouse Electric Company. For those of you who are not familiar with the company here is a look at how they **describe themselves**, "Westinghouse Electric Company provides fuel, services, technology, plant design, and equipment for the commercial nuclear electric power industry. Westinghouse nuclear technology will help provide future generations with safe, clean and reliable electricity." The company seems to believe that they can provide that power without almost 200 of their workers. The layoffs, which total 198 when all is said and done, are the byproduct of two different tactics to get rid of workers. The company used a combination of a voluntary layoff program and simply cutting back on workers with layoff notices in order to make ends meet and get to the overall desired number of job cuts. If the idea of a voluntary layoff program seems like an odd one to you, then you are not alone. Many employers who have tried them in the past have found that they are not always a success. In the city of Toronto for example they were an epic fail. So why would anyone choose to be out of a job? Well the voluntary layoff is one that appeals to the workers who are looking to retire in the next 12 to 18 months. They basically have the last year or so of their working life bought out by the company, usually under much better terms than workers who are getting laid off by force, keeping pensions, health plans and retirement plans in tact. So workers who are close to retiring, or who are fairly certain that the ax will be coming for their neck if they do not take the buy out will take it in order to get the best deal possible. In this case the bulk of the job cuts, about 170 workers, were from the voluntary layoff program. The other 28 workers were simply given pink slips. This amount of job cutting qualifies as a mass layoff action under the current federal guidelines, meaning that impacted workers will get some extra notice before they are taken off of the payrolls. For those of you who are not familiar with the idea of a mass layoff action here is a look at how the federal government **defines** the term, "...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 cuts came from departments such as finance, human resources, communications and other business support units.

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