

Wi-Fi plant lays off 12 workers

BY TAWANDA KANHEMA
Staff Reporter

The new year began on a sad note for 12 workers of local high-tech developer and manufacturer Wi-Fi Sensors after they were laid off from the company's assembly line Jan. 1, as it struggled to balance its finances.

David Fuhr, co-owner of Wi-Fi Sensors, a company relatively new to Kirksville with a workforce of more than 30 employees, said the layoffs were temporary and had been brought about by financial challenges resulting from the failure of one of their financiers to advance a line of credit they had anticipated.

Fuhr dismissed earlier reports in the local media that his company was shutting down but said the company laid off between 12 and 15 employees from the assembly line.

"We are not going anywhere," Fuhr said. "These [layoffs] tend to happen, especially in January. We had secured a line of credit, and it didn't turn up, so we went ahead and kept selling some of the units and cut down on production.

"We had been assured by our bank that we would get an increase in our line of credit, and there was a change of heart late December," he said. "So, we decided to layoff so as not to jeopardize our operation until we have

a more stable assembly environment."

Wi-Fi Sensors is involved in the development and manufacturing of wireless sensors based on the 802.11 wireless infrastructure commonly used in Internet routers, which the company says is the dominant wireless technology in the market and the world.

The company produces the sensor solutions for industrial purpose and has two research centers in California and Tennessee, Fuhr said. Wi-Fi Sensors, located at 2101 S. Baltimore St., had built an inventory of finished goods worth \$500,000 and would sell the units before hiring again. Fuhr would not disclose how much money the company was expecting from its financier but said this was not enough to threaten the company's viability.

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David Fuhr
Co-owner of Wi-Fi Sensors

"We are self-funded and have not received any special deals from anyone," Fuhr said.

Fuhr said the company, which earlier promised to create 40 jobs in Kirksville and invest \$4 million, had notified the Kirksville Career Center about its plans to layoff some workers well ahead of time and would continue to work with the career center when vacancies became available.

"We had ramped up the 31 people over here, and we had built up some inventory," he said. "We are a new business, and building up to where we are has been a challenge."

Wreck on campus



Brian O'Shaugnessy/Index
Members of the Kirksville Fire Department and Adair County Ambulance District respond to a car crash Wednesday afternoon in the parking lot east of Centennial Hall.

Residents pay more for trash service

BY JANE KRIENKE
Staff Reporter

After 10 years, the city's contract with waste management Veolia will end March 31.

Negotiations for a new contract are underway. Brad Selby, Kirksville codes and planning director, said the city is shooting for a finalized proposal in February. A renewed contract will increase the size of trash containers as well as raise the cost of trash removal, which has remained static for the last 10 years.

The new proposed rate would be \$10.47 per month for one 65-gallon can, twice the size of the current ones. Senior citizens are eligible for a reduced rate of \$8.67 per month for one 32-gallon

container with attached wheels.

The current rate for residents is \$6.50 per month plus 50 cents per month for the spring clean up.

"[The spring clean-up] provides an opportunity for people to get rid of large household items as long as one guy can load it," Selby said.

The elimination of this service would save the city a considerable amount of money and would provide residents a weekly opportunity to dispose of large household items.

The trash collection service automatically begins when residential water is established. The billing for trash removal appears on residential water bills.

Currently, each residential household is provided with one 32-gallon container for trash and one 32-gal-

lon container for recyclables.

There currently are four trash pick-up zones. The new proposal would split the city into five zones and would allow for trash to be picked up five days per week. The recyclables would be picked up once every other week.

"I don't think it's right," Kirksville resident Bernice Johnson, 73, said. "The gas is going up, the water is going up, the electricity is going up, everything is going up,

and we never got a cost of living raise for Social Security this year. I'm thankful we've got trash pick-up because we used to throw the trash in ditches, but everything is just too high. Older people can't afford it, although I heard that seniors will have a discount, but what about the people who just can't afford it?"

"If we all got together, we could figure out a better solution because it's bad for everyone. I feel sorry for them because they do work very hard."

Bernice Johnson
Kirksville Resident

Johnson said she thinks the location of Veolia's landfill in Macon has its consequences and could be the cause of the

price increase.

"My late husband was a trash collector for years," she said. "And years ago they used to have their own trucks and pay for their own gas. Now the big hot-shots took over everything, and it's been downhill ever since. It's a fighting battle. We should keep our garbage in our own town. They used to have a landfill in Kirksville, but now they have to go haul it off to Macon. We shouldn't have to have this.

"If we all got together, we could figure out a better solution because it's bad for everyone. I do feel sorry for them because they do work very hard."

Veolia general manager Dave Sellhorst said that Veolia was working with the city and currently going through negotiations.

It's not out in the open, but
GRIEF IS HERE.

1 out of 3 college students experienced the illness or loss of a family member or close friend in the last year. Talk about loss and help your friends in need by starting a National Students of AMF Support Network Chapter at your school.

TalkAboutLoss.org