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Steel company offers incentives to its workers who buy U.S. cars

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WARREN — A steel distributor that has a warehouse here is giving its workers cash payments if they buy a car that's made in the U.S.

Payments to workers of Sunbelt-Turret Steel and its affiliate Turret Steel Industries range from \$250 to \$750.

Wayne Gould, president of the companies, said the auto industry is crucial to the country.

"I don't think we should wait for government bailouts as the only answer," he said.

Workers will receive \$250 for a vehicle purchase or lease if the vehicle is made in the United States and has a domestic parts content of at least 75 percent. An extra \$250 will be added if the vehicle is from General Motors, Ford or Chrysler.

Plus, if the vehicle gets at least 20 mpg in the city and 25 mpg on the highway, another \$250 will be added.

"With each purchase of a fuel-efficient vehicle, we are putting less dollars into the pockets of people who don't like Americans very much," Gould said.

Turret Steel operates a warehouse in Warren that handles solid steel bars. Company officials would not say how many employees work there. The company is based in Leetsdale, Pa. Sunbelt-Turret Steel is based in Charlotte, N.C.

News

• LIVE
BREAKING
NEWS

Opinion

Sports News

• Local &

Marketplace

Community

Bar distributor opening 2 new centers

CHICAGO — Sunbelt-Turret Steel Inc., a national distributor of rolled bar and forged rounds based in Charlotte, N.C., expects to provide same-day processing and next-day delivery of its products with the opening of two new service centers in early 2009.

The company will open a 100,000-square-foot warehouse and bar-sawing facility in Dos Palos, Calif., by Jan. 1, Wayne Gould, the company's president, said Thursday. "It is our first West Coast location, right in the geographic center of California," he said. "This will allow us to service the entire state with next-day deliveries. We will start with a modest group of employees and go from there."

The Dos Palos warehouse will stock a full range of bars from 1- to 26-inch rounds, he added.

Customers range from two-man machine shops to major multinational manufacturing companies, Gould said. "In the next few months, we are going coast to coast," he said, including the scheduled February opening of a 35,000-square-foot warehouse in South Windsor, Conn.

The company has long serviced the West Coast and Northeast markets "but never to the extent that will now be possible," Gould said. "We specialize in same-day processing, next-day delivery. That's the reason, more than anything, to open new locations. . . because machine operators often need the steel bar to restart production when a machine breaks down. That's where we fit in."

Gould said his company is committing "millions of dollars" to the expansion.

"We've been in the business a long time (since 1970) and have seen the cycles. This is a long-term investment," he said.

Gould foresees long-term steady growth because "there is a machine shop in every town in America and every machine shop is a potential customer."

Company-wide, Sunbelt-Turret today has "in excess of 20 horizontal band saws cutting steel. Our niche in the market is providing small quantities for manufacturing customers and machine shops, as well as larger quantities, by taking processing off our customers' hands."

Along with sister company Turret Steel Industries Inc., the company operates distribution centers in Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Texas and North Carolina.

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Recycling caucus swaps par for the course

WASHINGTON — At least 16 members of the Congressional Recycling Caucus, including two senators, won't be returning for the new Congress next year, having lost their seats either in the Nov. 4 elections or retirement.

Two prominent Republican senators are among them, and a Republican caucus member, Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R., Ga.) faces a runoff election against Democrat Jim Martin in Georgia on Dec. 2 in a race that could determine whether the Democrats pick up 60 seats in the Senate.

Sen. Gordon Smith (R., Ore.), active in promoting recycling, was defeated in a tight election, and Sen. Pete Domenici (R., N.M.), former chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, announced his retirement earlier this year.

Billy Johnson, director of

political affairs at the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI), didn't see the turnover in caucus members as unusual. "Essentially it's about the same we lost the last time around," he said.

Johnson expressed regret that Smith won't be back. "He was a good guy and a real supporter of recycling," he said.

House Recycling co-chairmen Rep. Frank Pallone (D., N.J.) and Rep. John Shimkus (R., Ill.) were both re-elected.

On the House side, the caucus members defeated included: Rep. Marilyn Musgrave (R., Colo.), Rep. Chris Shays (R., Conn.), Rep. Phil English (R., Pa.), Rep. Steve Chabot (R., Ohio), Rep. Joe Knollenberg (R., Mich.) and Rep. Albert Wynn (D., Md.). Wynn lost in the Democratic primary to Donna Edwards and then left Congress in June for a lucrative position

with a Washington law firm before his term ended.

English was co-chairman of the House Steel Caucus and had served in Congress since 1994. Knollenberg was an influential member of the Congressional Auto Caucus and a strong backer of domestic automakers.

Among those either retiring or giving up their House seats to run for a higher office were: Rep. Mark Udall (D., Colo.), who won a Senate seat; Rep. Tom Tancredo (R., Colo.), who ran unsuccessfully for the Republican presidential nomination; Rep. Heather Wilson (R., N.M.), who ran unsuccessfully for the Senate; Rep. Vito Fossella (R., N.Y.), caught in a sex scandal; Rep. Darlene Hooley (D., Ore.); Rep. John Peterson (R., Pa.); Rep. Jerry Weller (R., Ill.); and Rep. Barbara Cubin (R., Wyo.).

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Evraz Claymont emissions could be toxic, study says

PITTSBURGH — Emissions from Evraz Claymont Steel, Claymont, Del., could be toxic to local area residents, according to preliminary results from a study measuring air pollutants in the vicinity of the electric furnace steel producer.

The year-long study, conducted by Global Community Monitor (GCM), a San Francisco-based non-profit organization, was ordered by the state of Delaware and was partially funded by a \$50,000 grant from Claymont Steel.

Its findings indicated that levels of both lead and manganese in the air around the plant might exceed what the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established as acceptable amounts. Excessive amounts of the metals—found in soot that has settled on cars, buildings and other objects in about a one-mile radius of the steel plant—could be hazardous to the health of residents, according to the EPA.

Claymont Steel is also conducting its own study. Results of the company's study will be available shortly and a community meeting will be scheduled with residents to discuss the significance of the findings, address concerns and explain Evraz Claymont's steelmaking process, company executives said.

Evraz Claymont's environmental personnel couldn't be reached for comment on the results of the GCM study, the results of which were released over the weekend at a meeting of residents at a local elementary school, according to a report in the *News Journal*, located in Claymont.

Residents collected 42 air samples between July 26 and Oct. 2, of which 37 were outdoor samples and five were indoor, according to the report.

The study showed eight of the 37 outdoor samples contained levels of manganese that exceeded EPA standards, and four more contained levels of lead that exceeded the standards.

The newspaper report didn't indicate any findings related to the indoor samples.

Denny Larson, GCM's executive director, said his group will continue to monitor air pollution levels in the area as part of the year-long study. Findings released over the weekend were preliminary, and Larson said he hopes to meet with company executives to discuss them and find solutions to the problem.

"We really want to sit down with Claymont Steel and work out a program that will eliminate the dust from traveling out into the community," he told the newspaper. "It's not healthy for you. It's not good for your property and your cars."

Local residents noted that the plant has made significant improvements to its pollution controls over the years, but added that more must be done, according to the report.

"We don't want to close the plant," one resident was quoted as saying. "But we don't want to put up with emissions. All they (Evraz Claymont) have to do is whatever they have to do to enclose that—to keep it in their fence line."

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Business

A steel for South Windsor

[Print Page](#)

North Carolina-based company creating new division

By Howard French

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The clouds of recession will be parted a bit in South Windsor in about three months when the town gains a new manufacturer.

North Carolina-based Sunbelt-Turret Steel Inc. has signed a contract to establish a distribution center in the former United Steel building at 55 Corneau Way, near the East Hartford line, company officials said Tuesday.

Privately held Sunbelt-Turret Steel has not yet determined how many workers it will need when the plant opens, according to Neil M. Stein, regional manager for the company's newly created New England division.

"Because there will be many renovations and improvements required for this site, we are not ready to announce a listing of employees that will be needed in 2009," Stein said. "It may indeed require many months, but we will be looking for various staff members in the near future."

United Steel moved out of the South Windsor building in 1996 when it returned to its East Hartford roots where it began business in the 1970s under the name East Hartford Welding. Before the move, United had operated out of the 30,000-square-foot, 14-acre Corneau Way site since 1987.

With the acquisition of the South Windsor site to serve the New England area, the aggressively growing Sunbelt-Turret will have stretched its operations across the entire country in little more than a decade.

"We're going coast to coast," Stein said, calling the South Windsor move "an amazing opportunity," which will expand the company's ability to offer "local inventory and next day service" of steel products to customers in the northeast.

Sunbelt-Turret Steel is a distributor of "hot rolled and forged rough turned carbon and alloy steel bars up to 26-inch diameter," Stein said. Plans are to be fully operational in South Windsor by February 2009.

Along with sister company Turret Steel Industries Inc., the company operates distribution centers in Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Texas, as well as North Carolina, and will begin operations in California in December, according to Stein.

"We are extremely excited about our choice to have South Windsor serve as our future operations center in the New England region," Stein said. The company's steel saw-cutting operations supply large diameter steel bars to a variety of manufacturers, he said.

Turret Steel Industries Inc. was founded as Turret Steel Corp. in 1970, in New York, according to a company history. In 1979, the sales office was relocated to Leetsdale, Penn., outside Pittsburgh, where major company corporate offices also remain.

In 1998, the company became affiliated with Sunbelt-Turret Steel Inc., a steel bar supplier and processor in Charlotte, N.C.

In 1999, the acquisition of a 160,000 square foot plant in Warren, Ohio "enabled the company to consolidate a number of operations and to add to the services that are offered," according to the company profile. In 2002, the company acquired an 80,000-square-foot warehouse in Chicago, near Midway airport,

and in 2004, it bought a 110,000-square-foot warehouse in Charlotte, N.C. In 2007, the company acquired a 100,000-square-foot warehouse in Cooper Texas, and this year bought a 100,000-square-foot warehouse in Dos Palos, Calif.

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[x] Close Window