

## Ford to lay off more than 900 workers



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Ford Motor Co.'s Ohio Assembly Plant in Avon Lake is seen in this 2011 file photo. The plant announced Monday that it will lay off more than half of its workforce.

AVON LAKE — About half of the 1,886 workers at Ford Motor Co.'s Ohio Assembly Plant will be laid off as part of restructuring at the plant, said a Ford spokeswoman.

Spokeswoman Kristina Adamski released an email statement on the layoffs after Avon Lake Mayor Greg Zilka confirmed that he had spoken with Ford officials, who said employees would be laid off during the plant's retooling for a new product line later this year.

“As part of our One Ford plan, Ford continues to restructure its manufacturing footprint to match capacity with demand. With the all-new Transit van starting at the Ford Kansas City Assembly Plant later this year, the Ford Ohio Assembly Plant is preparing to balance out our E-Series van production,” read the email statement. “While Ohio Assembly retools for future product, the plant will experience some down time and approximately half of the plant employees will go on layoff until further notice.

“Ford remains committed to Ohio Assembly, and the plant will continue to play a key role in Ford's global manufacturing strategy.”

Adamski did not indicate whether the layoffs would be permanent, but Zilka said he was informed that the plant intends to rehire some workers.

“They hope and expect that they will call more back after the initial layoffs,” he said.

Adamski said more information on the workforce will be shared when it becomes available.

On Jan. 3, Ford announced that 2013 marked its best sales year since 2006, with a 14 percent rise in overall sales.

The plant is scheduled to start producing the F-650 and F-750 trucks this year under a long-term agreement announced in late 2011 among the automaker, state and union officials. The facility has long been the home of the Econoline van, which is expected to be phased out.

Groundwork for the deal to bring F-Series production to Avon Lake began in 2007 when the plant’s Econoline van production was reportedly slated to be sent to Michigan.

It is not clear when Econoline production will end.

Opened in 1974, the Ohio Assembly Plant is a 3.7-million-square-foot facility on 419 acres in Avon Lake, Sheffield and Sheffield Lake.

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