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Secretary Newson Announces Steps DWD is Taking to Assist Workers, Help Region Following Wausau Paper's Announced Closure of Brokaw Mill

MADISON – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson today announced steps that DWD and its regional workforce partners are taking to assist working families affected by the announcement that Wausau Paper will permanently close its Brokaw facility in early 2012.

"We are working in collaboration with our regional partners to assist the community as quickly as possible, particularly the men and women employed at the Brokaw mill," Secretary Newson said. "We will do whatever we can to help these workers get through these challenging times and pursue new employment opportunities to support themselves and their families."

Secretary Newson cited the following action steps being taken under his leadership:

- DWD has formed and dispatched a Rapid Response Team to begin meeting with the affected employees to expedite unemployment claims and give workers access to job training and placement services. DWD and local workforce development partners will meet with the company to discuss available services and to schedule worker orientation meetings as soon as possible.
- DWD will make available needed resources to the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board to initiate services for the affected workers.
- DWD will work with the company to petition for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) benefits from the U.S. Department of Labor, which may allow for additional re-training and benefits for eligible workers.
- DWD will pursue possible funding opportunities through the U.S. Department of Labor to assist these workers through the National Emergency Grant (NEG) program, which provides funding to states when significant events create a sudden need for assistance.

Secretary Newson encourages all affected workers to contact their local Job Center to inquire about services by visiting www.wisconsinjobcenter.org/directory or toll free at 888-258-9966. He also encourages affected workers to visit www.JobCenterofWisconsin.com, which currently over 32,000 job openings posted in addition to approximately 85,000 additional postings available from other sites.