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Governor Doyle Announces Additional Assistance for Dislocated Workers at Briggs & Stratton, Port Washington

MADISON – Governor Jim Doyle announced today the availability of additional assistance for 261 workers affected by declining employment at Briggs & Stratton Power Products Group, LLC, Simplicity Division, Port Washington, Wisconsin.

“I am pleased to announce this additional federal assistance for workers at Briggs & Stratton in Port Washington, which will help them improve their skills, and prepare for new jobs,” Governor Doyle said. “With this additional assistance we will be able to help these workers reenter the workforce, so they can support themselves and their families and enjoy all that life in Wisconsin has to offer.”

The services, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), are available through local Job Centers and funded through the federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program. They include retraining and reemployment services tailored to meet the needs of individual workers. Major activities and services for which these workers may qualify for are:

- **Training** for employment in another job or career
- **Income Support**, known as trade readjustment allowances (TRA)
- **Job Search Allowance** to cover expenses incurred in seeking employment outside normal commuting areas
- **Relocation Allowances** for approved relocation expenses to relocate to a new area of employment.

“These are services that we and our local partners can provide affected workers to help connect them with employers in search of workers with the right skills,” DWD Secretary Roberta Gassman said.

The workers produce lawn and garden tractors, snow blowers, accessories, and component parts. A Department of Labor investigation determined that increases of imports of articles like or directly competitive with those produced at Briggs & Stratton, Port Washington, Wisconsin contributed importantly to the total or partial separation of workers and to the decline in sales or production.

All workers separated from employment on or after July 24, 2007, through September 24, 2010, are eligible to apply for services. Affected workers will be notified of their eligibility by DWD.

Affected workers are also eligible to apply for Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA), which is available to workers aged 50 or older who possess skills that are not easily transferable. Qualifying workers who obtain new employment within 26 weeks of separation can receive a wage subsidy to help bridge the salary gap between their old and new employment. The program was designed to provide assistance to workers for whom the retraining offered under the regular TAA program may not be appropriate.

Individuals interested in receiving reemployment assistance should contact a local Job Center or visit <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dws/programs/dislocated/default.htm>. The nearest Job Center location can be found by calling (888) 258-9966 toll free.