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March 19, 2020

Greetings Brothers & Sisters,

I am amazed at how quickly our world has changed with the coronavirus pandemic that we are living with. I have talked to a lot of our members and see the post on our websites and Facebook, so I would like to communicate what little I know through talking to our committee people in all business units and I just got off the phone with a Caterpillar representative.

The first thing is that I have told the International how irresponsible and unacceptable it was for them to announce that they are negotiating with the automakers to close down their plants, but nothing about us. They have since then said that they would be working with and talking to all of the companies that have UAW members working in them. I hope this statement is true!

The next point that I would like to make is that closing the plants down is solely a Caterpillar decision. The only thing that we can do on the local level is to try and make sure that we communicate with our members and to handle and try to help each members concerns on a case by case situation.

Here is some of the things that I have verified from the company on what they have done due to the virus.

Caterpillar has released all vacations/y-time that people have left to be used for childcare issues, illnesses with the employee or their family

members, or to self-quarantine. They will look at leave of absences after you exhaust your remaining paid off days. You need to tell your supervisors and/or human resources if you want/need time off. If you are denied call for your union steward.

The company also said that they have extra cleaning and sanitizing going on and have limited any meetings to under 20 people.

I realize this isn't enough to satisfy people but please don't shoot the messenger. I am just trying to communicate.

I understand that a lot of people are angry that the company is not shutting down, but I also know that there is a lot of people that need the paycheck and doesn't want the company to shut the doors.

I guess the other thing that we need to think about is if/when the company shuts all operations down, and I believe personally they will eventually, how long are they going to shut everything down for and is it going to be worse 6 months from now. Conditions and decisions are changing daily and even hourly.

I will try to communicate all new information I receive.

In Solidarity,

Randy Diehl

RD:sdl/opeiu#9/afl-cio-clc