



# The United Voice

*"USW Local 310's Information Resource"*

11/20/2017

Sisters and Brothers,

This is to bring you up to date with what's going on with the ever changing Flex Day issue.

Flexdays were first negotiated in the 2000 contract. In the 17 years that have passed and 5 contracts that have been negotiated since then, people have always been able to take a flex day when needed throughout the year with the only stipulation being that only one person could be on a flexday at a time per dept., per shift. When first negotiated in 2000 you had to give 4 days notice so the Company could cover your job. In 2005 that changed to 3 days notice. This is how the Des Moines plant has always administered Flexdays. Other Local Unions covered under our master agreement, Local 1055 in Laverne, Tn. for example, have plant specific local language that deals with Flexday scheduling. Laverne schedules Flexdays on a level line basis (total flex days for each dept. and shift divided by 12 = x number of flex days per month). We do not, nor was it ever proposed by the Company during negotiations. Our flex days have always been random, taken when needed. The other two plants covered under the Master agreement, Akron and Russellville, allow Flexdays to be taken the same as we always have. The only change in the contract language was that we can now take up to 10 Flexdays up from a previous max of 5. We didn't negotiate more total vacation days.

The Company now claims that they can't cover all the additional Flexdays and they are implementing their new interpretation of the language that has been in place since 2000. Their claim that they can't cover these additional Flexdays doesn't make sense because if they weren't taken as Flexdays they would be taken as full weeks of vacation instead. If you can't cover one how can you cover the other? This is a manpower issue not a Flexday issue. The Company's new interpretation means many of you will be forced to sell your vacation days under their plan. Flexdays are removed from the liability, so the more Flexdays we said we wanted to take the less liability we had to use per month. Long before the vacation canvassing was completed, many departments reached the mathematical tipping point where you would be forced to sell your Flexdays under the Company's unjustly implemented changes. Some small departments have only a couple of days per month that you can use for a flexday and the rest will have to be sold if the Company has their way.

We have been meeting with the Company in hopes of resolving this issue as quickly as possible. The Company has given us options that are totally unacceptable. One option even wants to raise the amount of Mandatory Overtime they can make you work in order to help fix this "coverage" problem. The only option that is acceptable to us is to go back to scheduling Flexdays the way we have since their inception in the year 2000. Flexdays are there to be taken as needed when something arises like a Drs. appt., school conference etc. Vacation is one of the most important benefits that has ever been negotiated, and one you don't mess with. We work to provide for our families, and we treasure the time off work to spend with our families. Forcing us to sell vacation days, even 1, is totally unacceptable. We have filed grievances on this issue, and will continue to push to settle this as quickly as possible. We have enlisted the help of the International USW on this matter. We will do our best to keep you informed as this progresses.

In Solidarity,

Steve Vonk

President USW Local 310L