

TOP STORIES

☒ Last updated 2:21 pm CT May 16, 2007.

Southern Illinois Economy Job Loss

WSIL-TV -- With the closing of Maytag in Herrin and the announcement of Technicolor laying off 440 workers at the end of March, at least work has been steady for one sector of the economy as state and local agencies have been scrambling to find jobs for the unemployed.

Mantracon in Marion, and Rend Lake College in Ina, had just wrapped up a big push to help displaced Herrin Maytag workers when they learned Technicolor would also be closing its doors.

"We have done this kind of thing since our coal mines closed down, said Lisa Price, spokeswoman for Rend Lake College. "We helped coal miners years ago come back for re-training and find employment elsewhere.

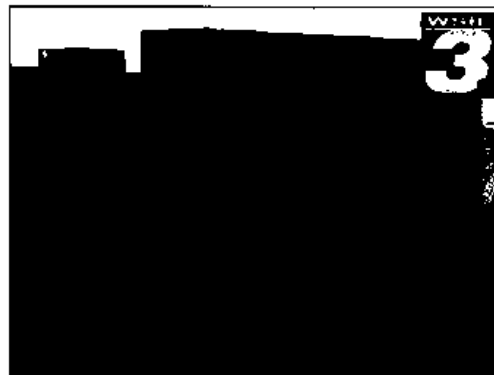
About 50 former Maytag workers are now enrolled in classes at Rend Lake College, and Price said the school plans to offer the same services to Technicolor employees.

"Being laid off, they may have thought that would be what they did until retirement so they may not have thought of anything else, said Price. "We can guide them in the way their assessment shows."

Rend Lake has a campus just down the road from the Technicolor plant and Price said that will be an important place for people wanting to take a fresh approach to the workforce.

"We can do many things they need right there at the campus," said Price.

Kathy Lively with Mantracon said there are jobs available in Southern Illinois,



and any laid off worker that wants to go over their options can visit Mantracon for help.

"There are jobs in management, finance, retail, management and healthcare," said Lively. "Many of those will have similar wages but not without re-training."

However, Lively explained, most people needing to pay the bills may need to relocate to other areas where they are hiring, including Indiana, Springfield or Peoria.

"Our hope is that it would be short-term that they would go up, get some wages they need, and then as soon as the opportunity is here they would come back to Southern Illinois," Lively said.

Both Mantracon and Rend Lake College say they plan to show workers the many services available and hopefully get them started on a new job track as soon as possible.