

LOCAL NEWS

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Province should move quickly to help Corner Brook Pulp and Paper workers, says Parsons **LATEST NEWS**

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The loss of 130 jobs at Corner Brook Pulp and Paper operation will have an impact on the entire western region, says Kelvin Parsons, MHA for the District of Burgeo-Lapointe.

"Today's news is certainly devastating to many families who rely upon Corner Brook Pulp and Paper for their livelihoods," the Liberal member said in a release.

"It is truly unfortunate that the global economic recession continues to negatively impact our province's resource sector, especially the forestry industry."

Parsons said government must move quickly to help the workers deal with their layoffs and provide assistance in their search for other opportunities.

He pointed out that the province stepped forward to help the Abitibi-Bowater workers who were laid off at the mill in Grand Falls-Windsor.

"I would ask government to consider establishing a task force to deal with this situation and determine what is needed by these displaced employees, how government can provide assistance and whether any other sectors of the local economy will be impacted by this announcement," Parsons said.

"Corner Brook Pulp and Paper is a very significant operation and employer in western Newfoundland and this downsizing will be felt by many. We already witnessed the closure of the Abitibi mill in Stephenville and the economic impact of that closure, and government must do everything possible to mitigate any additional repercussions throughout the region."

Parsons added that he was disappointed government was not more proactive on the file.

"When I asked Natural Resources Minister Kathy Dunderdale about this issue on May 14 in the House of Assembly, she certainly downplayed the impact that the closure of the number four paper machine would have on employment," he said.

"The minister must become more vigilant in communicating with these companies so the people of the province are not always reacting in shock to these bad news announcements."

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