

Straight Talk

CAT TEAM Local 235A



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LOCAL 235A SHEDS LIGHT ON SHERWIN SAFETY RECORD

USW Report Shows Lockout Has Created 'Too Great a Risk'

Members of Local 235A held a news conference last week to unveil a USW report that raised concerns about the spotty safety record at Sherwin Alumina and its potential effect on the community.

"When you force well-trained, highly skilled workers off the job, the dangers in a plant like this only increase. It's a recipe for disaster," said District 13 Director Ruben Garza. "The solution is to end the lockout."

In the report, titled "Sherwin Alumina: Too Great a Risk," the union revealed a nearly



10-fold increase in "serious and substantial" citations and orders from the Mine Safety and Health Administration since Sherwin took over. Since the lockout began, the record has been far worse.

The local's news conference received widespread media coverage. The report cited an explosion during a 1999 lockout at an alumina plant in Gramercy, La., that injured

29 workers as an example of what can happen when workers are locked out.

"The risks are not only to the workers, but to the entire community," Garza said. "In the case of an explosion, the effects could spread far beyond the plant gates. It takes constant vigilance and attention to detail to ensure that the process goes smoothly."

One Day Longer – One Day Stronger