

ment was "looking for any reason to terminate people." Another employee told that, due to workforce hearing of the impending closure, morale is very low. This person stated that there is so little business going on at the site right now that workers are finishing their jobs before the end of their shifts and then standing around idly with nothing to do. However, this source stated an email was circulated a couple of months ago that addressed the rumors of the closing. That email was reportedly sent to supervisors (but was then leaked to the workforce) and denied the plant's closing. This source, no longer with Urban Outfitters but formerly a permanent worker, noted that Urban Outfitters is "moving a lot of product out and nothing is coming in."

After speaking with these sources, The Advertiser did again speak with County Administrator Lynn Strom and Economic Development Partnership President Will Williams. In speaking with them, the point was made, in regards to the lay-offs that have occurred at Urban Outfitters, that these could be seasonal employees who are now being let go after the holiday season has ended. Each also reconfirmed that neither have been told by Urban Outfitters of any plans to leave the county.

Administrator Strom did tell The Advertiser that Urban Outfitters does have a FILOT agreement with the County. That agree-

ment, which began in 2002, was for 20 years and set the company's tax rate at 6%. According to tax records, in 2014, Urban Outfitters paid \$65,819 to the county. While it is believed through their lease agreement Urban Outfitters pays the taxes on the building as well, that would not be money lost for the county as the taxes on that real property will still be owed the county by the property owners. Along with lost tax dollars however, an estimated 480 employees will be left without a job if Urban Outfitters closes their Edgefield County location.

The Advertiser is still seeking comment from Urban Outfitters. We will continue to follow this story and give any updates as they become available.

*Tiffani Ireland*

# Is Urban Outfitters Leaving Edgefield County?

## "One of the Largest Employers in County"

Is Urban Outfitters pulling up stakes and leaving Edgefield County? That, it seems, is the million dollar question. Rumors have been swirling for weeks that the company is leaving the county this year.

The Advertiser has made several attempts to confirm or squelch these rumors, but, thus far, there has been no success in getting a comment from Urban Outfitters. However, there have been comments from other people, including employees with the company, which speak to a possible closing.

The Advertiser first contacted County Administrator Lynn Strom some weeks ago regarding the rumors, and she reported that the County had been given no notice by Urban Outfitters that it may be leaving. The Advertiser also spoke to Will Williams, President of the Economic

Development Partnership, to see if he knew anything about the company possibly leaving the area. He, too, had received no notice from Urban Outfitters stating this

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purpose. In fact, Williams said he meets with company representatives annually and no indication was given at their last meeting that the business would be leaving. However, he did say the lease on the building out of which Urban Outfitters operates is set to expire soon, possibly at the end of this year. (That building is leased from a third party and not the County.) In speaking to the possible loss of Urban Outfitters, Williams said it would be a "tremendous blow" to Edgefield County as they are one of the largest employers in the County, employing even more workers than long-time resident Milliken.

The Advertiser followed these interviews with a call to Urban Outfitters and spoke with a Senior Operations Manager, Tracy Gatson. When asked if she could confirm or deny the rumor, she responded, "We're not allowed to make any comments on any news stories." She did take down contact information and said someone would call back on the matter. That was Monday, Feb. 2. As of Monday, Feb. 9, there had been no returned call from

the company. The Advertiser also contacted the PR department of Urban Outfitters via an email given to the writer by their corporate office. There was no reply. Another contact was made to the company through an official who noted certain protocol had to be followed. That contact was made on Feb. 2, and as of Feb. 9, there has been no reply.

Although Urban Outfitters officials are not responding, two credible sources have stated that yes, indeed, Urban Outfitters will be closing its doors and leaving Edgefield County. One of those sources gave a time for leaving as June of this year. The other source confirmed the departure, too, and stated that the company believes the recent threats (reported in our Jan. 21 ed.) made against the business were due to disgruntled employees who are aware of the company's plans to close.

Employees of the facility, some former and some current, were also contacted, and they, too, all state the company is leaving the county; one giving management as a source for this information. This contact also stated that the company has been laying off "lots of people without warning" and that the workforce was told that manage-



# MyLibertyAssist<sup>®</sup>

## Employee Assistance Program

Employees covered under group long-term disability policies issued by Liberty Life Assurance Company of Boston are eligible for MyLibertyAssist<sup>®</sup> Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provided by Bensinger, DuPont & Associates.

### MyLibertyAssist: Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

MyLibertyAssist EAP services are available to the employee and his or her immediate family members.

Services	Financial	Legal	Family
<b>5 face-to-face sessions<sup>1,2</sup></b>  <b>Telephonic assistance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Available 24/7</li><li>- Marital/Family</li><li>- Personal</li><li>- Alcohol/Drug abuse</li><li>- Stress/Anger</li><li>- Death and dying</li></ul> <b>Also available</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Telephonic employer advice</li><li>- Online access to information</li></ul>	<b>Toll-free information line:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Credit</li><li>- Debt</li><li>- Request educational material</li></ul> <b>Financial advice sessions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Scheduled phone counseling sessions and financial worksheet review</li></ul>	<b>Assistance from attorneys:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- One free 30-minute telephonic or face-to-face session</li><li>- 25% employee discount on additional services</li></ul> <b>Assistance with:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Document preparation</li><li>- Divorce/separation</li><li>- Real estate</li><li>- Civil matters</li></ul>	<b>Access to information:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Child care</li><li>- Eldercare</li><li>- Adoption</li><li>- Education</li></ul> <b>Telephonic assistance:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- One free 30--minute telephonic session</li></ul> <b>Web access:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Available 24/7</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> In California, sessions are limited to three (3) in a six-month period, not to exceed a total of five (5) sessions per year.

<sup>2</sup> Individual face-to-face sessions are available for covered individuals 16 years and older. Family/group face-to-face sessions are available for covered individuals 12 years and older, and their parents. Services are not available to children under the age of 12.

## GAP, PA



- Current Gap campus = 1.3m sq. ft.; 110 employees
- Gap is 57 miles west of Philadelphia
- Small rural town with a population of about 2,000
- Closest city is Lancaster, 17 miles away, with a population of approximately 60,000
- Additional information can be found at:
  - <http://www.lancastercityliving.org/>

## RENO, NV



- Current Reno Campus = 677k sq. ft.; 210 employees
- Reno is 450 miles north of Las Vegas
- Population of approximately 250,000, the third most populated city in Nevada
- Additional information can be found at:
  - <http://thechambernv.org/reno-sparks-lake-tahoe/living-relocating-here/>



## SEPARATION FAQ's

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- ❖ What are the dates of separation?
  - June 30, 2015
  - July 21, 2015
  - August 18, 2015
  - September 22, 2015
- ❖ How will it be determined who will be separated first?
  - Separation will be based on seniority within job function.
- ❖ When will I be notified of my separation date?
  - Employees will receive written notification a minimum of 60 days prior to the separation date that contains specific details including date and severance amount.
- ❖ What compensation will I receive upon separation?
  - Severance will be based on length of service.
  - Stay bonus of \$1,000 will be paid if employment is continued through the end of the agreement date.
- ❖ I have been with the company for 10 years; what about my service award?
  - Service awards will be paid to those who would have reached 10 years of service in 2015. If eligible, this will be included in your final paycheck.
- ❖ What do I do if I would like to relocate?
  - Sign-up for an information session to be held in March.
- ❖ What do I do next?
  - Ask questions
  - Determine if relocation to either Gap, PA or Reno, NV is a possibility
  - Stay connected
- ❖ What support will you give me to help me find my next job?
  - Once you are notified of your end date, you will be able to sign-up for information sessions. These sessions will include:
    - Benefits continuation
    - Unemployment assistance
    - Job search assistance

## Urban

*from front page*

Bill Gilchrist of the County's tax office to see what recourse, if any, is available to the County for the early withdrawal of the company from this agreement. Gilchrist said he will be contacting the state's Department of Revenue, which oversees FILOT agreements, to see of any action the County may need to take or of any recourse the County has in regards to the company leaving the area before the expiration of the FILOT agreement. Gilchrist did say the property taxes on the building would revert back to a 10% rate upon the company's departure. If Urban Outfitters does leave in July, this year's tax bill will still reflect the 6% from the FILOT. However, the 2016 tax bill for the building will reflect the 10% rate.

The Advertiser broke the news of the company's departure from the county to Administrator Lynn Strom Monday morning as the County had still not been notified by Urban Outfitters stating that fact. Strom said that while the County "hated to lose an industry", she said she was more concerned with the impact on the workers who will now be left without a job and their families. Will Williams, President of the Economic Development Partnership, who spoke with The Advertiser regarding this news Monday, did receive an early morning call from someone with Urban Outfitters Monday informing him of the company's plans to leave the county. Williams said it is his understanding from talking with this company official that Urban Outfitters will begin transitioning out of the county in June and that that transition is expected to be completed in

September.

Urban Outfitters does have another year remaining on their lease of the building in Trenton according to Williams. However, he had no word on how the company planned to handle the remaining time on that lease. Additionally, Williams said he has not been advised of any other business moving into the building.

"The story in this is the 485 people losing their jobs," Williams told The Advertiser. He went on to say he was "very distraught" about the employees who will now be without a job but added the company's leaving gives Edgefield County something it does not currently have; an available, marketable location for other industries.

The impact to the postal service is also a concern for residents of Trenton as Urban Outfitters provided much business for the rural post office. Some have even ques-

tioned whether the company's leaving will mean the end of a post office in Trenton. However, Williams said that while there will be lost revenue as a result of Urban Outfitter's closing, he does not believe it will result in the closing of the Trenton post office.

The Advertiser will continue to follow the story of the closing of Urban Outfitters in Edgefield County and report any other information as it becomes available.

*Tiffani Ireland*



# Urban Outfitters to Leave the County

## It is Official - Urban Outfitters is Leaving Edgefield County

Urban Outfitters, the largest employer in Edgefield County behind the school system, is leaving Edgefield County. Confirmation of this came via a press lease on the company's website, Monday, Feb. 16. That release gives the company's departure date as July of this year.

The Advertiser first reported on rumors that the company was leaving last week on our website and in our print edition. During the investigation into those rumors, The Advertiser made repeated attempts to contact Urban Outfitters for a comment, but none was received. The Advertiser has still not been contacted directly by the company as a result of those inquiries.

As previously reported, Urban Outfitters employs approximately 480 workers at their Edgefield County location on Hwy 25 in Trenton. Additionally, the company does have a twenty year 6% FILOT agreement with the County that started in 2002. The Advertiser spoke with

See **URBAN**

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Urban Outfitters on Highway 25 photographed on Tuesday.

## Urban Outfitters Announces New State-of-the-Art Fulfillment Center

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 16, 2015 (GLOBE NEWS-WIRE) -- Urban Outfitters, Inc. (Nasdaq:URBN), a leading lifestyle specialty retail company operating under the Anthropologie, Bhldn, Free People, Terrain and Urban Outfitters brands, today announced plans to relocate its Trenton, South Carolina Ecommerce Fulfillment Center to Gap, Pennsylvania. Construction of the new one million square foot fulfillment center in Gap, PA, is on schedule to be complete by July 2015. The new, highly automated facility will significantly increase the Company's fulfillment capacity, supporting strong direct-to-consumer growth for many years to come. The location of the facility, adjacent to the existing URBN Retail Distribution Center, will create increased efficiencies across the URBN supply chain and noticeably improve order delivery time, enabling next day delivery into the important Northeast region.

"Our Trenton workforce has provided key support for our exceptional Direct and Wholesale growth over the past nine years. We thank them and hope many will decide to stay with the Company as we move to Gap, PA," said Richard A. Hayne, Chief Executive Officer. "As online sales continue to surge, our new facility places us in closer proximity to a large percentage of our Direct customers and allows us to service them faster and more efficiently," finished Mr. Hayne.

Urban Outfitters, Inc. is an innovative specialty retail company which offers a variety of lifestyle merchandise to highly defined customer niches through 238 Urban Outfitters stores in the United States, Canada, and Europe, catalogs and websites; 204 Anthropologie Group stores in the United States, Canada and Europe, catalogs and websites; 102 Free People stores in the United States and Canada, catalogs and websites; Free People wholesale, which sells its product to approximately 1,600 specialty stores and select department stores worldwide; and 2 Terrain garden centers and a website, as of January 31, 2015.



Governor Haley I almost forgot I went to the Greenwood County Library and Googled the Greenwood County Airport. Ah! I've got to admit I'm not sure this can be put in reality as for coming up with a plan to use the Greenwood Airport. I don't think its big enough for a large operation so I scraped that idea.

So I came up with a second solution to this problem. I think there may be some land that can be bought right outside of Greenwood on Highway 25. Brad Thomson owns a small portion on the land up for sell, but the property behind his has been planted in pine trees. So I'm sure a portion of that land can be bought to add to the track of land Mr Thomson has for sell. Brad is a Forester and he also manages my mother Timber property in Saluda.

The transport trucks will have a strait run from Greenwood 25 south to I-20 to Columbia. It will add about 35 miles to the trip but it can work out to what we need to keep these jobs and keeps these truckers in business. The UPS driver that picks up the 8:00 PM load said he may not have a job if he looses this hub delivery. Plus other drivers will be effected from this sut down. I guess you can say it will have a domino effect from one business service to the other. That's not good. So we've got work to do don't we?



February 26, 2015

Richard M. Witt  
1111 Cornelia Circle  
Greenwood, SC 29646

Gov. Nikki Haley  
Office of the Governor  
1205 Pendleton Street  
Columbia, SC 29201

Governor Haley,

I wrote to you 2-17-2015 saying that I will put together a proposal that may save the jobs of the Urban Outfitters in Trenton. AS I expressed my feelings about these jobs being lost to Gap Pennsylvania.

Unfortunately I'm going to have to back track on this offer, there's noway I can start and finish this project and send it to you in a short period of time. I've got to give this project a lot of thought and I need to look up all of my related articles and information so the project will be most effective. I can't just throw this together or I'm sure to leave out some details.

They have informed us that they will begin the layoff process in a few months going by who has the most time with the company. I've only been there two years so I'm sure to be one of the first to go. They will have three wave layoffs and I will probably go in the second wave. The Temps will be the first wave of layoffs.

The other reason for having to back peddle is I need to work on my taxes. My W2 form was sent to my old address in Saluda and someone took it out of the mail box. Yeah! that's not good news at all. When I get past my taxes I should be able to start on the proposal to help keep these jobs in South Carolina. We will have to just wait and see what I can put together and see what develops from my effort. Thank you for your time and consideration. May God Bless you always!

Sincerely yours,



Richard M. Witt

RMW/attachments