

# THE PLAIN DEALER

## Republic Steel to add 449 new jobs in Lorain

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[http://www.cleveland.com/business/index.ssf/2011/11/republic\\_steel\\_to\\_add\\_449\\_new.html](http://www.cleveland.com/business/index.ssf/2011/11/republic_steel_to_add_449_new.html)

LORAIN, Ohio -- An Ohio steel maker is expanding its operation with an electric arc furnace used to make steel from scrap.

Republic Steel in Lorain is using a \$85.2 million investment to add the furnace and expand its operations.

The expansion, which is being announced by Ohio Gov. John Kasich in Lorain, is expected to add 449 new jobs and retain 489 jobs at the plant west of Cleveland.

The electric furnace will return the plant to steel making. Republic shut down the blast furnace in Lorain in 2008, ending 700 jobs there. Many of those workers took positions at the company's plant in Canton.

Since 2008, Republic has shipped steel from Canton to Lorain where workers convert the raw steel billets into round bars. With the new arc furnace, the plant will make those billets next to the bar-rolling operations as it has traditionally done for more than 100 years.

With Gov. John Kasich standing at his side, Republic President and Chief Executive Jaime Vigil, pronounced vi-heel, said, "It was easy to chose Lorain, Ohio, over other locations in the United States and other parts of the world."

"Can you repeat that?" Kasich asked.

Pat Gallagher, sub-district director for the United Steelworkers union, said of the 700 jobs cut in 2008, there are still about 125 people on layoff. Those workers will have first crack at the new jobs when the new furnace opens in 2013.

"There will be a substantial number of new jobs created here," Gallagher said.

Vigil said the new electric furnace will be able to melt about 1 million tons of steel per year, about the same capacity as the shuttered blast furnace. Blast furnaces burn coke, a refined form of coal, to melt iron ore for steel creation.

It can take weeks to get the furnaces up to the proper temperature, and the furnace must run continuously. That's why blast-furnace plants tend to operate 24 hours per day.

Electric furnaces, on the other hand, heat up almost instantly and can be run for part of the day.

"We're hoping to run 24 hours," Vigil said. But he added that the ability to shut down the new furnace when demand shifts will give Republic far more flexibility than it had in the past.

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