

# Guterl reopening suffers a setback

## Delay attributed to plant's radiation levels

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LOCKPORT — Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corp.'s reopening of the former Guterl Special Steel Corp. plant on Ohio Street will be delayed from mid-July until at least mid-September.

Allegheny Ludlum officials in Pittsburgh yesterday attributed the delay to the corporation's discovery that higher than normal radiation levels exist in portions of the facility.

Allegheny Ludlum acquired the plant at a federal Bankruptcy Court auction March 27. The firm used the promise of \$9.5 million in industrial revenue bonds issued by the Niagara County Industrial Development Agency to aid in the purchase.

Allegheny Ludlum officials said they had already made a successful bid to acquire Guterl when they learned of a U.S. Department of Energy report on Guterl completed in 1979 and published in 1980. The report said higher than normal radiation levels existed at the plant, although "this contamination does not cause employees working at the site to receive radiation exposures ap-

preciably different from those due to naturally occurring environmental activity."

Allegheny Ludlum officials have said that they expect to hire about 100 workers within a year after reopening the plant.

Details of the Energy Department report received considerable local publicity in the spring of 1980. It could not be immediately learned why Allegheny Ludlum did not have the Energy Department information before the March auction.

A former Guterl executive said yesterday that after the Energy Department report was published, readings of radiation levels at the plant were taken on a regular basis. He said he was never given any indication that the radiation posed a danger.

The firm, which was the Simonds Saw and Steel Co., handled large quantities of uranium metal and small amounts of thorium metal in rolling mill operations between 1948 and 1956. Most of the work with radioactive material was done under contract with the federal Atomic Energy Commission or one of its subcontractors, according to the report.

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