

Battery maker charged with pay violations

Eastern Penn Manufacturing Co. in Lyon Station, Pa., faces a lawsuit after investigators from the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division found the company failed to pay workers for the time they spent putting on and taking off protective clothing and time spent showering before they checked out.

Following a U.S. Supreme Court decision's precedent, the Wage and Hour Division holds that workers are entitled to pay for those periods.

Eastern Penn's plant in Berks County is the world's largest lead-acid battery manufacturing facility.

According to the complaint, the company paid workers only for their scheduled hours regardless of the times recorded on their time cards. The Fair Labor Standards Act requires employers to pay workers for all the time they work and pay them time and a half overtime for all hours worked over 40 in one week.

The suit alleges Eastern Penn owes back pay to 6,900 employees.

Note: Employers that require workers to wear protective clothing must pay them for the "donning and doffing" time.