

Why Greenfield Lilly "jobs" matter

Contributed by Administrator
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Jobs at Eli Lilly's Greenfield Laboratories matter to Hancock County. Hancock County has even honored Lilly with tax abatements based on the number of new jobs produced at Greenfield Laboratories. We have followed the employment pronouncements at Greenfield Lilly now for some time. Despite many conflicting numbers over the years, in an October 27th Daily Reporter article, Lilly announced only 360 Elanco Animal Health employees and about the same number of Eli Lilly "local employees." We find this astonishingly low number of Lilly employees at Greenfield labs to be inconsistent with the promises they have made to the County.

What are these "tax abatements" all about?

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Buildings:

In exchange for 75 jobs, Hancock County gave Greenfield Lilly discounts from their property tax bill on new buildings and capital improvements of up to 90%. The abatement from the payment of property taxes on new buildings lasts for ten years for every new building built and covered all their vast property in a four mile square.

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Land:

The assessment of most of their vast industrial property in the four mile square is at farm value rather than at industrial value which gives them a 90% discount on the assessed value of industrial land.

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Jobs:

On December 7th 2000, the Indy Star in a discussion with Lilly spokesman Sagebiel – 2 days after the abatement's filing - Greenfield Lilly is said to have 780 "work force" at their facility in Greenfield.

Why are the "jobs" numbers Lilly has produced so "conflicting"?

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Lilly has tried to lead our county to believe that Lilly jobs were on the rise while in fact they have declined sharply to now about 360.

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Lilly is under pressure to produce 855 jobs at Greenfield Laboratories by contract with the county for the tax abatements.

This pressure is extended to their need to regularly certify their progress to the County.

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Lilly uses consistently changing language to describe their employees at Greenfield: "workforce";, "jobs";, "employees";, "local employees";. All are different, most could be inclusive of temps and contract workers and few describe the real number of full-fledged Eli Lilly employees at Greenfield Laboratories.

Why does it matter whether these are Eli Lilly or Elanco Animal Health employees?

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Greenfield Lilly employees have traditionally been high wage employees and have chosen to live in Hancock County.

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Elanco has a gypsy history of no roots. Ownership has ping-ponged from Lilly & Dow in 1989 to Dow in 1997 and back again recently to Lilly. With Lilly operations moving overseas, Elanco would be a prime candidate to move again. Further, Elanco has moved many times in the past from Greenfield to north Indianapolis and back again to Greenfield in 2003. And, parts of, such as their lawn & garden business, Elanco have been sold off over time to companies like Lebanon Chemical Company. Further, the 360 Elanco employees only represent a small fraction of 2,000 total Elanco employees worldwide in campuses all over the world.

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Elanco's business model has been one of change from agricultural chemicals and now animal health. When their business model changes again, they may move this unit again to a more appropriate campus.

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Traditionally full-fledged Lilly employees have represented stability. These are the stable jobs our county was led to believe they would receive - instead we have been provided a dubious and volatile substitution.

Why do we care whether these employees are Hancock County residents or not?

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Hancock County land owners pay property taxes to Hancock County. Non-Hancock-County land owners obviously do not.

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Hancock County residents tend to spend more money in Hancock County, and non-residents take that money home.

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Despite paying taxes to other municipalities they enjoy our services and assets.

What is the effect of outsourcing, contracting and usage of temp workers?

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Less security

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Less stability

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Lower wages

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More transient

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This workforce is less likely to invest in the community they are employed in.