



February 2018

U.S. Consumer Prices Rose “More Than Expected” in January

Recently released Labor Department data show that “U.S. consumer prices rose more than expected in January, raising pressure on new Federal Reserve chief Jerome Powell to prevent a possible overheating of the economy.”

Read more [here](#).



Don't Miss the China International Import Expo Nov. 5 – 10 in Shanghai

The China International Import Expo (CIIE) will take place from Nov. 5 – 10, 2018 in Shanghai. The Chinese government is extending an invitation to exporters to explore the Chinese market. The World Trade Center Arkansas will have a trade mission to the Expo.

For more information, click [here](#).



Manufacturers Call on Congress To Pass Immigration Reform

The National Association of Manufacturers issued a statement endorsing the bipartisan Senate immigration proposal put together by Sens. Mike Rounds (R-SD), Angus King (I-ME) and Susan Collins (R-ME).

Read more [here](#).



Southwestern Energy Putting Fayetteville Shale Assets on Auction Block

Houston-based Southwestern Energy announced it

will put its Fayetteville Shale assets on the auction block as the U.S. energy industry pivots to “liquids rich” shale plays that produce oil and gas.

Read more [here](#).

U.S. Retail Sales Fell “Unexpectedly” In January

The Commerce Department announced that “U.S. retail sales unexpectedly fell in January, recording their biggest drop in nearly a year, as households cut back on purchases of motor vehicles and building materials.”

Read more [here](#).



Sun Paper to Boost Investment in South Arkansas Plant, Add 100 More Jobs

Sun Paper recently announced plans to boost its investment in a proposed Clark County mill from around \$1.3 billion to \$1.8 billion. The new plans also include projected employment rising from 250 to 350 new jobs.

Read more [here](#).



Manufacturers “Pleased” With Permitting Provisions in Trump Administration Infrastructure Proposal

The Trump Administration’s infrastructure proposal aims to expedite the permitting process for projects, “narrowing reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act and other conservation laws.”

Read more [here](#).



AGC Report: Arkansas Adds 3,000 Construction Jobs

Paced by double-digit growth in Central Arkansas, construction jobs are on the rise in Arkansas. The Associated General Contractors of America recently announced that the state added 3,000 new jobs from December 2016 to December 2017.

Read more [here](#).



Skills Gap Widening in United States

The Hill reports that a gap between the number of jobs requiring moderate or high technical knowledge and the number of workers qualified to take such positions could leave companies understaffed in the near future.

Read more [here](#).



Union Partners To Build Facility on Big River Steel Campus

Union Partners recently announced plans to build a new steel processing facility on the Big River Steel campus in Osceola.

Read more [here](#).



Federal Reserve: Industrial Production Fell 0.1 Percent in January

The Federal Reserve announced that “industrial production fell 0.1 percent in January as output at factories failed to increase for the second straight month” after rising by 0.4 percent in December.

Read more [here](#).



ADEQ Accepting Applications for Two Environmental Awards

The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality is accepting applications through March 16 for two environmental awards: the Arkansas Environmental Stewardship (ENVY) Award and the Arkansas Environmental Technology (TECHe) Award.

For more information or to apply, click [here](#).



Reaching Out to Young People Helps Build Interest in “Smart Manufacturing”

Advanced Manufacturing reports that rather than continuing to “bemoan the problem” of a lack of skilled workers, “manufacturers are taking a multi-faceted approach to bridge the gap – not only for next year but also for 15 years down the road.”

Read more [here](#).



Applied Process Announces New Arkansas Plant, Will Create 30 New Jobs

Arkansas Business reports that Applied Process Inc. announced it plans “to build a multimillion-dollar, 51,000-SF treatment plant in Fort Smith [Arkansas] and bring 30 new jobs to the city.”



Read more [here](#).

Commerce Department: U.S. Business Inventories Rose 0.4 Percent in December

Reuters reports that the Commerce Department recently released data showing that “U.S. business inventories increased a bit more than expected in December, lifted by solid gains in stocks at manufacturers and wholesalers.”



Read more [here](#).

Pinnacle Foods Announces Plant Expansion

Consumer packaged goods company Pinnacle Foods Inc. recently announced it will build a 164,000 square-foot cold storage warehouse connected directly to its existing building at 1100 W. 15th St. in Fayetteville.



Read more [here](#).

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