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Resident rips Griffith plant on chemicals

WED., AUG. 5, 1981

By PAULETTE HADDIX
Post-Tribune Correspondent

GRIFFITH — Charges of excessive chemicals from American Chemical Co. entering the town's sewer system were made by southside crusader George Milne at the Town Board meeting Tuesday night.

Also, he gave a verbal and pictorial description of a soil-erosion problem where hazardous wastes are buried at the chemical plant on South Colfax Street.

Milne's complaint of a stench rising from water in drainage ditches near the chemical solvent recycling company was confirmed by Town Board member L. E. Owen.

"The fumes were strong yesterday," Owen said in reference to his inspection of the site on Monday with director of public works Glen V. Reyome.

During the inspection, Reyome took a sample of drainage ditch water for chemical analysis. He said the laboratory analysis with detailed recommendations should be ready within three weeks.

Reyome and Owen concurred that the smell there was "oily and different."

Citing statistics from two different chemical analyses done on water samples taken at American Chemical, Milne said there is a problem with acidity and 17 "very, very toxic chemicals."

The laboratory reports aren't recent, as one was on a sample taken Aug. 27-28 in 1979 and the other on a sample taken March 13, 1981.

Milne noted the March 13 sample had a pH of 3.5, meaning it was highly acidic and outside of the acceptable pH range of 4.5 to 9.5.

"In time, if we don't do something, our sewers will be eaten out," Milne stated, alluding to his experience as a plumber.

While the pH on the Aug. 27-28, 1979 sample was well within the acceptable range, the amounts of oils and greases and biochemical oxygen demand were "way high," Milne added.

He urged the Town Board to impose fines against American Chemical when chemical analysis indicates the firm is violating town ordinances with excessive chemicals.

A town ordinance calls for the company to monitor its chemical disposal itself and send monthly reports to the town, Reyome related. Milne said he contacted the Environmental Protection Agency and found out that in six to 12 months chemical companies will also have to submit reports to the EPA.

The Hammond Sanitary District, which treats Griffith's sewage, reportedly tests the effluent contents for excessive chemicals. However, because the testing is done where the Griffith sewers end on the far northern end of town and American Chemical is at the southern end, any chemicals it might be disposing of in the sewer system would be greatly diluted by the time they reached the sampling point, Reyome said.

Regarding the erosion, Milne said this chemical dumpsite was to be covered with clay and planted with grass. Rainfall has eroded a sloped area to the point where there is a gaping hole several feet deep and probably measuring about four feet in width and depth, Milne related.

He suggested this area at least be fenced for the safety of any children who might be playing in the area.

Odor problems stemming from the chemical company aren't new.

In August 1975, stench then described as "giant body odor" and "cat litter" was found to be coming from two 100-by-200-foot areas where American Chemical was reportedly dumping chemical waste.

The town filled in the area with sand, although one town trustee urged that the material be dug out and hauled away so it couldn't plague the town in the future.

In the wake of the 1975 odor problem, American Chemical agreed to dispose of barrels of chemical waste through a private scavenger.



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Post-Tribune
May 14, 1990

Griffith firm fined

Must meet EPA terms

The Associated Press
and Post-Tribune

American Chemical Services of Griffith has been fined \$116,300 and ordered to obtain liability insurance for it to continue to operate.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the fine and terms of a consent agreement with the chemical company during the weekend.

The agreement calls for American Chemical Services to show evidence of liability coverage to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management by Sept. 5, as required under the Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

The liability coverage protects against releases of hazardous waste into the environment. If American Chemical Services fails to secure such coverage, it has been ordered to stop accepting all hazardous waste and to submit a closure plan.

The agreement resolves an August 1989 administrative complaint citing the company for violations.

American Chemical Services was one of 10 Northwest Indiana factories listed among the nation's 500 worst sources of toxic pollution in 1987, according to a report by the National Wildlife Federation.

The report showed American Chemical Services released 8.6 million pounds of 15 different chemicals and ranked 151st.

The list of Northwest Indiana industries included Inland Steel of East Chicago, USS Steel Works, Amoco Oil at

Suzanne
Beth let me your
message that you
may be interested in
the article on ACS
- Steve S.

KM- This
article generated
all the reporters
today.
It has a fund
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I wanted you to
have a copy.



Regulations Violated

By ROSEMARY OSMULSKI
Times Correspondent
3 GRIFFITH — American Chemical Service Corporation is apparently in violation of Environmental Protection Agency hazardous waste regulations.

George Milne, a self-appointed Griffith watchdog, has presented the town board with copies of an EPA report, indicating the company has violated the EPA regulations since May, 1980.

Violations had apparently not been corrected by a subsequent inspection in December of that year.

The EPA cites the company for not fencing the area of providing 24-hour

surveillance, lack of a prepared evacuation plan, improper record-keeping on handling, treatment, storage and disposal of waste and lack of cross-references of disposal.

Milne said the company has 25,000 to 30,000 drums and a tank buried at the firm's site on south Colfax Avenue.

Public works director Glenn Reyome said a report on water collected in a ditch on the site will be ready for the next board meeting.

Milne said high acidity discharge into the town's sewer in May violates town ordinance and should require a fine as stated in ordinance 78-11.

Trustees took the EPA and Milne's report under study.

INDIANA NEWSCLIP
2102 E. 57th ST. SUITE E
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46205
HAMMOND TIMES
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Vehicle Noise Region Issue

By FRED OTT
Times Staff Writer

HAMMOND — "Noise toys" — the souped-up hot rods, vans and motorcycles that roar through the streets of some metropolitan areas, are something of a Region problem, too.

The Environmental Protection Agency says that hot rodders top the list of noise pollution complaints nationwide. But for Ronald Novak, Hammond's air pollution chief, all vehicles create the city's No. 1 noise problem.

And Hammond is trying to do something about it. It is one of 50 midwest communities cooperating with the EPA in a noise control program. Hammond is also working on the program with the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns.

For about a year the city has been using a decibel monitoring device borrowed from the EPA through the association, and it has proved a success, Novak says.

The city also has a model noise control ordinance, so good that it is serving as a model for other communities in the state.

Brad Garton, noise coordinator for the association, says, "Hammond has probably the most comprehensive noise control ordinance in the state. We are going to incorporate parts of it into our own pilot ordinance."

Garton believes, however, that the Region's major noise comes from stationary things, varying from go-cart tracks to barking dogs.

Where vehicle noise is troublesome, the association, aided by the EPA, has developed a program for using decibel meters mounted on police cars to monitor noise levels of passing traffic.

The device is used in Hammond when manpower permits. Vacations and other absences prevent its use as regularly as would be desirable.

"The unit is good," Police Lt. Bernard Stribjack says. "It works. We've made numerous arrests with it."

Hammond also has signs posted at

major entrances to the city showing the word "noise" with a slash through it.

"But a sign is just a sign," Stribjack says. "You have to enforce it."

Crown Point has borrowed the device but only to run tests on a go-cart track that never opened.

Crown Point Councilman-at-Large James Forsythe agrees with Garton that vehicles are not the major source of noise, at least not in his city. Barking dogs and loud parties were more prevalent and noisier, he says.

To help combat the racket, Forsythe is drafting a noise control ordinance which he wants to be as comprehensive as Hammond's.

Barking dogs and raucous gatherings rank behind vehicles as top-noisemakers in Calumet City. The noise they generate is so serious that "We are going to go along with the EPA on this thing," says Capt. John Sullivan.

Calumet City police put a decibel monitoring device into use this month.

Other Region law enforcement agencies do not regard "noise toys" as a major headache.

"It doesn't even rank as a minor problem," says Lansing Police Capt. Robert Wheaton.

All communities have hot rods, he observes, but that it's not something Lansing police cannot easily handle.

Dolton Police Sgt. Richard Hall agrees.

"We get some calls about loud cars," he says. "But I don't feel it's something that needs special action."

South Holland has some areas where there is new construction, and dirt bikers use the roads there.

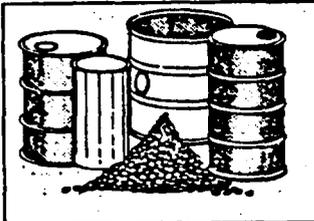
"I wouldn't say we have a real problem," Sgt. James Santeforte says.

In South Holland, according to Santeforte, railroads are the worst noise polluters. Trains have been monitored with noise devices but police they have never had to use them on street traffic, he says.

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DUMPING HAZARDOUS WASTES

N. Lake dump sites chosen



By PETRA LUKE
Times Staff Writer

CROWN POINT — Sites in Gary, East Chicago and Hammond are being considered for a "confined disposal facility" for polluted material which may be dredged from Indiana Harbor.

The sites and estimated costs are:

• GARY: On the north side of Industrial Highway, east of Cline Avenue, \$22,357,000;

• EAST CHICAGO: In Lake Michigan, opposite Jearse Park, \$20,814,000;

• HAMMOND: On 141st Street, between Calumet Avenue and Indianapolis Boulevard, \$23,001,000; and in

(Continued Back Page)

INDUSTRIAL WASTE CLEANUP

Superfund cash sought

By The Times
and Times Wire Services

INDIANAPOLIS — American Chemical Services in Griffith has been nominated by the state as one of five sites needing cleanup with federal Superfund money.

In an update of the \$1.6-billion fund's national priority list, state health officials have requested the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency include the Griffith solvent recovery firm.

American Chemical Services is listed because of

past practices of burying barrels of chemicals in a landfill in the rear of the company's property, according to the board of health.

In 1980, oil leaking from the site was found to contain phenol — a known carcinogen. At the time, however, the EPA said the firm had surrounded the burial site with clay, preventing the leak from spreading.

About 2,000 drums were buried about 18 years ago at the site near Colfax Avenue, although in

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4 N. Lake hazardous dump sites chosen

Continued From Page One

Lake Michigan, just east of the Hammond Filtration Plant, \$19,540,000.

Lt. Col. Christos A. Dovas of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers told the Lake County Solid Waste Disposal Committee on Wednesday where the project stands.

It's been almost a year since he convinced the committee the dredging needed to be done.

Lake County commissioners, who formed the solid waste disposal committee, agreed in July 1982 to act as local sponsor for the project.

If the harbor isn't dredged, it eventually will fill with silt and polluted materials and will have to be closed, Dovas has said.

The harbor contains varying levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), an industrial pollutant listed as a known carcinogen (cancer-causing) by the federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1977.

Dovas said a 1980 test of the harbor showed one area that had a hazardous level of PCBs. He said the corps will let a contract later this month for another test on the level of PCBs.

There are still several stumbling blocks which must be overcome before dredging begins.

One is funding.

If the project complies with a pollutant control plan and is granted a waiver by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the federal government would pay for all construction costs. Otherwise, the local sponsor would have to pay for 25 percent of the construction costs.

Dovas said that waiver can't be granted until the Hammond and East Chicago sanitary districts are in compliance with National Pollutant Discharge

Elimination System permits.

The solid waste disposal committee will try to meet later this month with representatives of the two sanitary districts to resolve the problem.

Costs to the local sponsor would be:

- \$473,000 with the waiver and \$5,944,000 without for the Gary site;
- \$58,000 with and \$5,197,000 without for the East Chicago site;
- \$647,000 with and \$6,236,000 without for the 141st Street site in Hammond;
- \$103,000 with and \$4,962,000 without for the site next to the filtration plant.

State seeks Superfund cash for Griffith firm

Continued From Page One

1981 George Milne, a self-appointed Griffith watchdog, claimed in a report to the EPA that 25,000 to 30,000 drums and a tank were buried at the site.

Jacqueline Strecker, a Superfund coordinator for the state, said the firm's

current operation complies with state and federal waste handling laws.

James Tarpo, the firm's general manager, said a call by The Times today was the first he had heard of the matter.

Tarpo would not comment further.

Also on the state's list are Reilly Tar

and Chemical Corp. in Indianapolis; Northside Sanitary Landfill in Boone County; Bennett Stone Quarry in Monroe County; and the Norman Poer farm in Hancock County.

The sites will be considered for a new Superfund list scheduled to be published

in late July. The nominations are based on a scoring system devised by the EPA.

Each Indiana site was named because of the threat of contamination of groundwater, according to David D. Lamm, director of the land pollution control division of the health board.

Official says land-pollution division needs to double its budget by 1985

By JAN CARROLL
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — The state's division of land-pollution control will need twice as much money by 1985 to do a first-rate job of policing dump sites, the chief of the Environmental Management Board said yesterday.

"To what extent do we want to clean up the state? That's the question that remains unanswered," Ralph Pickard, the board's technical secretary, told a House committee. "Closely allied to that question is, are the people willing to pay for that cleanup? The state isn't lying around with the money, and industry isn't lying around with a bag of money."

The more than 400 Indiana waste operations that must be policed will take 65 man-years to inspect, Pickard said. The job is enormous, considering the size of the land-pollution division's staff, he said.

Fifty-seven people work in the division at the State Board of Health, he said. Six more chemists are being added because of an extra \$190,000 appropriated by the 1983 General Assembly, he said.

The division has a budget of \$1.7 million, which comes from both state and federal funds.

Ideally, he said, the division would have a staff of 95 and a \$2.7 million budget for 1984, and a staff of 123 and a \$3.4 million budget for 1985. The federal government would pick up some of that cost, he said.

Having a hazardous-waste disposal program will be essential to attract new industry to Indiana, he said.

"Somewhere along the way, if we are going to continue to talk to prospective industry, we are going to have to be able to answer the question, 'If we come to this state, what can we do with the hazardous waste which we generate?'" he said.

Pickard also said that finding

sites for waste dumps is a problem.

"Nobody wants either a hazardous or solid-waste operation on their side of the county," Pickard said. "I would suggest that everybody's got to be somewhere and so do solid-waste operations."

Committee chairman Richard Mangus, R-Lakeville, said landfills that pose no environmental threat should be placed near metropolitan areas that generate the most waste.

"If a landfill is safe, why put it miles out in the county next to a dairy farm?" asked Mangus, a dairy farmer.

David D. Lamm, director of land-pollution control for the Board of Health, said there are five state members in the inspection division to keep tabs on 125 landfills in Indiana.

The inspectors get to each landfill once every three to six weeks, Lamm said, and that translates into about 2,000 inspections a year.

Superfund site OK'd

By LORI OLSZEWSKI
Times Staff Writer

American Chemical Services in Griffith is on the nation's updated Superfund cleanup list, sources have told The Times.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was to officially announce later today that ACS and four other Indiana hazardous waste sites were on the updated national priority list, sources told The Times.

Illinois didn't get any additional sites, a source in the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, said.

Inclusion on the list doesn't guarantee a Superfund cleanup of the site, but it

substantially increases the chances it may qualify for the money.

U.S. EPA, seeking to improve its battered reputation for cleaning up toxic waste, expanded the list of the country's worst hazardous waste sites by a third.

ACS in Griffith was among five Indi-

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ana sites the state Board of Health submitted as candidates for the updated list.

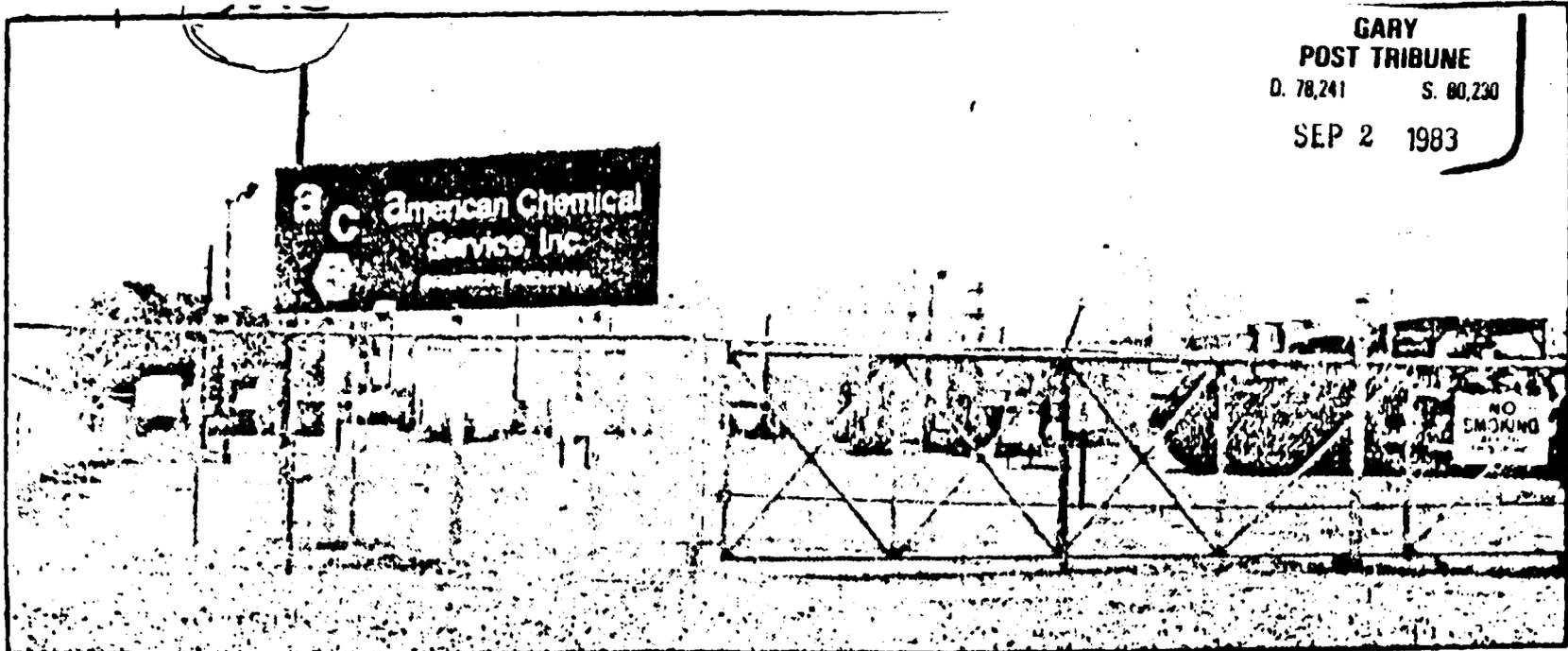
A spokesman for Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., said all Indiana sites made the list. ACS was the only site submitted from the Calumet Region.

The other Indiana sites included: the Northside Landfill in Boone County;

Reilly Tar and Chemical Company in Marion County; Bennett Stone Quarry in Monroe County; and the Norman Poer Farms in Hancock County.

The Indiana sites are among 133 sites the EPA added to the national priority list today, making the dumps eligible to compete for \$1.6 billion from the Superfund.

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This is the exterior of the American Chemical Service Co. at Griffith.

Don't panic on cleanup

By Sharon Emanuelson
Post-Tribune Correspondent

GRIFFITH — Officials here are pleased to learn American Chemical Service Co. has been put on the Environmental Protection Agency's superfund cleanup list, but cautioned against panic.

The site was named by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as one of 133 sites across the nation targeted for cleanup.

Sherry Evans-Carmichael, planner for solid waste management for the Indiana Board of Health, said that

upper water table but not in the lower water table from where most of the residents in the area get their water.

The last test conducted by the EPA was in May, and there was no evidence then that the contamination had progressed beyond the American Chemical grounds, she said.

Griffith Public Works Director Glen V. Reyome also said repeated tests at the town's sanitary landfill site, which is adjacent to one of the chemical burial sites, have been negative,

The first thing the superfund

the full extent of the contamination. From those results a remedial action feasibility master plan will be developed and it will be decided whether total excavation or merely removal of the buried material is necessary, Mrs. Evans-Carmichael said.

She said the announcement that American Chemical had been added to the list of dump sites in the nation that pose health threats will understandably cause panic among the residents but she asked for caution and patience.

"The... just too many variables that can affect the

of a natural clay layer in the ground that can absorb the contaminated material and prevent its spread," she said.

Reyome said there are about 80 wells in the area that will need testing.

The contamination stems from disposal of chemical waste drums and slug that was buried on the site from 1958 to 1975. The company voluntarily stopped dumping in 1975.

Reyome said, "We've been working with American Chemical for the last 10 to 15 years and they (the company) have really straightened out. They have complied with everything the

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EPA seeks private funds for cleanup

The funding for Superfund is in a shambles. The bill authorizing the program expired last September. On Apr. 1, Congress authorized \$150 million in interim funding, but it stipulated that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) cannot spend any portion of that money after May 31. Meanwhile, Congress has not ironed out differences among various versions of a new bill, and it does not seem likely that the lawmakers will reauthorize the Superfund program by the May 31 deadline.

Despite that, EPA's regional officials say that they are proceeding apace with site cleanups. Since Superfund formally expired, explains Morris Kay, EPA Region 7 administrator (St. Louis), "we are continuing to obtain cleanups" from po-

Some regional EPA agencies are asking individual firms to help clean up Superfund sites

tentially responsible parties (PRPs) in the private sector.

Typical of the offices trying to forge ahead with PRP-financed cleanups is EPA Region 5 (Chicago). Officials there have called on some 800 PRPs to help the agency pay up to \$1 million for the first step toward cleaning up a National Priority List (NPL) land-disposal site, which is owned by American Chemical Service, at Griffith, Ind. The NPL site is a landfill that the company says it closed after operating it between 1955 and 1975. However, other waste disposal units at American Chemical Service's Griffith facility are still operating.

Cleanup options. EPA wants the PRPs to foot the bill for a remedial investigation and feasibility study (RIFS) on the landfill. The study would identify hydrogeological characteristics; define the nature and extent of soil, water and air-contamination at the site; and explore remedial cleanup options.

Industry representatives have serious questions about the agency's approach. "Why drag in several hundred generators that paid to have their waste disposed of there?" asks Thomas Reid, vice-president of the Illinois Manufacturers Assn. (IMA). After all, he points out, the American Chemical Service facility is still a hazardous waste storage and treatment business, regulated under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Superfund, he notes, is designed for cleanup of aban-

doned sites. Reid argues that EPA should compel American Chemical Service to clean up its old land-disposal unit—the NPL site—under RCRA, because that would involve direct talks with only one business. "It just seems," concludes Reid, that "the government is overlooking a quicker, more efficient way to resolve this problem."

EPA does not buy that argument. David M. Taliaferro, an EPA Region 5 attorney, says, "We believe it would actually be slower" to switch cleanup efforts at the facility to RCRA oversight. Doing so, he says, would "ignore the several years of Superfund work that's already been done" on the site. He notes that the agency has carefully evaluated the site and is now ready to decide whether there should be a publicly or privately funded RIFS.

Voluntary. For now, Taliaferro says, EPA is interested only in those PRPs that used the American Chemical Service disposal service between 1955 and 1975. Financial support, he adds, is voluntary. Taliaferro stresses, however, that those PRPs that used the company's services at the site for the first time after 1975 may be hit for costs, depending on the outcome of further EPA investigations. For those covered by the 20-year period, "the decision to participate is up to them," Taliaferro points out, adding, "We certainly hope the appropriate people" will participate.

If EPA decides on public funding for the cleanup, the Superfund law would allow the agency to seek out, later, all the facility's documented PRPs and make them liable for all removal or remedial action costs. The PRPs have until August to decide whether they will volunteer assistance in the RIFS.

The way that EPA is handling the case seems to be discouraging at least a few PRPs from volunteering their help. The agency's alleged lack of cooperation in determining a period of liability is one example. It was not until a May 5 meeting in Chicago between EPA and all the PRPs that the agency finally announced that companies that dealt with American Chemical Service after the 1975 cutoff time would not be involved in the cleanup study. Many PRPs who

began using the service well after that time say they learned of their exclusion only after they flew to Chicago for the meeting.

'All the way.' One man who is irate about that point is Archie L. Simmons, safety and environmental affairs director of Whittaker (Los Angeles), a specialty chemical and equipment producer. Simmons says he will take his complaint "all the way to the White House." He explains that Whittaker's lawyers had written to the agency well in advance of the meeting to inquire whether Whittaker should be on the PRP list and if Simmons needed to attend. Whittaker did not start using American Chemical Service until 1979. However, Simmons says EPA failed to inform him that his



Reid: Serious questions about EPA's approach.

presence was not required until he arrived at the Chicago session from the company's corporate office in Dallas.

3M had a similar experience, says Lowell Ludford, a 3M environmental specialist. An attorney from his company went to Chicago on Mar. 17 for another meeting about the American Chemical Service site, only to find that the conference had been canceled without notice. The 3M corporate lawyer then visited Region 5 headquarters where, Ludford insists, he met with an official "who had no good information and did not know much about the site." 3M says it should not have been asked to volunteer because it became an American Chemical Service customer in

1981, six years after the cutoff year. American Chemical Service, which declines to comment on the case, wrote a letter to its clients on Feb. 24, expressing similar concerns. In the letter, it says that "EPA incorrectly identified many recipients of the letter" that it sent to PRPs soliciting voluntary contributions for the RIFS. The letter notes that "for reasons unknown to the company" EPA did not use data on some 200 companies offered by American Chemical Service to the agency, to show which clients used the landfill before the unit was taken out of service in 1975. Instead, the company says, EPA prepared a list based on the company's 1982 and 1983 waste generator reports.

Old records. Another PRP complaint centers on EPA's requests for records that are more than three decades old in some cases. Says IMA's Reid: "Nineteen years ago was 31 years ago." He questions how many companies have records going back that far. "A company may have shipped one drum to American Chemical Service 31 years ago," he says. Their being drawn into the case now he calls a "fiasco."

EPA admits that its handling of the affair has caused some problems. Talia-

Disagreement surrounds EPA's request that companies volunteer to help with an RIFS

Taliaferro says that EPA "regrets very much" the frustration of many of the PRPs, particularly those that sent representatives to the May 5 conference in Chicago, only to discover they were no longer part of the case. He notes that the agency is removing companies that were on American Chemical Service after 1975 from its PRP list, but he says, too, that some additions are being made to the list. Taliaferro asks that the companies help EPA to avoid more difficulties by forming "a responsible generators' group for better communication."

Industry says that it is making progress on that score. "There's already a nucleus for a generators' committee," says Reid, who reports that IMA has offered logistical support by, among other things, sponsoring meetings to help affected firms improve coordination and communication among themselves. "There are certain waste generators that know they've disposed of waste during the affected target period," he says, adding, "There's actually an informal group." □

JEFFREY TREWHITT and Christina MacKenzie in Chicago, with Laurie A. Rich

Spain merges four firms to compete in Europe

Industrialists in Spain are aware that their country's new status as a member of the European Community (EC) will have some drawbacks. Among other changes triggered by its admission to the EC, Spain must dismantle its highly protectionist taxation and trading system, including customs duties and import quotas, and introduce a value-added tax (VAT), part of which is used to finance the EC budget. However, because much of Spain's industry is weaker than that of its new partners, a transition period of seven years has been established by the EC to give the business community time to adapt to the new wave of competition that membership will ultimately bring.

Given that respite, Spanish industrialists are restructuring their holdings. Last year, reforms designed to pare Spain's fertilizer industry were set in motion (*CW*, Feb. 13, 1985, p. 44). Now state oil company Empresa Nacional del Petróleo (EMP) is attempting to whip the petrochemical sector into shape, for its upcoming matches with EC opponents, by consolidating four of its joint-venture petrochemical companies—Alcudia, Paular, Calatrava and Montoro—into one major petrochemical entity (*table*, p. 57). The merger, says EMP President Juan Sancho Rof, will put the Spanish petrochemicals industry "in a better position to face the competition."

Need to export. EMP has been working on the merger since 1979. Prior to that year, Spain's domestic market was able to absorb all of the country's petrochemical production, explains Javier de la Peña, who became vice-president responsible for petrochemicals at EMP almost a year ago. In 1979, domestic consumption dropped, de la Peña says, and "the need to export became apparent."

At that point, he notes, "differences of opinion over export policies" developed between EMP and its joint-venture partners in the four companies. The decision was made to buy out the partners, which included companies such as Phillips Petroleum, Britain's Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) and Italy's Montedison. And when, in the early 1980s, the need to cut European petrochemical capacity became obvious, EMP felt that "the logical thing to do was consolidate," according to Sancho Rof.

That was also the conclusion drawn



De la Peña: A fighting chance in the EC.

by de la Peña, who is likely to serve as president of the new petrochemical group. De la Peña was brought in last June to participate in EMP's strategic study of its petrochemical assets, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each subsidiary. "All the units were in pretty good shape," he observes, but since EMP had the ethylene plants that supplied the four subsidiaries, "we were obviously better off merging the four derivative units into one."

Strategic location. By last year, EMP had attained 100% ownership of Alcudia, Paular and Calatrava, but negotiations to purchase Arco Chemical Iberica's 50% stake in Montoro were fruitless. "It was clearly in our interest to include Montoro within the group," de la Peña says, "because of its strategic location at Puertollano," a town near Madrid, where Alcudia and Calatrava have plants. With a \$5 million cash flow in 1985, EMP also considers Montoro the most financially sound of the four companies.

Nevertheless, de la Peña says, "we decided to go ahead with the merger of the three and [figure out] how to integrate Montoro later." Last September, EMP received government authorization to merge the three companies. However, prior to completion of that effort, Arco indicated that it was willing to sell

for ACS/Griffith file 7/27/86

THE TIMES Tuesday, April 29, 1986

State delays action on Turkey Creek dredging

By MARY SUE PENN
Times Correspondent

CROWN POINT — A Lake County plan to dredge Turkey Creek is on hold until the state resolves pollution questions.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources will study whether creek sediments have been polluted by toxins seeping from a chemical dump site about a half mile north of the creek.

The American Chemical Service property at Colfax Avenue in Griffith and the adjacent Griffith landfill comprise a toxic dump site to be cleaned under Federal Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund Program.

Until pollution questions are answered, the state is delaying action on a permit for Turkey Creek dredging.

Deputy County Surveyor William Henderson discussed the delay Monday at the Lake County Drainage Board Advisory Committee meeting.

The drainage board had applied for state and federal permits to remove sediment from Turkey Creek from Cline Avenue to Lake

George. The drainage board budgeted \$20,000 for the project this year.

The EPA will drill test wells at the toxic clean-up site this summer to determine the extent of off-site contamination.

The DNR will be interested in EPA results, said Victor Wenning, DNR Water Division assistant director. Wenning said the DNR study would be completed "as soon as we can" but had no specific time table.

The Natural Resources Commission, an advisory agency to the DNR, requested the study last Thursday.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is one agency protesting work on Turkey Creek, not only because of potential pollution problems, but also because the excavation project would damage wet lands, said wildlife biologist Jean Cochrane.

Henderson called the state action "unfair." He said the state should have granted the permit request on condition of approval from a new Indiana Environmental Management Board.

The Turkey Creek matter surfaced when Barb Baumann of the Lake

Dalecarlia Property Owners Association raised a question on pollution in general.

Baumann asked the Drainage Board Advisory Committee whether any other polluted drains other than Foss Ditch are being maintained by Lake County. Foss Ditch feeds into Lake Dalecarlia.

Drainage Board Advisory Committee members answered "yes" and "certainly," Henderson said, "there are some others that I'd rather not mention publicly." He said the drainage board is not required to address pollution questions.

"That's volunteering information that we're not required to volunteer," he said.

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6/25/86

Waste chance delays stream clearing

By Joseph Conn
Of the Post-Tribune

CROWN POINT — The possibility of contamination from a toxic landfill in Griffith has delayed plans to clear stretches of Turkey Creek this summer.

Assistant Lake County Surveyor William Henderson, who coordinates planning and project supervision for the Lake County Drainage Board, told the board Tuesday that the county's application to a state agency for a permit to begin work has been

delayed.

Henderson said the delay came during a review of permits for the project by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources' Bureau of Water and Minerals Council.

Henderson identified the problem site as a landfill believed to be owned by a chemical company near Colfax Street in Griffith almost a mile north of Turkey Creek.

"We have two concerns," said Lisa Kobe, director of external af-

airs for the new Indiana Department of Environmental Management. "The impact on wetlands, which is always a matter of concern, and the potential of contaminated sediments has been raised."

The environmental management department will probably be assigned to check whether runoff from the landfill is contaminating the stream.

Waters from Turkey Creek flow east across much of Lake County, feed Lake George in Ho-

bart, Deep River, Burns Ditch and, eventually, enter Lake Michigan. Several reaches of the stream, including the area near Lake George, include wetlands protected by the state Department of Natural Resources.

"It's a Superfund site," Kobe said of the Griffith landfill. "It probably has numerous types of industrial wastes."

The Superfund is a program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to pay for the cleanup of the nation's most notorious-

ly contaminated waste disposal sites.

The Griffith site is now being evaluated for remedial action, Kobe said.

The site has been on the federal cleanup list for about two years, she said.

The county has budgeted \$20,000 for work on Turkey Creek this year. Part of the county master plan includes a series of check dams and traps that would lessen sedimentation in Lake George.

Henderson said that "80 to 70

percent of the channel has already been snagged and most of that has been dredged" over the past few years and no problems have arisen over previous permit applications.

No evidence has been submitted that any contamination of Turkey Creek has or could occur from the dump, but the delay was suggested to provide time for further investigation, he said.

"They suggested that we may have an obligation to take samples," Henderson said.

Turkey Creek to be tested

By DEBRA GRUSZECKI
Times Staff Writer

6/24/86

CROWN POINT — Tests are expected to determine if Turkey Creek has been contaminated by a toxic waste dump site, the Lake County Drainage Advisory Committee learned.

The county's request for a permit to reconstruct the channel on Turkey Creek wetlands near Hobart was deferred this spring due to its closeness to a federal Superfund site: American Chemical Services in Griffith.

The chemical company site, located about one-half mile north of Turkey Creek, was listed in 1983 as one of five sites that needed to be cleaned up with federal Superfund money.

Jean Cochran, of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, said the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency began working at the site in April 1986. Cochran said EPA tests showed

groundwater around the site was contaminated, and may have traveled off-site and into the nearby creek.

Deputy Lake County Surveyor William Henderson said the permit was denied because creek sediment could stir up contaminants — if they exist — and could cause toxic materials to move downstream to further aggravate the situation.

Drainage Board President and Commissioner Ernest Niemeyer, R-Lowell, said he was advised ground borings may be taken to see if the creek is contaminated before the EPA checks it out. To wait for the EPA to do its testing, he said, could take one year or more.

The committee was told toxicity tests could cost about \$6,000. No action was taken.

Committee member Gene Krasocka said he wanted the drainage board's attorney to draft a letter to the mayor of Hobart explaining the delay in the project.

American Chemical Services was put on the Superfund list because of past practices of burying barrels of chemicals in a landfill behind company property, according to the state board of health.

In 1980, oil leaking from the site was found to contain phenol — a known carcinogen. At the time, however, the EPA said the firm had surrounded the burial site with clay, preventing the leak from spreading.

The EPA has said about 2,000 drums were buried about 18 years ago at the site near Colfax Avenue, but a local resident claimed in a report to the EPA in 1981 that 25,000 to 30,000 drums and a tank were buried at the site.

EPA officials assigned to the project would not comment on current activities at the site. Cochran said the EPA met in May with as many as 800 company representatives or their attorneys who were identified as potential toxic chemical dumpsters.

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6-1-89

Town halts its pumping of water into ditch

By Jim Procter

Staff writer

GRIFFITH — Griffith has stopped pumping water from its landfill into a drainage ditch that is believed to empty into Turkey Creek amid concerns the water may be contaminated by an adjacent toxic waste dump.

Robert Swale of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said Griffith officials told him Wednesday the pumping from a clay pit at the landfill would stop until EPA technicians can inspect the site this morning.

"We intend to take water and soil samples," Swale said. "The flow of ground water concerns us along with their digging down into the clay."

Swale said Griffith officials have also promised to stop removing sand in the pit area that also may be contaminated. The landfill will be allowed to continue pumping leachate — water that drains from garbage and debris — to the Hammond Sanitary District, Swale said. He added, however, that federal regulators want to determine the level, if any, of pre-treatment of the leachate.

Swale is project manager for the American Chemical Services Inc., Superfund site at 420 S. Colfax St. The site includes an inactive portion of the Griffith landfill on which wastes from the chemical dump were disposed. As many as 30,000 drums of chemical waste are believed buried on the site, authorities have said.

At a meeting in Griffith last week, EPA and Indiana Department of Environmental Management officials told residents preliminary tests show contamination of the Calumet aquifer beneath the Superfund site. The deeper Valparaiso aquifer is not believed to be contaminated.

Water flows from the Calumet aquifer in a northwesterly direction, or toward the active portion of the landfill, EPA tests show. Thus, the EPA wants to determine if polluted water is contaminating the water being pumped into the drainage ditch as well as the clay and sand.

Another EPA concern is that digging of the clay pit "could put the Valparaiso aquifer in danger," Swale said.

The clay is used as cover for the landfill, said John Bach, Griffith's public works director. He said water is pumped on an "as needed" basis from the pit. Bach disputed charges from neighbors and environmentalists that the clay pit has been dug in the last few days. He also questioned whether the drainage ditch actually empties into Turkey Creek.

"My understanding is it has been blocked for years and drains into a swamp," said Bach. The ditch flows in a southerly direction on the west side of the landfill.

Terry McCloskey, president of the Indiana division of the Izaak Walton League, said the ditch does flow into Turkey Creek, which in turn empties into Lake George in Hobart.

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Griffith

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"The town of Griffith has contaminated Turkey Creek and Lake George," McCloskey charged. "This is one of the most flagrant violations I've seen."

Bach said the leachate from the landfill is not treated before being received by the Hammond Sanitary District. He said Hammond officials visited the landfill Wednesday to take samples.

EPA starts talks on cleanup of Superfund site

By DEBRA GRUSZECKI
Times Staff Writer

6/25/86

GRIFFITH — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency confirmed Tuesday it has begun negotiations with alleged toxic waste handlers to clean up a federal Superfund site here.

Art Gasior, community relations coordinator of the EPA, said the Superfund site involves:

- The American Chemical Services, a solvent reclamation and chemical manufacturing firm on Colfax Street, one-half mile north of Turkey Creek.
- KAPICA Drum Inc., a former drum reconditioning facility that was adjacent to the ACS site.

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EPA

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□ A Griffith sanitary landfill located south of the chemical company. The town bought land from ACS for the landfill in 1979-80.

Gasior said the EPA contacted as many as 800 alleged handlers this spring to get them to pay for cleanup costs. The list has been pared down since, he said. The town of Griffith remains on the contact list.

The Superfund site has had a long and complicated history, Gasior said.

From 1955 to 1972, Gasior said ACS disposed of waste from its operation in an open landfill on their property. From 1968 to 1970, it allegedly dumped incineration ash in the containment area and up to 30,000 drums and general refuse of unreclaimed waste. The EPA also believes a tank truck partially filled with sludge may be buried in the area.

Gasior said Indiana's Board of Health became aware of the situation in 1972. EPA records show oil leaking from the site in 1980 was found to contain a carcinogen. Runoff from the drum reconditioning facility was detected in 1983.

Gasior said the Griffith landfill is included in the Superfund site because it is suspected waste from the two companies was disposed in the land prior to 1980.

The EPA began developing a workplan in August 1985 for the Superfund site, Gasior said, but remedial investigation has been delayed. He said the EPA is waiting to hear how much Superfund money will be reauthorized for the Griffith project.

Gasior said no public hearings have been held. Until remedial work progresses, Gasior said he does not want to name the chemicals on the site. He said he also does not know if contaminants have leaked into the water tables.

"To say anything right now would be like Pandora's Box," Gasior said. "It's a bad situation we hope to correct."

Gasior said a remedial investigation to learn exactly what is on site takes 18 to 18 months. He said water tables are also checked to see if the chemicals have left the site and entered wells, nearby creeks or streams or the groundwater.

Earlier this week, the Lake County Drainage Board discussed whether or not it would test Turkey Creek to see if contaminants have infiltrated the water. Their wetland cleanup project was halted by the state this spring due to suspicion the contaminated sediment had entered the creek.

Griffith Trustee Marjorie Hanrath, 43, said the town realizes a major problem exists at the Superfund site. "Everyone is tip-toeing around it," she said.

Hanrath said she does not fault the chemical company for its past practices, as little was known about toxic chemical handling years ago. Also, she said there were few state guidelines governing its disposal and use.

But Hanrath said that won't make the site go away. "We have a problem that has to be cleaned up," Hanrath said. "And it should have been cleaned up yesterday, or the day before."

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Post-Tribune

Region | state

Pumping dependent on test results

GRIFFITH — Water will not be pumped from a clay pit at the town landfill here until results of water and soil tests are reviewed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, an EPA official said Monday.

The heavy rain of last Thursday probably did not dilute the ground water and soil samples obtained by EPA technicians, said Robert Swale, project manager for the EPA Superfund clean-up site at American Chemical Services Inc., adjacent to the landfill.

"I feel the samples are valid," Swale said. "If anything is there, we'll find out."

Concern about seepage of contaminants from the Superfund site at 420 S. Colfax St. into the active portion of the town landfill where the clay pit is periodically drained brought the EPA's Tactical Assistance Team to the site Thursday. The clay is used to cover the landfill and is found about 12 to 14 feet beneath a top layer of sand, said Swale.

Water from the clay pit is pumped into a drainage ditch that may empty into Turkey Creek. Swale said the EPA wants to determine if the water has been polluted by the movement of contaminated ground water

from the ACS dump. The sand cover may also have been contaminated, he said.

Swale said some of the sand has been sold and removed, but added the EPA will wait for the test results before investigating further.

EPA technicians also took samples of leachate — water that drains from the garbage and debris in the landfill — that is sent by Griffith to the Hammond Sanitary District for treatment. Swale said pumping of the leachate to Hammond, which was suspended pending the EPA tests, has been resumed.