1705 (14) Ref. 17 Adams Plating MID 006522791

Copies to: J. Oshusky
O + HM
WQD files

State of Michigan
Department of Natural Resources

POLLUTION INVESTIGATION REPORT

P.E.A.S. Incident No.
15-81

DNR Employee Preparing Report – Name, Division, and phone number.	Alleged Violator – Name, title, and phone number.
John Kraft Water Quality	Adams Plating Co. 521 N. Rosemary Lansing

1. Type of Problem ☐ Air ☐ Solid Waste ☐ Submerged Lands ☐ Inland Lakes and Streams
☑ Water ☐ Soil Erosion ☐ Flood Plain
☐ Other _____

2. Statute or Administrative Rules involved: Act 245

3. Brief summary of the nature and extent of the problem and the effect of the problem on the environment or natural resources.

see attached report

This document paid for with State funds

4. A. Date of Emmission, Discharge or Alleged Violation: [redacted] not certain

B. Time (if known): _____ C. Approximate Location: see report

5. Were there any witnesses? ☐ Yes ☑ No Attach names and addresses with a brief summary of what each saw.

6. Were any photos taken? ☑ Yes ☐ No If yes, identify by whom, how many, dates, and what they depict.

by John Kraft, on 1-7-81, of Adams Plating Plant, effected residence

2/5/81

Staff Report
PEAS 15-81

Contaminated Water Entering Basement at [redacted], Lansing

Bob Ceru, Ingham County Health Department, notified our office of this problem on January 6, 1981. Greenish water had been coming into the basement of a residence at [redacted] since the previous July. The water was coming in through an abandoned sanitary sewer pipe.

On January 7, 1981, Bob Ceru, myself, Bob Bell (Lansing WWTP), and Richard Husby (Lansing Township) met at [redacted]. The basement was dry, but there was evidence of flooding along the walls - yellow residue about 4 inches above the floor. The old sewer pipe was still present - uncapped. Inside it was yellow-green colored water. I collected a sample by dipping out of this pipe. Results revealed mainly total chrome at 150 mg/l.

In discussion with Mr. [redacted] the homeowner, a sketchy story emerged. Apparently the sewage from the house used to flow to the east, which meant the pipe would have to cross the adjoining property. Last July, a new warehouse building was built on the adjacent property. During excavation for this building, the sewer tile was broken. This caused a flow stoppage from the [redacted] House. [redacted] approached the construction crew and told them about it. When there, he saw green water down in the excavated hole.

It is not clear what exactly happened after this. Mr. [redacted] had a new sewer connection installed. This connection ran west to Grace Street. The old pipe was left in place uncapped. The green water came into the basement whenever it rained. Mr. [redacted] installed a sump pump in the basement and pumped the water out onto the ground surface.

After the discussion with Mr. [redacted] we all went over to Adams Plating Company, [redacted], which is only two lots away from the [redacted] hosue (see figure 1). Mr. D. James Adams, the president of the company, was there. All wastewater from the plating rinses, tank dumps, boiler blowdown, go to the sanitary sewer. The chrome plating tanks have exhaust blowers over them which blow the vapors outside. The vapors go through baffle chambers located outside along the west and south walls of the building. The condensated chrome vapor just falls onto the pavement below. During the visit, there was heavy snow accumulation outside. When the snow was brushed aside in the area of these blowers, the snow underneath was very yellow. Mr. Adams said that these drippings go into drains in the pavement which connect to an in-ground tank. He showed us one of the drains, which wasn't working at the time, and where the tank was. The tank appeared to be full. When questioned about the waste in the tank, Mr. Adams claimed he treats the water himself every month by adding chemicals to the tank. Then he pumped the treated water into the sanitary sewer, and put the sludge in drums. When asked where the sludge barrels went, he said that he took them to Lansing Plating Company to be disposed of with their sludge by a licensed hauler.

However, Bob Bell knew the people at Lansing Plating Company and asked them later that day about the sludge from Adams. The Lansing Plating people told Bob that they never accepted sludge from Adams.

The next day, I went to Adams again and verified by dye testing that all the drains in the building are connected to the Lansing sanitary sewer.

Bob Bell notified Oldsmobile of the problem so they could test their well, which is across the street from Adams Plating.

The incident was recorded into the PEAS system on 1-8-81 as incident 15-81.

Bob Ceru notified the Board of Water & Light and Lansing Township so they could sample their wells in the area. He made a building-by-building survey of the area. No one else has any problems with the "green water". Bob warned [redacted] not to eat any vegetables out of their garden because of the high level of chrome in the water which had been pumped out on the ground for several months. He also advised them to plug the old sewer pipe. The Oldsmobile well, which is for non-potable use, is 425 feet deep, cased down to 82 feet. The sample they collected showed 0.03 mg/l total chrome. They plan to re-sample.

There are no active residential wells in the area.

The Board of Water & Light sampled the two wells which were within a mile of Adams Plating. One well, located at Willow and Sunset (about 3/4 mile away) showed 0.01 mg/l total chrome. The other well at Willow and Comfort Street (about 1 mile away) had 0.004 mg/l total chrome.

The Lansing Township well, located at [redacted], about one block north of Michigan Avenue (about 1/3 mile from Adams) showed < 0.003 mg/l of total chrome.

On January 19, 1981, a meeting was held between Mr. Adams, Bob Bell, Bob Ceru, Richard Husby, Bob Hayes of Groundwater Compliance, and myself. We asked Mr. Adams several questions concerning his operation. The following facts came out of this questioning:

1. The present blowers will be replaced by wet scrubbers around March 1981 when the new pre-treatment system is installed. The effluent from the new scrubbers will be treated with the other plating waste.

2. The present in-ground waste tank will be eliminated at the same time.

3. Mr. Adams claimed to have air tested the in-ground tank in May 1980 and it was okay. This is highly questionable, since the tank has an open top with a metal cover merely sitting on top of it. He further claimed that the steel tank is set in 4-inch thick cement walls and bottom.

4. Mr. Adams said that he has been at the site for about 17 years. (1964) The building was not used for plating before he took over. Blowers have been in use on the chrome tanks since he started. However, the drippings from these blowers were not always collected into the in-ground tank this long. In fact, according to a 4-11-78 letter from Tom Newell to Mr. Adams, this condensate was soaking into the ground at that time. The present bevelled cement aprons around the building and drains are not adequate to divert all this condensate into the tank, as the 1-7-81 visit revealed.

After these facts came out, we told Mr. Adams that we felt that the present in-ground tank is of questionable integrity, and the present collection system for the chrome tank ventilation blowers was inadequate. We then told him about the problem at [redacted] and how we felt that his operation was most likely responsible.

Mr. Adams responded with another story. He claimed that when he took over the building, he assumed all drains went to the sanitary sewer. However, about (1971) ten years ago, the floor drain in the plating room quit working. When they excavated, they found that this drain was connected to an old field tile system. They had no idea where this tile went. The drain was then connected to the sanitary sewer line already serving the boiler room and restroom. He owns the property on both sides of the plant and behind it, on Grace Street. He claimed that they have hit this field tile system several times since; during other excavations.

Bob Hayes then explained to Mr. Adams what kind of investigations we wanted him to carry out to check the groundwater. Mr. Adams responded that he couldn't afford to do anything and would simply close down and move. I gave him a list of groundwater consultants and told him that we expected him to look into it and respond back to us. He said that he would.

On 1-26-81, a certified letter was sent to Mr. Adams (copy attached) notifying him of the problems with the in-ground tank, the chrome ventilation blower condensate, and the possibility of his plating wastes going into the ground through the old field tile system. He was directed to: submit a plan for correction of the blower condensate and in-ground tank problem, submit a plan for a preliminary hydrogeological study, and submit a PIPP.