

Local cement plant is breaking the law ministry discovers

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By John Roe
district editor

EMBRO -- The Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) has ordered Canada Cement Lafarge Ltd. to clean up, its act after discovering the plant near here is breaking the law.

Ministry spokesman F.N. Durham, of the London regional office, said yesterday the cement company has spewed unacceptable levels of particles and dust into the

tryside several times in recent months. While the health of local residents isn't endangered, Mr. Durham said emissions are damaging local property and angering residents.

"Control of certain operations is unsatisfactory and requires correction within a reasonable time," he said.

The news has outraged The Embro Citizen's Group who have been fighting the company's plan to burn liquid industrial waste fuel for more than a year.

Just last week, a study of a three-month test burn of toxic wastes showed emissions were safe. Now the citizens say if the company can't run within the law burning conventional fuels, it can't be allowed to handle more dangerous toxic wastes.

And they dismiss the test burn results because scientists never checked emissions when a plant breakdown released high levels of particulate into the atmosphere.

In an interview this morning, a company official said Canada Cement knows about the problems and is trying to fix them.

"The ministry (of environment) has been in touch with us and we are working towards a solution acceptable to everyone," plant manager John Brown said.

He could not say how long it will take the company to clean up the problem.

But anything short of cancelling plans to burn industrial waste won't satisfy the citizens now.

"They're not good neighbors," said Grace Bragg yesterday at a press conference in her RR 4 Embro home just across the road from the plant.

"Would you consider a good neighbor someone who throws garbage on your property?"

Mrs. Bragg said the problem has worsened in the past three years and she frequently notices "a strong sulphur smell" coming from the plant.

She said she worries what the emissions will do to her health and points to the shingles on her roof -- originally black but now turned snow-white from the dust.

John Wilkerson, of RR 4 Embro, runs a farm equipment dealership near the plant and says sometimes "you can see the particulate matter like snow. Other times it's like a fog or a thick mist."

He says he needs an acid-based liquid to clean the white gritty dust from the equipment on his sales yard.

both from Brookside area Dec 1984
formerly



IN RECOGNITION for her faithful work as curator of the Downie Community Club since 1968, Jeanne Coulthard, right, was presented with a plaque last Thursday at the St. Pauls Township Hall. Johann Dill, president of the club, made the presentation to Mrs. Coulthard, of R. R.1, St. Pauls.

(Staff Photo)

But county road committee worries about increased traffic

Embro Road may be posted Stratford

By Jim Hagarty
district reporter

Perth County council's road committee is willing to discuss a suggestion that signs be erected that would indicate the Embro Road as the route to Stratford for eastbound traffic from Highway 401.

But the committee is cautious about the idea because of a problem it feels might be created by the increase in traffic that would probably result from the placing of the signs.

A letter from the ministry of transportation and communications

(MTC) suggested the Embro Road -- Perth County Road 20 and Oxford County Road 6 -- be signed as the route to Stratford from the 401 rather than Highway 19 as is presently marked.

But the road committee forsee problems because parts of the Embro Road were built in 1954 and because the highway is reduced to a half-load road every March and April.

The committee decided at a recent meeting to inform the MTC of its concerns but to advise the ministry

that the county is willing to sit down and discuss the suggestion.

Meanwhile, the county will take no immediate action on another MTC suggestion that it turn back all bridges on local boundary roads to

the local municipalities. There are three bridges in Perth in that category.

The county will pass a bylaw, however, to turn back to the local municipalities all remnants or

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