

B.H. 1984

Both sides anxious for results of Canada Lafarge test burn Plans to burn toxic fuel delayed

By John Roe
district editor

EMBRO — Bureaucratic snarls have stalled a local cement company's plan to burn liquid industrial waste for fuel by at least six months.

And while Canada Cement Lafarge is taking the delay in stride, a citizen's group opposing the project is keeping its fingers crossed.

"It will give us more time to organize our fight," said local farmer Joe Moss, a leader of the Embro Citizen's Group.

"But we're waiting with apprehension for the (laboratory) reports. Right now it doesn't look as if our chances are very good, but we're approaching it as if we will win."

Beachville plant manager Andrew Robb

said the company has taken much longer than originally planned to apply for a permit to burn industrial waste. This has set back the entire project.

He said the company has been working on its application since early January. But it still needs the results of a recent three-month experiment when nearly one million litres of toxic chemical wastes were burned as fuel during cement processing.

After the application is in, the company must still pass an environmental hearing and win the government's stamp of approval before it can burn the toxic waste.

The company hoped to make its application by mid-February, and go through the hearing in June. If the proposal

passed, chemical waste would have been used as supplemental fuel in the second half of 1984.

"Now there's a six-month delay in the project—if it is to go at all," Mr. Robb said. "There was no intention to delay it on our part. If we had our druthers, we'd be in business with this as soon as possible."

By the end of March, Mr. Robb said the company hopes to have the final test burn results — emission analysis from the Ontario Research Foundation in Mississauga, and dioxin tests from the Burlington firm Zenon.

If Canada Cement applies for the permit in early April, the environmental hearing will follow in September at the earliest. The verdict

would come sometime late next fall.

Mr. Robb said the company is proceeding cautiously to ensure the best chances for success.

"It's not just a matter of filling out forms," he said. "We've been working on the application for two months and we're not finished yet."

For both sides, much depends on the report from the Ontario Research Foundation. Mr. Moss worries a report supporting Canada Cement will kill any opposition to the project.

"If the report recommends burning the waste, we don't stand a chance," he said.

More optimistically, Mr. Moss said the six-month delay will give the 50-member

environmental group longer to raise money for court battles.

In the past six weeks the group has raised about \$1,500 selling chocolate bars and holding cooking classes. A Stratford concert later this month featuring Irish folk singer Mary O'Hara will raise more. The concert has sold more than 300 tickets so far.

Mr. Moss said the group hopes to raise about \$50,000, because fighting a big company in court can be expensive.

The citizens have been battling the company since February 1983, when Canada Cement announced the \$1 million project aimed at slashing fuel costs and making the 27-year-old plant more

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for 6 months

Backed by a \$350,000 federal grant, the project involves burning flammable toxic wastes as an alternative to the paint, ink and more expensive natural automotive industries gas.

Singer will appear to aid Embro group

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By John Roe
district editor

The Embro Citizens' Group has enlisted the aid of internationally-acclaimed singer Mary O'Hara in the fight to stop a local company from burning liquid industrial waste.

Group spokesman Joe Moss, of RR 5 Embro, announced yesterday the Irish singer will appear in a Stratford fund-raising concert March 27 to help the group in its drive to raise up to \$50,000 for upcoming court battles against Canada Cement Lafarge Ltd. which hopes to burn industrial waste for fuel at its plant eight kilometres south of Embro.

It will be Miss O'Hara's only Canadian stop in an otherwise all-American tour.

"We're going to pack the city hall," Mr. Moss said in an interview

yesterday. "She's one of the world's top classical folk singers."

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Mary O'Hara

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Association President



Jim Gibb, 1984 Farm Safety Association president.

Gibb's involvement with safety organizations dates back to 1971 when—as municipal councillor—he was appointed as a representative to the Oxford Safety Council. He has continued to play an active role in farm safety affairs since that time, and has served as Area III's director of the provincial Farm Safety Association for several years. Gibb was elected president of the Association at the 1984 Annual Meeting.

Still quite active in local government, Gibb is deputy mayor of Zorra Township, and a representative for that municipality on Oxford County Council. He is also president of the Woodstock Fair Board.

Gibb's administrative experience and ability to work with people will be important assets during his tenure as Farm Safety Association president. He believes that awareness is the key to safety on the farm, and will continue to encourage initiatives that increase recognition of hazards in the farm workplace. ■