

# Foam insulation gets a clean bill of health from manufacturer

by Eric Flistore  
In response to newspaper and television stories raising doubts about the safety and quality of urea-formaldehyde insulation, manufacturers and distributors are telling their side.

Rapco Foam, manufacturer of urea-formaldehyde at Milton, and distributor Brandco Insulators of Rockwood are eager to meet the challenges.

"If it can ever be proved there is a health hazard, we'd pull it off the market... if we're causing cancer or heart attacks," Rapco's general manager Bob Elliott said in an interview. "There's no doubt in my mind the Rapco product is safe. I have it in my home."

Mr. Elliott and Rapco's manager of manufacturing and development Edwin Perrin met Brandco Insulators

bosses Gary and Dennis Brace at Rockwood to discuss home insulations and improvements in inspections.

Urea-formaldehyde is a white spongy substance

which can be sprayed between walls. It keeps heat inside and cold outside. In fact, according to Dennis Brace, Brandco has come across many instances when fuel bills

have been sliced in half after insulation. Rapco, and Brandco, however, were reacting to news stories such as one in a recent Toronto paper which stated that

gas from insulation can irritate allergies.

The story quoted assistant deputy minister of the federal health protection branch Dr. Alexander Morrison, as saying: "People with allergies and respiratory problems, who are most likely to have an adverse reaction to any formaldehyde that is released, shouldn't use it at all."

"If the insulation is a good-quality material, installed properly and in the proper part of the house, people should not run into any problems at all," Dr. Morrison said.

The doctor went on to say it's difficult for homeowners to check the quality of materials and workmanship in the case of urea-formaldehyde.

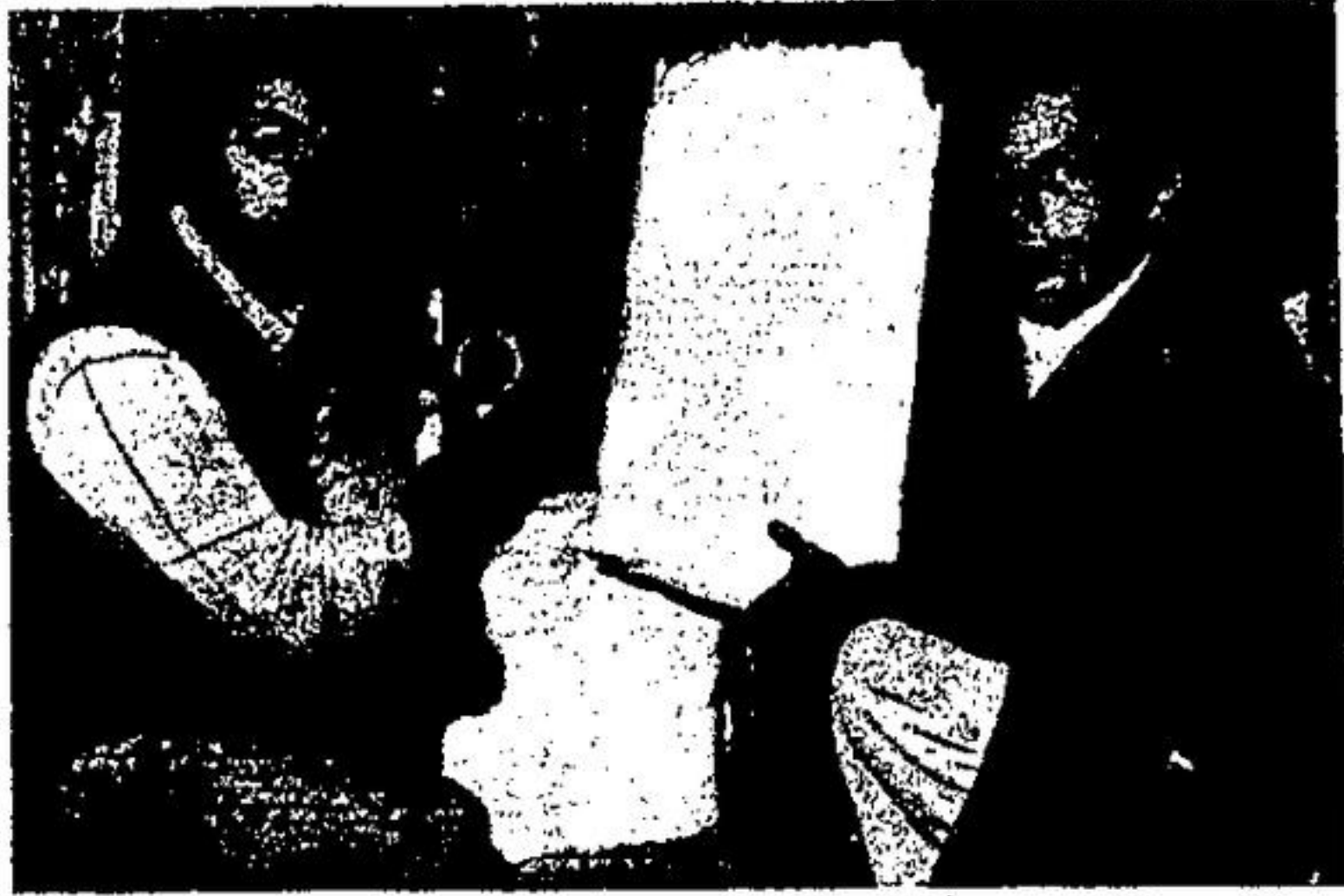
Rapco's Bob Elliott commented on the story that if someone worries about being allergic for formaldehyde, he should check with his doctor.

Manufacturing manger Edwin Perrin wondered if there was an issue with allergies because the formaldehyde contributed by foam is negligible. According to Mr. Perrin most of the formaldehyde in the air comes from car exhausts. And the Formaldehyde Institute in the U.S. estimates auto emissions of formaldehyde amounts to 800 million pounds per year.

Formaldehyde is a compound of oxygen, hydrogen and carbon obtained by the oxidation of wood alcohol. It is wood alcohol with hydrogen removed. As a gas, formaldehyde is colorless with a pungent—Mr. Perrin described it as being obnoxious—odor.

The Formaldehyde Institute states that levels of between one and three parts per million, formaldehyde is mildly

(Continued on Page 2)



Dennis and Gary Brace, of Rockwood, show off one of their products, urea-formaldehyde, and a heat monitor used to gauge the degree of installation in buildings.



# The Acton Free Press

One Hundred and Fifth Year—No. 25.

ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1979.

Sixteen Pages—Twenty Cents.

## School board chairman waits on new teacher contract negotiator

A 'wait and see attitude' is being adopted by Halton Board of Education Chairman Bill Herd in response to the addition of professional negotiators to the high school teachers' team.

"The only thing I can say is we will wait and see what that means," Herd said in a telephone interview.

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation District 9, the local group, ask the provincial organization to "take over" the negotiations with the school board as of December 19. Bringing to the negotiation table will be the support of the 38,000 member provincial group plus finances and a professional negotiator, said Neil Munro chairman of the new negotiating team.

OSSTF made the announcement to the press prior to officially informing the school board. Herd acknowledged he had been informed verbally of the change. "I find that way of doing business objectionable," he said.

Herd said he did not consider the switch of negotiators on the teachers side a major change. The board has changed its negotiators in this round of talks.

Haltion's 1,165 high school teachers have been working without a contract since September. This is the second year in a row in which the school year has commenced without a contract being signed. Last year's contract was agreed to in January, but only after a mediator was appointed to help bring the sides together.

Negotiations were going well, according to board officials. Both sides were at the conference table until 4 a.m. Thursday morning. "I thought we were not too far from an agreement. We were down to major issues," Herd said. He went on to say he interpreted that as "a healthy sign."

That view of the talks was not shared by local OSSTF president Ron Ness who said the "talks last week led us to believe we couldn't go on our own." The decision to ask the provincial group for help came from no one thing, said Ness. "It's been a long time," he said.

The talks were to continue the following Monday. However, some board officials acted surprised when teachers failed to make the appointment. Outgoing Superintendent of Instruction John Boich said: "teachers did

not show up on Monday. They called. We were pretty miffed at that."

Teachers contend they informed a school board official late the previous Saturday afternoon. "I think we gave them enough notice," OSSTF local president Ron Ness said at the press conference.

"I've been involved rather directly since the teachers didn't show up Monday. I knew they were not coming. I wrote a letter to the president of OSSTF District 9 of our concerns," said Herd. In the letter he said he hoped the change of mind by the teachers concerning the Monday meeting did not indicate a shift in position by the federation. "I've no reply from his (Ness) and no official notice of the take over," said Herd Friday. He was speaking from his office in Oakville, and acknowledged that official notice from the teachers may be at the board office in Burlington.

Herd said that the supposition on his part is that there has been some interruption within the union to cause the request for the provincial body to take over the negotiations.

Herd stressed that both sides in the talks have behaved well and responsibly. The danger at the moment is upsetting the apple cart by making statements, he said. He went on to say he hoped the change by the teachers will not result in a loss of trust at the negotiating table.

Herd underlined that no final offer had been made by the board to the teachers.

For the teachers part, the change in negotiators is a step in the right direction, according to the press conference at the headquarters in Burlington. Negotiating team chairman Neil Munro indicated a hope talks with the board would resume early in January.

"We expect things to be gained from this positive step, a step that had to be taken at this time," Ness said to the press. The decision to go to the provincial body for help was made Dec. 18. "It's the next step the local group has to take. It's a step-up," said Munro.

Both the board and teachers will go back in January feeling a little better about things. We're using the mandate they gave us," Ness

said. He went on to say: "Being the second year in a row, four months without a contract, our perception of the members feelings is—it's unsettling."

Teachers gave permission in November for the provincial OSSTF takeover of the talks for the teachers. More than 90 per cent of the teachers voted, and of that number 95.1 per cent voted for takeover, said Ness.

Key issues remaining to be negotiated to conclusion, according to OSSTF are compensation, benefits, staffing and working conditions. Teachers have done all that can be done, according to an OSSTF press release, to reach a fair and equitable settlement.

Teachers are asking for eight per cent increase in wages plus a cost of living clause, according to OSSTF. The board, according to

(Continued on Page 2)

## Fire location a mystery

A mixup in location cost the Acton Volunteer Department over an hour in reaching the scene of a house fire at the First Line, Erin Township, Friday evening.

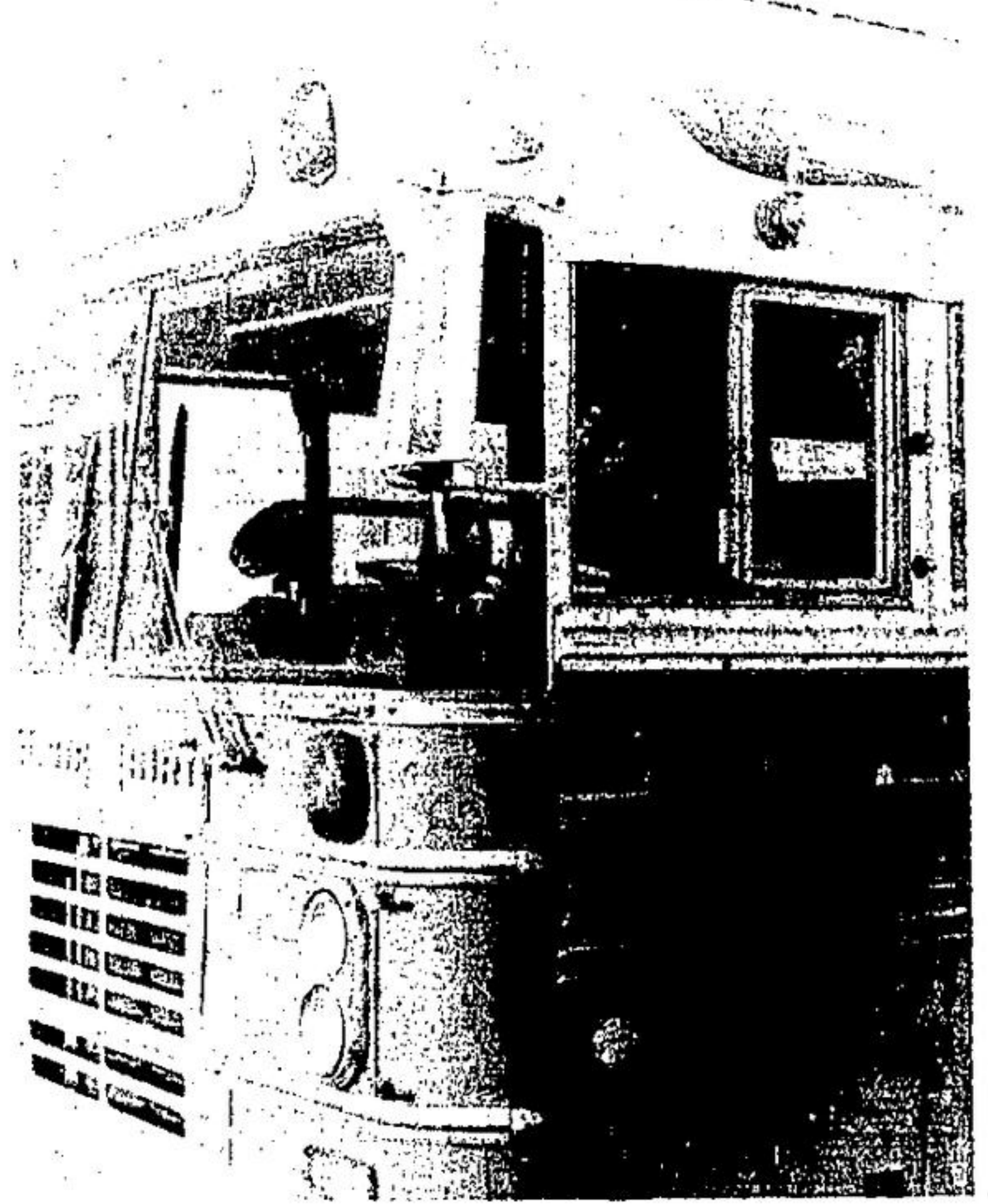
The fire was eventually located in Erin Township one hour and ten minutes after the first emergency call.

Five trucks from Acton and Milton scoured the Nassagaweya countryside, following directions the caller had given.

According to firefighter Brent Marshall, the teenager who placed the call had just moved into the house from Toronto. Her parents were not home at the time of the blaze and she insisted she was in Nassagaweya.

Mr. Marshall explained that firefighters were finally able to locate the fire by asking questions about the location.

"The fire was contained in the walls of the First Line house, Mr. Marshall said. Damage was minimal.



Bus driver Ken Budd has been a busy man over the past couple of weeks driving the Acton Merchants' Christmas bus throughout the streets picking up anyone wanting a lift to shopping areas.

## Two women are dead following tragic accidents

The holiday spirit was dampened in Acton this week with the sudden deaths of two well known women.

Mrs. Elyn Masales died suddenly in her home on Mill St., December 19, the result of a home accident.

Mrs. Kae Lidkea died suddenly in Guelph General Hospital Friday following an accident on Church St. where she was struck by an automobile.

Mrs. Lidkea is the wife of the late Edgar Lidkea. Left to mourn her loss in the holiday season are her daughter, Jean, Mrs. M.J. Middleton, Cold Lake Alberta, son Randy, of

Owen Sound, daughter-in-law Gail Lidkea, sister of Peggy Knoerck, Charlotte Smith and Lucien Michaud, all of Brampton and six grandchildren. She was also predeceased by her son David.

Funeral service was held at Trinity United Church on Christmas Eve.

Mrs. Masales, 77, is survived by husband Lloyd, son Owen, grandchildren Terry and Gary, and four great-grandchildren. She is also survived by brother Aubrey Gervais, sisters Cora Ball, Jessie Helf, Audrey Currie and Edmeda Warden. She was predeceased by Edsel Gervais. Funeral service was held at the Shoemaker Funeral Home on Friday.

## Charges against police dismissed by Judge

Assault charges laid by two Acton men against Halton Regional Police Constables were dismissed in Provincial court Thursday morning. Courts costs were assessed to the complainants.

Timothy Spurrell, 18, and Paul Bowen, 19, laid the charges following an incident June 9 with Constables Jack Poot and Ray Hendry. Both Acton men failed to appear in court on Thursday.

The officers pleaded not guilty to two charges each of common assault and Judge Kenneth Langdon assessed the costs at \$303 per charge. Bowen and Spurrell each face costs of \$606 each or

two months imprisonment on the two charges they laid.

Spurrell was found guilty on three charges November 14 relating to the same incident. He was fined \$100 and a year's probation for assaulting a police officer, \$200 for obstructing police and \$200 for resisting arrest.

Bowen was fined the same date, \$500 for assaulting police and given a year's probation. He was found not guilty on charges of obstructing police and resisting arrest.

Constable Poot is 36 years old and has been with the force since 1967. Constable Hendry, 24, has been with Halton Regional Police since 1976.



The puck slipped over the line for Wade Vickery's Acton goal against the Buffalo Junior Sabres Friday night. In a nip 'n tuck wide open duel Buffalo shaded the local Sabres 7-4. Buffalo net minder

Brian Willison was the difference for the visitors. He stopped 52 Acton shots in the exhibition match. Acton is to play at Buffalo in a return on January 6.

—See story on sports pages.

Speyside Brownies bring Christmas to sick

—See Page 7