

Terrace Bay - Schreiber

NEWS

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SERVING TERRACE BAY, SCHREIBER, ROSSPORT & JACKFISH LAKE

Professor has concerns with tests at Schreiber's Mineral Transfer Facility

Concerned citizens meet with dust expert

By Dave Chmara

The dust at Canadian Pacific's mineral transfer facility in Schreiber "may be a harmless powder but I don't like what it's made up of," said Brian Kaye, professor of physics and fine particles with Sudbury's Laurentian University.

Kaye made the comment at a meeting held in Schreiber last week with Rick Briggs, president of the Sudbury Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers' Union, Local No. 598, members of the Concerned Citizens Committee of Schreiber and about 60 other people in attendance.

Briggs said his union "maintains workers have the right to

live and work in a healthy environment."

He said the issue is to try to understand the situation in Schreiber and to try to find a solution everybody can live with.

"We do a lot of environmental work, especially in Sudbury, and we decided to get involved here to see if there is a problem," said Briggs.

Kaye added the situation in Schreiber with respect to the mineral transfer facility is a complex one and said, "so far you've been asking the wrong questions."

He also believes the Ministry of the Environment studies are not specific enough as they do not indicate the exact form of the the

cadmium, lead, arsenic, zinc and copper.

Kaye said, "without knowing the form the chemicals are in I can't tell you of the danger."

However, he did say, "I don't think they are safe to be sniffing."

He said he wonders if any testing on animals has ever been done to see if there are possible health hazards associated with the concentrate.

Wants different tests performed

Kaye commented on the tests conducted by the MOE saying, "with all respect to the MOE, I don't care what happens to a bag of moss."

He said he would like to know the level of dust inside homes in Schreiber. Items such as vacuum cleaners and carpets would give an indication if the dust is getting inside people's homes and the level of the dust, he said.

As for the MOE guidelines, Kaye said the levels are set for healthy adults. These industrial safety limits and exposures are generally higher than for young children and pregnant women, he said.

The size of the dust particles is another area of concern Kaye has.

He said, "what you can't see is what harms you."

Briggs said samples were collected from various sites in

Schreiber and Kaye will conduct testing to determine the size and content of the samples. Results of the tests are expected sometime within two to four weeks.

Kaye commented on how the concentrate is handled at the CP transfer facility and said, "I'm not a mining engineer, but it seems to me to be a very primitive way of handling the concentrate."

At present, the concentrate is shipped by truck to the transfer facility where it is dumped onto concrete pads. A front end loader then picks up the concentrate and dumps it into rail cars.

MOE study

A report recently released by the MOE gives the results of tests performed this spring and summer.

The report concludes, "based on monitoring results to date, the concentrate transshipment operation now meets Ministry requirements for air quality."

It goes on to say, "This improvement is attributed to the control program implemented by CP Rail in early 1989. Because air quality objectives for hi-vol (air) sampling are based on health effects, we consider that these data offer the best evidence that the ore transshipment operation currently poses no health threat off CP Rail property."

The authors of the report recommend the air sampling program should continue for another six to nine months and, if at that time the dust levels have been satisfactory, the need for monitoring should be reviewed.

It also suggests the moss exposure tests and snow sampling should also be continued, particularly if the air sampling program is reduced or dropped.

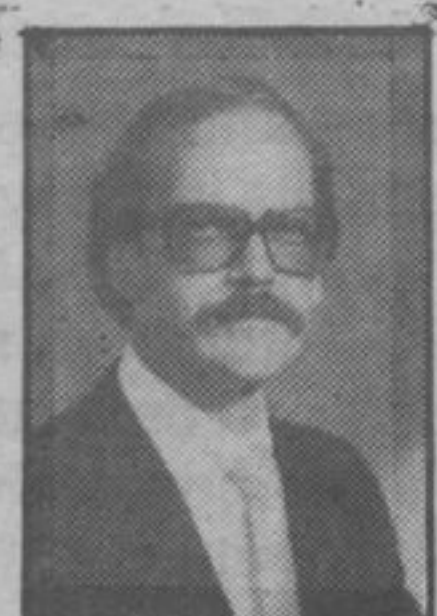
Kaye said he would like to know more about the concentrate such as the size distribution of the dust particles, its health risks on people, and if and how much dust

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Highview Animal Clinic from Thunder Bay was in Terrace Bay for a couple of days last week to perform surgery one day and give dogs and cats any necessary shots the next. The clinic comes to town every few months which saves people the drive to Thunder Bay. Above, Jim Charlton looks on as Dr. Peterson Warren gives Gunner his shots.

Photo by Dave Chmara



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