

Engineer reveals chemical threat

(continued from pg. 1) dump is totally uncontrolled and discounted. York Sanitation's argument that no more liquid industrial waste is being dumped by saying "liquid pollutants can be dumped as solids" because they have been absorbed in sawdust etc. or sent to the dump in gallon containers.

He maintained the aquifer feeding the Stouffville wells is not a continuous sheet of water but is an underground stream. Under these conditions, he said, "the normal calculations made with respect to the dilution of a pollutant in the aquifer do not apply and this undoubtedly is why we find phenol at the Stouffville pumps in concentrations well above any reasonable background level, and why we find cadmium at the pumps at half the

concentration it is found in the (Keith) Hutchinson well.

He said monitoring is ineffective because the pollution travels in ribbons or plumes and a well tested one day may have a close to normal reading and the very next day it could have a very high concentration of contaminants.

Mr. Munroe said if the town's water supply is polluted with arsenic, barium, boron, cadmium, chloride, chromium, copper, fluoride, lead, manganese, nitrate or nitrite, selenium, silver, sulphate, uranyl ion or zinc, cyanide, oil, grease, pesticides or phenol, "even an extensive water purification plant would not remove them."

Mr. Munroe told the board "trace amounts" of pollutants are just as deadly as large amounts.

He then outlined specific incidents of chemical pollution

caused by phosphates and its substitute, mercury, lead, arsenic, nickel, aldrin, dieldrin, vinyl chloride monomer, bis-chloromethylether (BCME) and others.

Mr. Munroe said some forms of mercury can cause congenital mental retardation, abnormalities of the chromosomes and through intoxication of the fetus in the uterus can bring about cerebral palsy, attack the brain cells and may maintain its destructive action for weeks or months.

Mr. Munroe estimated 600,000 pounds of mercury was produced in Canada in 1969 and he said its use is rising. "About 12 per cent is used in the manufacture of paints and this is the most probable common source for mercury that would reach site number 4 but other sources could be antiseptics, floor waxes, furniture polishes, fabric softeners and laundry preparations, used mercury cells for flashlights and the like. In other words a quite appreciable amount of mercury could be expected on site number 4."

Mr. Munroe then went on to discuss lead poisoning. "Lead poisoning," he said, "is a major source of brain damage, mental deficiency and serious behaviour problems." He said the effects of lead are cumulative in nature and can lead to convulsions, coma and even death.

"We know from the residents who live around site number 4 that a large number of drums of what appeared to be a lead based paint were disposed of at the site and we can expect that additional lead compounds will find their way there," said Mr. Munroe and he discounted the claim by York Sanitation that heavy metals would be attenuated in the clay till.

Mr. Munroe explained the soil can be overwhelmed "with respect to its ability to further retain heavy metal" and he noted the presence of lead in the leachate and in the McLean Hutchinson and Hoover wells.

Mr. Munroe then pointed out the dangers of vinyl chloride monomer which he said "are the second most common

plastics produced in the world." He said it was established the monomer caused a rare form of liver cancer called angiosarcoma and that the chemical industry was accused of concealing this information from the authorities.

"It has since been established," he continued, "that brain tumors, destruction of the bones in the fingers, gastro-intestinal bleeding and chromosome damage also result from exposure."

Mr. Munroe related this to the dump site, saying, "The presence of used vinyl products such as floor tiles, old wiring etc. on the dump can only add to the general hazard to the aquifer since the monomer can be expected to leach from these products to an unknown degree."

Mr. Munroe told the board bis-chloromethylether (BCME) is carcinogenic (cancer causing) and can be produced by the interaction of formaldehyde and chlorine in tap water.

"Our interest in BCME," he said, "stems from the fact that we can fully expect that formaldehyde will be generated by bacterial action at site number 4 and that this formaldehyde will find its way to the Stouffville chlorinator where it will be converted to BCME."

Hearing Board Chairman David Calverly criticized Mr. Munroe for not relating some of his examples to the situation at the Stouffville dump.

Mr. Munroe replied he was informing the board of the "chemical explosion" and was making them aware of the "unregulated materials" going into the dump.

Murray Chusid, solicitor for York Sanitation, who had until then not interrupted Mr. Munroe's testimony, chimed in, "How is this relating to this site?" he asked. "Otherwise I am lost."

"In fairness he has tied in many of his points," replied Mr. Calverly, adding Mr.

Munroe had "left some dangling."

"We have not dwelt on toxins or viruses which represent just as great a danger to the town," said Mr. Munroe. He said that toxins are deadly and viruses are so small they can only be seen with an electron microscope and under certain conditions they can be broken up into discrete particles which can then recombine to form a whole live virus. It is hard to imagine that clay could filter this size of particle."

Mr. Munroe pointed out that methane which will be produced on the site is not only an explosion hazard but "the aquifer will undoubtedly contain methane in solution which when it reaches the chlorinator will react to form a number of carcinogenic compounds."

"I suggest as the methane evolves the total volume of garbage will shrink and the cap of clay or other low permeability soil will fissure and open."

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Monday, Jan. 20 — 7:30 p.m.
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Tuesday, Jan. 21 — 7:30 p.m.
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Wednesday, Jan. 22 — 7:30 p.m.
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH — STOUFFVILLE

Thursday, Jan. 23 — 7:30 p.m.
CHRIST CHURCH — ANGLICAN

Friday, Jan. 24 — 7:30 p.m.
STOUFFVILLE MISSIONARY CHURCH

Saturday, Jan. 25 — 7:30 p.m.
MEMORIAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Sunday, Jan. 26 — 3 p.m.
STOUFFVILLE BAPTIST

Devote Yourselves To Prayer
Keeping Alert In It With Attitude
Of Thanksgiving. COL. 4:2

Lawyer fails to budge witnesses

STOUFFVILLE — It was an uphill battle all the way for lawyer Murray Chusid during a recent day's activity before the Environment Hearing Board.

The first witness, Tom Marshall, had crossed swords with Mr. Chusid earlier, especially over the question of aerial photos used by York Sanitation. Mr. Chusid, who represents York

Benefit dance
MUSS LAKE — A's Tack shop is sponsoring a benefit dance next week for a Caledon area farmer who was the victim of a fire recently.

The disaster took place at Lomac Stock Farm, owned by John MacKenzie.

The dance will be held Friday, Jan. 24 at Glendale Pavilion at Musselman's Lake. Tickets are \$8 per couple.

Sanitation, maintained that the company's photos and contour lines were correct.

Sparks flew almost immediately when the lawyer objected to the introduction of 1972 and 1974 aerial photos of the dump site.

Chairman D. S. Caverly finally instructed the witness to proceed. With frequent interruptions from Mr. Chusid, Marshall proceeded to estimate the error in the contours as anywhere from 10 to 50 feet.

A representative of a firm which sells many photogrammetric devices, Mr. Marshall displayed the instrument he thought had been used and explained its shortcomings.

Mr. Marshall was also sharply critical of the basic airphoto used by the company, which he said dates from 1970 and is of comparatively poor quality. Much of the covering soil and other features had changed in those four years, he said, and it was unrealistic to use the old photos to calculate the amount of fill and cover material available on the site.

Lawyer Donald Hindson, who had introduced Mr. Marshall, presented as his witness Ed Fockler, who lives on the boundaries of the disposal site. Mr. Fockler traced the history of the area and of the dump, especially the liquid industrial waste placed there before York Sanitation owned the property. He described seeing hundreds of gallons of liquid waste dumped in containers ranging from 45-gallon steel drums to what appeared to be acid carboys. Much of this material, he said, was dumped in the area known as Lagoon 5.

Lagoon 5 was at the heart of Mr. Fockler's testimony; he maintained that liquids regularly escape from the area and some end up on his property.

1974, he told the board, was the worst year yet. The spring runoff deposited a dark-colored stinking substance over an area of 50 acres, he claimed, which included a corner of his property.

Mr. Fockler described the disappearance of wildlife in the area and claimed property values in the area have depreciated because of the dump. In the real estate business for some years, Mr. Fockler stated that he has taken certificate courses in appraisal.

He predicted that an extension of the dumping operation would depress values even further, and said the site should be closed down immediately and permanently.

Mr. Fockler also had

some harsh words for officials of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment who, he felt, did not take the complaints seriously.

"It was another tough cross-examination for Mr. Chusid, who found the witness unshakable on many points."

"I had to raise the level of the curbing on my well three feet so this stuff wouldn't run into it," Mr. Fockler said. "I don't think I can save my well. I'm not stupid enough to think that this stuff won't catch up with me."

Mr. Chusid suggested that Mr. Fockler should have taken pictures and samples of his own property.

During a long and confusing exchange on this point, it emerged that samples had been taken by the Town, but those samples were not in evidence. Mr. Hindson pointed out that at the time of the flooding & from March to July, 1974 — no hearing on the dump was scheduled, and hence no-one thought to take such samples.

Mr. Chusid also suggested that the source of the liquid and the smell might be something other than the dump site. Mr. Fockler testified that he is frequently obliged to stay indoors with the windows shut, or even leave the property during the evening because of the smell. The lawyer suggested a nearby pig farm might cause this, but Mr. Fockler denied this.

Mr. Chusid also questioned the witness' estimate of property devaluation, demanding some evidence that values have dropped by the 50 per cent estimated by the witness. Mr. Fockler said that he had not done a formal appraisal, and stated that he had given an opinion based on his experience.

The lawyers pointed out that the liquid waste was dumped some years ago, not by York Sanitation, and suggested that his client had inherited this problem.

Mr. Fockler felt that the material was "escaping from the lagoon because the tons of garbage dumped in the southern part of the site were putting pressure on the soil, forcing the berm to open."


Mr. Fockler admitted that even if operations were stopped, the problem might well persist, but he predicted an improvement if no more waste is dumped in the area.

The Board appeared impressed by Mr. Fockler's testimony. Mr. Caverly asked him if the property could be returned to farming.

The witness said that part of the site could, but some was now "beyond the point of no return."

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