

EXTRACTIONS



a newsletter from O'CONNOR ASSOCIATES

Number 1, July 1987

LEACHATE FROM DUMP REACHES AQUIFER

Monitoring at a landfill used for disposal of Regina's garbage has revealed contamination of an underlying shallow aquifer by landfill leachate. According to news reports, a layer of clay underlying the site was purposely removed when the city constructed the landfill in the early 1960s, and that action has allowed leachate to penetrate the aquifer. Regina obtains one-third of its water from a separate deeper aquifer, and it is feared leachate from the landfill will eventually penetrate that water source as well.

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERTISE MISSING

When Marcel Masse, Canada's Minister of Energy, addressed the opening session of his department's Energy Options Conference in Calgary, he made specific and rather emphatic reference to a belief that environmental considerations should be part of energy policy and development. Included in his remarks was the statement: "From this time on it should be plain to all, the environmental element in energy matters must be given full consideration. Protecting the environment is not secondary to developing energy resources, and the costs of environmental protection are a fundamental part of the financing of energy projects. It was not always acknowledged that this is so, but it must be in the future." However, in appointing a 22-member advisory committee to preside over the Energy Options program, Masse failed to include individuals with training in the life or environmental sciences.

AN ORGANOPHOSPHATE EXPOSURE METER

Personal radiation exposure devices are commonly used to protect workers who come in contact with radioactive materials or who are exposed to other forms of radiation. Similar devices designed to measure exposure to chemical hazards have been slow to develop but are now beginning to appear. One example of the new chemical

monitors being introduced is a badge capable of measuring exposures to organophosphate pesticides. Developed by Robert E. Baier, a professor of biophysics at the State University of New York in Buffalo, the device gives a visual indication of exposure through colour change. The badge is designed to be worn on clothing or on the wrist.

BETTER SYSTEM FOR TANK RECORDS

A dip and meter book developed by retail gasoline dealers in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia is being touted as superior to similar record keeping systems now in use. A field test of the new record keeping aid is under way. Details may be obtained by contacting Dale Mader, Executive Director of the Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia Retail Gasoline Dealers Association, at P.O. Box 171, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 3Y3 (902) 466-7516.

NEW HAZARDOUS WASTE REGULATION

Manitoba has adopted a new regulation under the *Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act*. The regulation requires registration of operations and facilities which generate hazardous waste and licensing of haulers of the waste. The regulation is presently in effect.

PUBLICATIONS

In meeting the problem of leaks from underground storage tanks, regulatory authorities and tank managers in West Germany have adopted a number of stringent technical standards. Tanks are built to withstand test pressures of 29.4 p.s.i., are double walled, and are coated with an asphaltic cover tested at 14 000 volts in the factory and at the installation site. Details of European approaches to tank management are included in a brief report entitled *Some European Perspectives on Prevention of Leaks from Underground Storage Tank Systems* available without charge from the State of Maine's Department of Environmental Protection. Contact Susan Cummings, Maine DEP, Station #17, Augusta, Maine 04333 U.S.A.

NEWSLETTER FOR TANK MANAGERS

A new publication entitled *Leaking Underground Storage Tank Newsletter*, published by Environment Canada, is devoted to the art and the science of underground steel tank management. For further information contact the editor, K.R. Karr, Environment Canada, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1C8 (819) 953-1125.

WASTE MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

Collections, a quarterly source of news on the subject of waste management in Alberta, is published by the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. For further information contact Sharon Pearce (Editor), 900, 10909 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5S 3L9.

COMMENT ON PCBS

Dr. Walter Harris, University of Alberta Chemistry Professor, on claims that PCBs are the most hazardous wastes...

PCBs have been called a "political waste" and I agree with that description. In some news media we have a virtual drumbeat of *lethal, deadly, highly toxic, and cancer causing* to the point where these distortions are widely believed to be correct. For several years I have been following developments, and I find little to substantiate these perceptions. For example, workers who formerly worked with transformer-capacitors in the U.S. with high long-term exposures had no increases in any type of cancer. Nor has any overall increase in mortality been observed. I think discussions of adverse effects on health have been highly overstated. The best information I can find indicates PCBs are enormously less toxic than, for example, cyanide or nicotine. From rat experiments it appears they are probably about as toxic as glycol (antifreeze) and somewhat more toxic than table salt.

[from the newsletter *Collections*, Vol. 1, No. 1]

MEETINGS

Annual Meeting of the Western Canada Water and Wastewater Association. October 20-23, 1987, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Contact Doreen Munsie, c/o WCWWNA, (403) 291-4882.

9th Annual Canadian Conference on Waste Management. October 7-8, 1987, Edmonton, Alberta. Contact Michel Cloutier, Technology Transfer and Training Division, Conservation and Protection, Environment Canada, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E7.

40th Canadian Geotechnical Conference. October 19-21, 1987, Regina, Saskatchewan. Contact Dave Kent, Clifton Associates Ltd., 340 Maxwell Crescent, Regina, Saskatchewan S4N 5Y5 (306) 949-7711.

Conference and Exhibition on Petroleum Hydrocarbons and Organic Chemicals in Groundwater. November 4-6, 1987, Houston, Texas.

Contact the National Water Well Association, 6375 Riverside Drive, Dublin, Ohio 43017 U.S.A.

Groundwater Contamination: Use of Models in Decision-Making. October 26-29, 1987, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Contact G. Jousma, TNO Corporate Communications Department, P.O. Box 297, 2501 ED, the Hague, the Netherlands.

O'CONNOR UPDATE



A move by **Ron McKee** of O'Connor Associates to Mississauga will increase the expertise and services available to O'Connor clients in Ontario. McKee will assume responsibility for the firm's eastern operations. O'Connor Associates offices in Mississauga are located at #6, 2175 Dunwin Drive, Mississauga, Ontario L5L 1X2, (416) 820-6330 or 828-0066.

EXTRACTIONS (ISSN 0835-6645) is published periodically by O'Connor Associates Environmental Inc. for professionals involved in environmental management. Information presented in **EXTRACTIONS** is believed to be accurate in all respects, but O'Connor Associates Environmental Inc. does not warrant it to be so. If you know of others who might like to receive **EXTRACTIONS**, please send their names and addresses to Extractions Editor, 1000, 639 - 5th Avenue S.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 0M9. We welcome your comments.