

Meade Heights checked for toxic wastes

By Linda McCarty and Neil Myers

The wooded area and path east of Meade Heights may contain buried hazardous chemicals, according to a report released April 9 by the Department of Environmental Resources (D.E.R.). The site is one of five new locations on the former Olmsted Air Force Base that have been identified by the Air Force as potentially contaminated with trichloroethylene (T.C.E.) and other wastes.

According to D.E.R., the Meade Heights site was used by the Air Force between 1956 and 1963 to dispose of unknown types of waste. A recent site inspection by the Air Force reportedly found metal drums and "construction rubble" there.

According to the report, "A site survey revealed the presence of eight drums at the base of the fill area. These drums were found to be filled with an unknown material . . . It is recommended that a portion of the fill area at the edge of the post run at the Meade Heights end of the walkway, where the drums are located, be excavated for observation pits and inspected for the presence of drums, sludge, or liquid materials. If found, any waste materials in drums should be analyzed for T.C.E., T.O.H., V.O.C., and oil and grease. It is also recommended that surface water and sediment samples be obtained from the stream that runs through the area."

Campus officials were unable to comment on the finding pending action at University Park, and had apparently not been notified by D.E.R. that a dump exists on campus. John Joseph, Assistant Provost, said that the matter had been referred to the "Safety Division" at University Park. Maurine Banner, an in-

dustrial hygienist there, declined to comment on whether the University was aware of the situation or what it intended to do. She said that the university was waiting for information from D.E.R.

As of Monday evening of this week, Dr. Joseph could only report that R.E. Zilly, Vice President for Business, would visit the campus at an undetermined date to inspect the site.

Joseph Kemp, Supervisor of Maintenance and Utilities Operations here, said that the university did some construction years ago in the area to add lights and paving to the path, yet the drums were never reported. Kemp said his crews occasionally dump "good clean fill" in the path area.

Also named as a dumpsite in Air Force records is a 15-acre tract at the eastern end of the Fruehauf property just north of Capitol Campus. According to D.E.R. Secretary Nicholas DeBenedictis, that site may contain everything from barrels of waste to typewriters and lunchroom waste. Frank Fair, a D.E.R. official, said the Environmental Protection Agency took samples from the site about six to eight weeks ago and hopes to have the results back in roughly a week. John Drayer, Facilities Engineer at Fruehauf,



Photo by Jeffrey G. Shatzer

Rusted barrel rests in suspected dump area located along Meade Heights path.

said the site is not used by his company, but that he recalls the Air Force dumping waste there when he was in high school.

A visual inspection by Capitol Times reporters revealed no surface evidence of drums or debris. However, the Air Force report says that "the presence of T.C.E. and P.C.E. contamination was

shown in the Penn State area located hydraulically down gradient. Reports indicated that large quantities of drummed wastes were disposed of at this site." The Fruehauf site was used from 1950-1956 and again from 1963-1964, according to D.E.R.

Please see "Air," p. 3.

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Room and board upped for major repairs

By Neil Myers

Both tuition and room and board charges are expected to increase next fall, but only the room and board hike is definite.

The 6.3 percent increase was announced on March 17 by the Board of Trustees, and will translate into an additional \$78 per semester for a "basic double room" in the dorms. A comparable increase is expected for Meade Heights and University Apartments, although housing officials have not released exact figures for those facilities.

Whether or not the additional room and board charges are needed remains an open question. Steve A. Garban, Vice President for Financial Operations, cited "increased operating costs and

mandated employee benefits" as justification, adding, "It will be necessary to spend a considerable amount of funds in the near future on (the) aging dining and residence halls" at University Park.

Bernard Resnick, Director of Housing at University Park, agrees. He cited several major projects on next year's calendar. Among them are:

- Replacing gas mains in Meade Heights at a cost of \$60,000.
- Replacing the fire alarm system in the dorms, costing \$12,000.
- Installing smoke detectors in Meade Heights houses.

But when asked if these expenses amounted to more than was common in previous years, Resnick said, "I can't remember what expenses were in past years."

Moreover, Frank Williams, Housing Supervisor at Capitol, said the dorms here are "not that old", that they do not require major repairs, and that his major concern this year is with minor vandalism.

Also planned for next year is the conversion of 10 Meade Heights houses to accommodate six people, according to Pat Murphy, Director of Residence Living. University Park's Resnick said half-bathrooms are being installed in those units, which will house nursing students from Hershey Medical Center. Asked if Hershey students would displace Capitol students who requested Meade Heights assignments, Resnick said, "We have set aside several houses for nursing students. Returning students get priority."

Tuition is another expense expected to increase next year, but

no university official is willing to speculate on how much until the Board of Trustees meets this summer. Tuition has increased an average of 14 percent per year in the last five years, with last year's hike leveling off at nine percent, according to data provided by Capitol's Finance Office. Current tuition charges for a full time Pennsylvania resident are \$1,156 per semester.

James H. Lane, Financial Aid and Admissions Counselor, said that "theoretically" students receiving aid would not be affected because tuition and room and board charges are used to determine aid awards. Lane said that financial aid programs have not been reduced this year because "it's an election year."

Lane said students do not seem to be concerned over the potential increases in costs.