

Campus Water System Examined For Pollutants

As early as 1970, the concerns of pollution were being voiced. A survey of 40 of the Pennsylvania collegiate editors ranked pollution above the Vietnam War as the "greatest problem and challenge facing America today."

However, it wasn't until 13 years later that the impact of this sampling had an effect on Penn State at Harrisburg. In April, 1983, tests run by the Department of Environmental Resources on water samples taken from wells at Harrisburg International Airport (HIA) showed the presence of carcinogenic agents, namely hydrocar-

bons, tetrachlorethylene, and primarily trichloroethylene (TCE). In addition, the campus water supply, which comes from a combination of HIA wells also showed the contaminants, but in lower amounts.

Citing the low concentration of the cancer-causing agents, Department of Environmental Resources (DER) informed the campus there was no need to issue a notice to boil water, but monthly monitoring would occur for an extended period.

The source of the pollutants appeared to originate with the United States Air Force when it

occupied Olmsted Air Force base. Used for many purposes, the chemicals were used mainly as a degreaser for aircraft parts. At that time (1957-64) it was not unusual for establishments to dump the chemical after being used. DER studied the base area and came to the conclusion that an area beneath the middle of the 10,000 foot runway was the area used by the Air Force as a landfill, possibly burying 55 gallon drums filled with liquids containing TCE. The Air Force kept no record of how much or what kind of material was dumped there.

Since the three well filtering water to Penn State were located away from the path of the ground water flow from the river it was believed the water supply wouldn't be seriously affected.

In April 1984, the alarm again sounded when DER announced additional waste sites found near Meade Heights and Fruehauf. At Meade Heights, eight drums filled with unknown contents were found at the end of the walkway, necessitating further testing of ground water and sediment samples. Air Force records revealed a 15-acre tract east of Fruehauf and just north of the campus contained everything from "barrels to typewriters to lunchroom waste."

Tests run by an independent consultant in November 1984 revealed the drums from Meade Heights contained a sludge-like substance believed to have been old crankcase oil and that none

of the mixture had contaminated the ground.

In a move to control the situation, the military in February 1985 joined with PennDot, the present owner of the airport, to study the total situation in an attempt to reach a solution agreeable to all.

During a public meeting July 31, 1986, the two governing bodies recommended the construction of a \$3.75 million water treatment plant with two air stripping towers to clean up the wells. Obviously missing from the report was any indication of cleanup of land fill areas at the Heights or adjoining Fruehauf.

John Moyer, DER regional director suggested further investigation of the entire groundwater problem be addressed before any conclusions are reached. Both PennDot and the Air Force has taken comments under advisement.

PSU Adopts New Alcohol Policy

It's no secret. Most college age students are going to drink. It's looked upon as a rite of passage.

A 1983 survey by Dr. James Rooney, sociology professor, showed 59 percent of the campus population drank weekly with 20 percent drinking three to five drinks daily. In addition, 30 percent reported alcohol interfered with school work.

Social activities on campus supported these numbers. Few activities got wide student response without alcohol being served. Keggers of the 70's were beer bashes sponsored by student clubs. A standard event at these were the booze raffle, where the winner won a bottle of booze, many times chugging it immediately. The winners of the Bath-tub Races won a keg. The thousands of people attending the popular rock concerts left behind tons of beer and liquor bottles.

Like many other colleges, Penn State's attitude concerning these events could be described as lax. Sure, they had rules but enforcement was low key, many times placing the burden of regulating alcohol on the individual sponsoring club members.

Along came the 80's, and with it the push for drinking responsibility. Organizations such as Mother Against Drunk Drivers pushed for legislation to make offenders pay for mistakes. This has created an abundance of liability lawsuits, such as the \$22 million case Penn State is now involved in with a former Altoona campus student who was injured in an accident after leaving a fraternity party where beer had been served.

In order to clarify the responsibility of the college, Dr. Bryce Jordan, university president, announced a new alcohol policy on May 1, 1986. The move was "intended to distance the university in terms of legal liability," according to a Patriot News article on May 3, 1986. The policy, while not drastically different from the old one, spells out specific areas of concern, separating students off-campus actions from their on-campus behavior.

(The revised policy guidelines are listed in the gray box on this page)



50 years of Military History

Former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara was not a popular man in the Middletown area on November 19, 1964. It was on this date he gave the order to the United States Air Force to discontinue operation at Olmsted Air Force Base, forcing probable unemployment on 11,000 individuals.

Despite local opposition, the Air Force had its last retreat at their Headquarters Building (now the Olmsted Building) on August 28, 1966 and then handed their keys over to Pennsylvania State University, thus ending nearly 50 years of occupancy at the Middletown base.

In 1917 the government bought land from Heinz Corporation (the pickle people) to build the Middletown Air Depot. What began as a single warehouse next to the PA Railroad tracks grew into a 600-acre base by the time of its demise.

Airplanes flew out of the depot as early as 1918, but it wasn't until 1922 that the Army Air Corp took over to establish their defense program. In expanding their flight program, aircraft repair facilities were added in 1925. As flying became more popular, the Air Corp found its facilities to be deficient. So in 1927 the landing field was enlarged and improved to handle the new airborne crafts. The runway, reinforced with iron slag from Bethlehem Steel, was used until 1957, when it was replaced with the 10,000 foot runway in use today at Harrisburg International Airport.

After the base closed, and the campus opened several air force personnel stayed to tie up loose ends, operating side by side with the students. While male students lived in Wrisberg Hall and the third floor of Church Hall, the airment lived on the first two floors until May 1968. The first female students were housed in the former bachelor officer's quarters, which now serve as the University Apartments.

The Olmsted Base was named for First Lieutenant Robert Olmsted, a depot engineer who was killed in 1923 during the Gordon-Bennett International Balloon Races in the Netherlands when lightning struck the balloon he was piloting for the Army.

*Undergraduate student organizations, including fraternities and sororities, will be prohibited from serving alcohol at organization functions on campus.

*The University sheds responsibility for alcohol violations occurring off-campus.

*Alcohol shall not be served to minors (younger than 21) at University-sponsored functions, which is any event at any location that is sponsored by an officer, employee, or agent of the University.

*Minor undergraduate students and undergraduate-registered student organizations shall not serve alcoholic beverages at any function that occurs on the premises of the University.

*Undergraduate-registered student organizations cannot use University student activity funds for the purchase of alcoholic beverages whether such beverages are possessed or consumed on or off University property.

*Adult graduate students and graduate-registered student organizations may serve alcoholic beverages to adults in facilities owned by the University only if no monetary charge is made for admission and the function is closed to the public.

*Adult students may possess and consume alcohol in their rooms or the rooms of other adults in the residence hall. Conduct, such as disorderly parties resulting from drinking, that interferes with the rights of others shall be prohibited.

*Students younger than 21 are prohibited from possessing or consuming alcoholic beverages anywhere on the premises of the University, specifically in their residence hall room.

ATTENTION—
There will be a short meeting of the Capital Times staff on Thursday, August 28, at 1:00 in room W-129. Anyone interested in joining the staff is urged to attend. We need writers (feature, news, sports) an advertising manager, artists, layout people, distributors, etc. Take advantage of this opportunity to meet new people while gaining valuable experience. No experience necessary.

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