

WISCONSIN
Newspaper Association

702 Midvale Blvd.
Madison, Wis. 53705
Clipping Bureau Division

Eau Claire Leader-Telegram

DEC 10 1980 *DJ*

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**DNR plans to improve
communication system**

MADISON (AP) — State employees properly arranged for prompt clean-up of chemical wastes from a Washington County farm, but the general public should have been kept informed of the action, Natural Resources Secretary Carroll D. Besadny said Monday.

Besadny said the Department of Natural Resources will develop guidelines to ensure notification of the news media and the general public of future significant discoveries of chemical wastes, even if they are determined not to be hazardous.

"The improper disposal of waste, especially chemical waste, is an issue that is in the news every day," Besadny said. "The DNR has an obligation to keep the public informed on how we go about the job of protecting our environment."

The new policy is being drafted in response to reports that 80 rusty drums, jellied resins and soil were removed last month from a

farm in the town of Wayne west of West Bend after a DNR solid waste specialist discovered them in July during an inspection of a neighboring dump.

The DNR's southeastern district office and Freeman Chemical Corp., whose label was on some of the drums, decided to clean up the waste, but officials were quoted last weekend as saying they decided to keep the operation secret to avoid arousing undue public alarm.

Secrecy denied

Besadny contended the DNR had not acted secretly, however, because the landowner, town officials and waste site operators all knew what was happening.

Tests indicated that the wastes, deposited on the farm in 1958, would have been considered hazardous by today's standards. But the company's tests were reported to have determined they were no longer hazardous when discovered.

A fire about five months after the barrels were deposited on the farm was said to have burned up the flammable chemicals, and the remaining ones had solidified or drained off.

While some remaining residues were tested by Freeman Chemical Corp., the crucial test of what metals were present and might potentially contaminate nearby wells, was undertaken by an independent laboratory, DNR information officer Larry Sperling said.

"The metals test showed we were dealing with some pretty innocuous stuff," Sperling said. "Once we determined there was no danger, we should have communicated that to the public."

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Wausau Daily-Herald

file
DEC 9 1980

2 State acted properly in waste cleanup: DNR

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"The metals test showed we were dealing with some pretty innocuous stuff," Sperling said. "Once we determined there was no danger, we should have communicated that to the public."

"The DNR acted promptly once it discovered the waste," Besadny said.

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Fort Atkinson-
Jefferson Co. Union

DNR To Probe Secret Dump

WEST BEND (AP) — The secretary of the Department of Natural Resources said he wanted an explanation today for why bureaucrats kept Washington County home owners ignorant of a chemical waste dump.

Carroll Besadny said it is normal DNR policy "to put out a general news release," but that his subordinates chose to be so discreet about a chemical corporation's dump that they did not even tell him about it.

Besadny said Sunday that reviewing the matter would be "the first thing I do" when he reported to his office today in Madison.

Spokesmen for the department and Freeman Chemical Corp. were quoted during the weekend as defending their aversion to publicity over a DNR inspector's discovery of 80 drums of material in July in a dump near West Bend.

The chemicals, described as polyesters used in construction of fiberglass boat hulls, apparently had been dumped about 22 years ago. Freeman began a 10-day cleanup project

Nov. 12 under DNR auspices.

James Reyburn, a DNR toxic waste specialist, said it was decided to avoid publicity which might generate unnecessary alarm among persons living in the neighborhood.

Jack Thorsen, director of the department's hazardous waste section, said public disclosure might have interfered with Freeman's work.

"Although our hazardous waste section chief in Madison knew of this problem and decided it was not critical and therefore (had) no reason to make it public, it still should have been brought to my attention," Besadny said.

"Normally it is our policy to put out a general news release so people do not get alarmed when they hear the news," he said. "It is important that we keep them informed."

Reyburn said DNR solid waste specialist David Edwards discovered the chemicals in rusting drums while inspecting a dump in the Town of Wayne.

Some of the drums, he said, were on a dairy farm adjoining the dump.

Some were broken open. The company was notified two days later.

The company said its tests showed the drums' contents are not hazardous to the public, Reyburn said.

The DNR has not certified the company's tests, he added.

Nor was there any immediate confirmation that the tests had been certified by an independent laboratory.

Russell Cerk, manufacturing director of the company's plant at Saukville, said there was no reason for the company to notify the public because its tests showed the chemicals were not dangerous to anyone.

"We're no Hooker Chemical," he said, referring to a company whose waste chemicals are blamed for contaminating soil and dwellings in the Love Canal neighborhood of Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Eight truckloads of jellied resins and rusted scrap, along with 30 cubic yards of dirt from a crusted-over pond of liquid wastes, were shipped to a licensed landfill site in Germantown, Reyburn said.

Reyburn said the company's evaluation of the wastes was accepted because of Freeman's good reputation.

Gerald L. Schwebke, a Freeman chemist, serves on a state task force on hazardous wastes.

No independent samples were taken for analysis because of the cost involved and because there was "no imminent hazard," Thorsen said.

Cerk said most of the polyesters were thought to have been burned in a fire about five months after the barrels were dumped at the Lowell Martin property in 1958 by a Freeman hauler who paid Martin \$150.

"The fire probably was set," Reyburn said.

Cerk said the flammable waste, at the time it was dumped, would have been considered hazardous under today's regulations.

Cerk and Reyburn said no information was released on the discovery because it was feared news media would report the situation inaccurately, causing public concern which could interfere with the cleanup.

"We figured we should get it out of there before we got some bad publicity," Cerk said. "Had I not removed them, no one would ever have known."

Political contribu-
tions donated by
lawyers and doctors,
Director Roger Rebb
percent of the 298
contributing

contributions to candidates:

- Support of incumbents who have favorable voting records on dairying;
- Determination of what kind of support candidates have given dairy farmers.

He said that C-Tape contribution is the key to catching Congressional attention on dairy issues.

The C-Tape support in the November elections went to 223 victorious House candidates and 59 victorious Senate candidates.

Rutherford said dairy farmers have one major issue facing them in the new Congress — the enactment of the 1981 farm bill, a four-year program, which is expected to be passed by this spring or summer.

"The one major dairy provision as part of the farm bill is the price support level it will have for milk and dairy products," he said.

Rutherford said there will be a dairy price support program since it is part of permanent farm law and because Congress wants a working program.

"That leaves the question, what is the proper price level for your products," he said. "Some feed the current overproduction in this country is the result of high price supports, but they don't recognize that milk production is up and with the general economy in

trouble people have stayed on farms, and most important, other sectors of agriculture haven't been doing too well.

"Dairy has been a fairly stable and, hopefully, a profitable enterprise for the past couple of years when compared with the rest of agriculture. This has kept people in the dairy business and encouraged a few people to come into the business so as a result we have 2 or 3 percent too much milk in the country. When that happens, price levels are in jeopardy."

Dairy price supports are at 80 percent of parity, which means they are at 80 percent of the full parity price farmers would have if the dairy economy was in line with the non-farm economy.

If supports prices should drop to the 75 percent level as they could in October 1981, milk prices would be 90 cents a hundred pounds or about 2 cents a quart under current levels, Rutherford said.

DNR chief to probe 'secret' cleanup

From staff and wire service reports

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is an "open" agency and doesn't hide dangerous situations from the public, the agency's secretary, C.D. Besadny, said Sunday.

Besadny was responding to a published report Sunday that DNR officials worked privately this year with a chemical company in Washington County to dispose hazardous chemicals dumped on a dairy farm.

No written report on the waste dumpings or their cleanup by the Freeman Chemical Corp. was made to the agency's headquarters in Madison, The Milwaukee Journal reported Sunday.

The chemicals were reportedly dumped some 22 years ago on property adjacent to the town of Wayne's dump west of West Bend, and were found by a DNR employee this summer. A DNR hazardous waste specialist, James Reyburn, was quoted as saying the chemicals were tested by the chemical company and found to present no health risk.

The wastes, the tests showed, were polyesters left from the manufacture of glass fiber for boat hulls. Reyburn reportedly said he accepted the tests by the chemical company because the company had a good reputation.

The chemicals were contained in about 80 drums that were found July 22 during an inspection of the town's dump. The company was contacted two days later and 10-day cleanup began Nov. 12. The jellied chemicals, dirt from a pond containing liquid waste, and scrap were taken to a licensed landfill in Germantown.

The DNR officials involved in the cleanup said they worked privately with the chemical company because they "were afraid the press would report it inaccurately, cause public alarm and interfere with the cleanup," the newspaper's report said.

Reyburn said it was decided to avoid publicity which might generate unnecessary alarm among persons in the neighborhood of the dump.

Besadny, who was not head of the DNR at the time of the incident, said reviewing the matter would be "the first thing I do" when he reports to his office Monday, adding that it is unwise for the department to conceal such information from the public.

"Although our hazardous waste section chief in Madison knew of this problem and decided it was not critical and therefore (had) no reason to make it public, it still should have been brought to my attention," Besadny said.



Controversial City Hall

LAND USE AND PARK DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON COUNTY
WEST BEND, WISCONSIN

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DEC 22 11 39 AM '80

M E M O

TO: Herbert F. Wolf, Land Use & Park Dept. Ass't. Administrator

FROM: Tom R. Johnson, Land Use Inspector

DATE: December 8, 1980

RE: Martin Farm - Dump Site
Town of Wayne, Section 22

On 12/8/80 I visited the dump site with a member of the Martin family. Two large metal "United Wastes" dumpsters remained at the top of the ravine in which approximately 80 barrels of polyester resins and filtering materials were dumped. The materials were found by Dave Edwards, Solid Waste Specialist-D.N.R., at a earlier date.

The dumpsters were filled with the barrels, hardened resins, and some soils from the immediate area.

When I entered the ravine, a paint thinner type odor was evident. The ravine sloped downward toward a kettle type depression. The slope was approximately 20-25%. Soil maps indicate a gravel vein in the dump site area.

The kettle contained two small pools or ponds. It appeared the ponds still contained some of the waste material. My only recommendation would be to remove all materials from these two ponds.

I feel the D.N.R. acted in a responsible and swift manner. Outside interference could have resulted in a substantial delay of time in the proper removal of this waste.

Tom R. Johnson-Land Use Inspector

"Citizens are our eyes, ears, and chief group of supporters," Besadny said. "They can help us locate hazardous waste, but they also can support DNR efforts to get this waste placed in safe and proper sites in the first place."

Besadny used the Washington County example to emphasize to his field directors the need for prompt communications of hazardous waste incidents. Early Monday he contacted the directors, their hazardous waste staffs and information personnel by conference phone.

Regarding, the Washington County incident, Besadny said he was satisfied with a report presented him by Jack Thorsen, chief of the DNR's hazardous waste section. Thorsen said the waste was properly analyzed, transported and disposed safely at a licensed disposal site near Milwaukee.

"In analyzing this kind of waste," Thorsen continued, "DNR was concerned that the waste might catch fire or that metal compounds in the waste might contaminate water supplies."

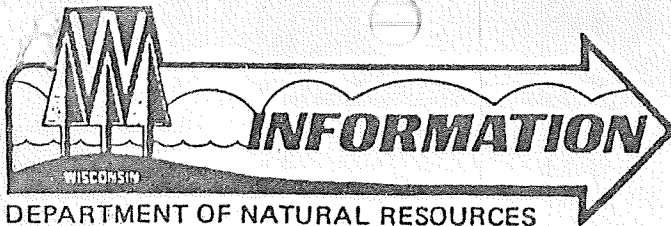
A fire at the waste site 22 years ago burned the flammable wastes and independent lab analysis showed that the metal content in the waste was very low.

"In fact," Thorsen said, "These wastes were not hazardous." "Once we determined that there was no significant human health or environmental threat, the case was handled routinely," Thorsen said. "We found the wastes, determined they were not hazardous, found out who was responsible and arranged to have the wastes safely cleaned up," he continued.

"The landowner, the responsible firm, local town officials and the waste site operators all knew what kind of waste they were handling. The company took the waste to a licensed hazardous waste disposal site, even though the material wasn't hazardous. The DNR was quite pleased that the waste was handled properly," Thorsen concluded.

Copies of correspondences from Freeman Chemical (Port Washington) and the independent testing lab, Anderson Laboratories (Milwaukee), were reviewed by the DNR's hazardous waste staff in Madison before the waste was transported to the Waste Management landfill in Germantown.

For more information, contact: Jack Thorsen, Chief, Hazardous Waste Management, (608)266-7596.



DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Box 7921 Madison, WI 53707

Waste Cleanup Handled Properly, Besadny Says

MADISON, WI--Department of Natural Resources hazardous waste employees acted properly by arranging for a prompt cleanup of barrels left in a Washington County farm field, DNR Secretary C.D. "Buzz" Besadny said today.

But the DNR failed to communicate the sensitivity of the situation internally and notify the public and the press about the effort, he said.

"Improper waste disposal--especially chemical waste--is an issue that is in the news every day," Besadny said. "The public and media are interested. The DNR has an obligation to keep the public informed on how we go about the job of protecting our environment."

Besadny rejected a newspaper suggestion that the DNR acted "secretly" once discovering 80 drums discarded on a Town of Wayne (Wash. Co.) farm in 1958. The landowner, the responsible firm, local town officials and the waste site operator all know what was happening, he said.

"However, more extensive notification should have taken place both inside and outside the agency," Besadny said. "The department will draft guidelines to see that there is proper notification in the future. We represent the public interest and the public should know what DNR is doing," he said.

"The most important point to remember is that the DNR acted promptly once it discovered the waste," Besadny said. "Our hazardous waste experts first determined the material did not threaten public health or safety and then set about the task of getting it cleaned up."

At the same time, Besadny emphasized that DNR is eager to receive reports of illegal or improper disposal of hazardous wastes and is hopeful Wisconsin will enact necessary legislation to provide for safe waste disposal sites.

(more)

DNR's excuses on Freeman incident seem a little weak

By FRANK RYAN
United Press International

C.D. Besadny, the new head of the Department of Natural Resources, is incorrect if he thinks communication with the public is the only problem with a recent, mishandled cleanup of chemical wastes.

Eighty drums of jelled polyester fiber, apparently discarded 22 years ago, were discovered by a DNR inspector in a Washington County dump last summer. Some of the drums were broken and material had leaked out.

The DNR's southeastern district participated in a cleanup with the Freeman Chemical Co., Port Washington, which dumped the chemicals in the first place. Even though local officials were notified about the discovery of the chemicals and the DNR's assistance, the general public and some in the DNR hierarchy — including Besadny — were not notified.

The reason for the hush-up, the DNR said, was to prevent public alarm.

A Milwaukee newspaper (the Journal) heard about the cleanup and published it. Besadny, according to a DNR source, then chewed out southeastern district DNR personnel responsible for the way the situation

Commentary

was handled.

The DNR, he said, "failed to communicate the sensitivity of the situation internally and to notify the public and the press about the effort."

Besadny's statement speaks for itself. When the health of the public might be at stake, public concern, maybe even alarm, is justified. It has a way of making chemical-dumping companies and government officials responsive.

But more important in this situation is that the DNR did not conduct its own independent tests of whether the chemicals dumped in Washington County were toxic.

The Freeman Chemical Co. took six samples from the site while a DNR employee looked on, and the company chose the laboratory to test them. They were ruled safe, by the way.

The DNR did not follow the samples — four from drums and two from the soil — all the way through the testing process and did not send any to the State Hygiene Laboratory so it could make its own judgment.

DNR spokesman John Nelson said his agency agreed to the procedure because the laboratory was reputable

and had done some work for the state.

"We are satisfied the tests are valid," W. Jeffrey Smoller, another DNR spokesman, said. "It (the laboratory) is a reputable firm."

Such safety tests, if conducted by the DNR, would have cost only about \$100-\$150, Smoller said. He said the DNR would have tested the chemicals "if there was an obvious, imminent public health threat and obviously was a case of such a nature that it would have resulted in litigation."

In other words, if the DNR felt legal action was in order against the chemical company, the DNR would have conducted the tests itself. DNR experts, without its own tests, feel the material is inert, Smoller said. It has since been dumped in a properly licensed landfill site, he said.

The point is, however, that the DNR should have done its own testing no matter how reputable the laboratory is. After all, the laboratory had been chosen by the company that dumped the material in the first place. And there could have been a mistake.

If Smoller is correct, it would have cost the state a pittance — only \$100 to \$150 to conduct tests.

There are some public officials in Wisconsin who spend that much for lunch.

AMC implements its 'survival plan' with new \$250 million line of credit

DETROIT (UPI) — Armed with a vote of confidence from bankers, American Motors Corp. needs only the approval of its shareholders to complete its survival plan.

AMC said Tuesday it has negotiated a new line of up to \$250 million in bank credit over the next five years — a key portion of the complex transaction that will join it more closely to its French partner Renault.

It was a significant turnabout from this summer, when bankers cut off AMC's \$150 million credit line at the \$90 million then outstanding and called for a restructuring of the firm's debt.

"We are pleased with this new

\$200 million to AMC's new product plans.

AMC has pledged nearly \$1 billion to modernize its car and Jeep vehicle fleets through the first half of this decade.

Under the transaction, Renault will purchase 46 percent of outstanding AMC stock and could eventually extend its holdings as high as 59 percent. One condition of the deal was that AMC obtain at least \$200 million in new bank credit.

The overall transaction will be submitted to shareholders for approval at a special meeting in Detroit next Tuesday.

An AMC spokesman

An earlier partnership arrangement gave Renault its current 4.7 percent portion of the 32 million outstanding AMC shares and provided AMC with funds to build a fuel-efficient Renault-designed passenger car at its Kenosha, Wis., assembly plant in 1982.

It is believed AMC will use the new funding from Renault to help it produce a new generation of lighter, more fuel-efficient Jeep vehicle in 1983.

An AMC spokesman said the new credit line was negotiated with a group of about 18 U.S. and foreign banks.

...the Beatles
...of the 1960s,
and young people the world
over identified with their music
and with the songs that Lennon

...his ...
him because ...
could exist in a world
her.

A gunman has struck him
down. A part of our past is gone.
Taken away without reason.

Bible ...
ment has set ...
ment of women in our ...

If the clergy were honest

Secrecy never is wise

MAYBE SOME officials of the State Department of Natural Resources learned a lesson this weekend about doing things in secret.

A few DNR officials cooperated this summer with a Milwaukee area chemical firm in keeping quiet the fact that an inspector had found 80 drums of chemicals in a dump near West Bend. Rather than make the find public, the state officials and the firm got together and secretly had it cleaned-up.

BUT AS always happens in a case like this, the word leaked out.

Consequently, the DNR and the firm — the Freeman Chemical Corp. — wound up on the front page of the state's largest newspaper while many wondered out loud what the two were trying to hide.

A simple release, telling the public about the problem and what was going to be done about it, would have avoided the rash of embarrassing publicity that has now resulted.

THE DNR toxic waste specialist who made the decision to keep the matter secret said he did so because he didn't want to unduly alarm the citizens who lived in the area.

What he and many others forget is that the citizens are perfectly capable of understanding the problems and making their own decisions about matters that could affect their lives.

THEY DESERVE to be told the problem and given an explanation of why it happened and how it will be solved.

Keeping this information from them simply serves to increase the mistrust that many people already have in their government. The best way to solve any problem, it should be apparent by now, is to be as honest and open about it as possible.

That's the premise on which our government was founded. And that's the only way it can work.

Anotk

WASHINGTON — Y
have to know your stuff t
the mailroom at the
these days.

"Sarge, where do these
anti-aircraft missiles go?"

"Let's see. I think they
posed to be sent to Jordan.
a minute ... the anti-airc-
siles go to Saudi Arabia, t
tank missiles go to Jordan.
ly, it doesn't make any diff-
because they're probably al
shipped to Iraq anyway."

"Why don't we send th-
rectly to Iraq and save th-
age?"

"Because we're not supp-
send anything to Iraq while
at war with Iran."

"There's a box of aviatio-
parts over here for Iran. Sho-
ship it off to Tehran?"

"No. Don't send anything t-
until they release the ho-
Then we'll mail all the box-
there so they can fight the
against Iraq."

"How come we're shippin-