

Pollution - CARGILL EPA and village disagree on latest Cargill findings *1979*

By PATRICIA BOMBARD

CARPENTERSVILLE—An Illinois Environmental Protection Agency official is "confident" that the source of a discharge into the Fox River coming from the Cargill, Inc. chemical plant has been found.

Village officials outspokenly disagree with the EPA findings, however. In any case steps are apparently being taken to monitor the discharge to prevent further pollution.

According to EPA field investigator John Raevouri, the discharge problem was caused by a leak in a fire protection water line.

Raevouri said the water from the leak flows across the ground and into the plant's storm water system. It then runs through a settling tank where it has been picking up contaminants that were carried through the discharge pipe into the river.

Raevouri was at the plant site last week and said Monday that he was shown the broken water line by Cargill officials. He said he is satisfied that it is the source of the water being discharged. He said the water coming from the pipe is clean, but the settling tank was exceedingly dirty because it was not cleaned during the winter. The contaminants were mixing with the water and were carried to the river.

However, village officials, including Village Engineer Carl Caspers and Village Trustee Mary Srajer, dispute Raevouri's opinion.

Caspers said Monday that he disagrees with Raevouri on the basis of his observation of the water flow-

ing from the discharge pipe. He said he has seen a volume of water amounting to as much as several hundred gallons a minute pouring from the pipe.

Caspers said that after learning of Raevouri's conclusion last Friday, he and several other village officials visited the plant thinking that the leak in the fire protection line must

be severe to contribute that much water. He said they "were very concerned" because if that much water were leaking from the line, the plant would have to be shut down and all flammable materials evacuated.

What they found, according to Caspers was "a minor leak under high pressure" with water flowing at

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afterburner to be installed at the plant site. again, he will final sample to verify it.

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the rate of two to three gallons a minute.

Keith Long, Cargill's plant supervisor, agreed that the amount of water leaking from the pipe is about three gallons a minute. He said the leak was discovered in early March and reported to Carpentersville Fire Department officials at that time.

Long said the leaking water caused the flow that has been passing through the dirty settling tank. He said the tank is generally cleaned twice a year and is being cleaned now.

Caspers, however, disagrees that the leak is the source of the discharge. Referring to the leak Monday Caspers said, "it is not sufficient to carry the contaminant to the river that is the village's concern."

Caspers also said that village personnel sampled the discharge water at 9:20 a.m. Friday, at which time "a substantial flow" was observed coming from the pipe. He said the sample was tested and indicated "heavy contamination."

Also, when he joined other village officials in visiting the plant at 1:30 that afternoon, another sample was taken. At that time, said Caspers, on-

ly a few drops of water were coming out of the pipe.

Another sample was taken on Saturday morning and at that time there was also a "substantial flow which indicated heavy contamination," according to Caspers.

Were the discharge water actually coming from the leak in the pipe, Caspers pointed out, the flow would have been the same each time the pipe was checked.

Raevouri, on the other hand, said Monday that in his estimation the water leaving the broken water line equals the amount flowing from the discharge pipe.

He said he is sure that no water is being added as a result of the processes at the plant itself. "I'm confident that the water going in and coming out were the same. I'm satisfied that there is no process water going into the tank," said Raevouri.

Raevouri said the plant officials agreed to clean the settling tank and repair the broken water line as soon as possible. Long said fixing the line will amount to a "pretty major expense" and will be done sometime next month.

Asked about the finding Monday, Village Trustee Mary Srajer, who has filed complaints with the EPA regarding Cargill, said, "I can't believe this."

According to Caspers, an agreement has been reached under which Village Sewer Superintendent Ken Swartz will continue to take samples of the discharge water and will also receive some of the samples taken by Cargill.

Caspers said the village has now "been assured cooperation from Cargill and we hope it will extend to the point where the discharge will not contaminate in the future."

Raevouri said that when the tests conducted by the village on the discharge water show that it is clean again, he will come out and take a final sample to verify it.

Cargill hearing tonight

CARPENTERSVILLE—The Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing tonight at 8 p.m. in the Village Hall regarding a variance request by Cargill chemical plant.

The variance requested concerns a 65-foot tower needed for a catalytic afterburner to be installed at the plant site.

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