

# IEPA, Cargill look to halt discharge into Fox River

By KATHY HARGER

Rainwater mixed with a black substance spilled into the Fox River Wednesday from a discharge pipe near the Cottage Avenue industrial park.

Village Engineer Carl Caspers and sewer plant operator Bill Boone inspected Cargill Inc.'s discharge pipe soon after a police scanner notified village officials of the spill.

The chemical — found to contain normal pH, a low number of suspended solids and a chemical oxygen demand above permitted levels — was emptying into the river at a rate of 10 gallons a minute, according to Caspers.

"It's nothing spectacular," Boone remarked. "It's about normal for sewage. But I think you definitely wouldn't want it going into the river."

According to Illinois Environmental Protection Agency officials, the continuation of that type of discharge cannot be condoned.

IEPA field investigator John Raevouri said talks with his supervisors determined the discharge would not be allowed to continue.

There are metals and as well as stagnant water in the spill, he said, after comparing the odor and preliminary tests of sample discharges.

**BEFORE HE** examined the chemical spill, Raevouri said. "If it smells bad and looks sort of bad, the spill is too much."

Raevouri said he called Cargill's plant superintendent, Jerry Dorset, after he learned of the spill. Dorset told him the plant had shut off the valve which controls its discharge pipe, as Caspers suggested.

There are two theories as to what

caused the spill. Dorset said the black discharge occurred because the plant was testing its fire protection system, as required by the village's fire department.

Therefore, he concluded, the black color came from the stagnant water which had been in the fire hydrants since last fall.

Caspers said the spill probably resulted when the previous night's rain rushed into Cargill's storm sewer system and picked up the chemical substance in its holding tanks.

The IEPA preliminary findings indicate both the explanations apply.

**THE HOLDING** tanks should be cleaned as soon as possible, Caspers advised.

"As soon as we get a dry streak, we'll clean it out," Dorset said. "We do it every year in May or June."

If rain is expected and the firm cleans out the system, the plant superintendent said it would jeopardize the fire protection of the plant.

Caspers disagreed: "Wouldn't it make sense to empty the tanks and clean them out before rain came and washed into the river again?"

**THERE IS** a history of actions between Cargill, the IEPA and the Illinois Pollution Control Board, beginning in 1979 when the IEPA fined the firm \$10,000 for alleged air pollution.

Since that time, Cargill has invested \$250,000 in air pollution control devices to reduce the odor emissions.

Cargill is currently under an IPCB order to correct its storm sewer system, and to cease and desist from releasing contaminants into the river.

To comply with the order, the firm is about to begin installing the system. Construction is scheduled to begin next week, pending any delays in receiving the necessary building permit.

In 1980, Cargill was found in violation of IEPA water pollution regulations by the IPBC.

**AT THAT** time, the plant received a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit which specifies plant officials must notify the IEPA within 24 hours

## C'ville okays water main plan

By KATHY HARGER

**CARPENTERSVILLE** — A \$120,000 water main construction plan was approved by the village board Monday night.

The engineer firm of Baxter and Woodman of Crystal Lake designed the project, with separate costs totaling \$90,000.

Together with the construction work, the project is expected to improve service and fire protection to Rivers End subdivision and the westside of the village.

Homart's (Spring Hill Mall developers) willingness to serve fee will pay for \$80,000 of the construction work and Valspar Corp., a chemical manufacturer in Cottage

Avenue industrial park, is expected to contribute \$40,000. The project is specifically designed to improve the area's access to water for fire protection.

"We tried to do this a couple of years ago," Village Engineer Carl Caspers said. "But McWhorter (recently purchased by Valspar) wouldn't help out with the expenses."

"Once, a valve broke," he said, explaining the reasoning behind the improvements. "This will give the area two sources to receive water. It'll improve the volume of the flow, not necessarily the pressure."

According to Caspers, the modifications will include a 12-inch

water extension to the east side of the river on Cottage Avenue. A section of the eight-inch line in the industrial park, which now deadends on the east side of Cottage Avenue, will be extended south on Cottage to Wisconsin Street.

Also in the area, Caspers continued, an eight and 12-inch line will be extended across the river, running from Lake Marian Road to River-view Drive.

Additionally, a 10-inch line will replace a four-inch line on Lincoln Avenue. With the project's modifications, it will connect at Fox River Drive and extend south on Lincoln to an existing 6-inch line.

# Dist. 300 teachers get pay hikes



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if its discharge exceeds a COD concentration of 50 milligrams per liter.

The permit additionally requires Cargill to monitor its own discharge.

According to Raevouri, Wednesday's spill constitutes a violation of the permit regulations.

"Cargill is prepared to do anything to meet state standards," Dorset said. "We want to eliminate the source with the new system."

In any case, the firm is planning to appeal the permit June 11 and 12 before the IPCB because it wants more time to comply with standards.

"I hope people will be a little tolerable of this until we get the system done," Dorset added.

**TWO EMPLOYEES** from Carpentersville Ready Mix, another firm in the industrial park, were not speaking in terms of tolerance Wednesday morning.

They said Cargill officials had been down to the pipe earlier that morning, placing absorbent pillows under the discharge pipe.

"It's poison," charged one Ready Mix employee. "You ought to see it some mornings. I feel like calling the Fox."

Caspers said the discharge was

missing the pillows completely. According to Raevouri, the pillows are only sufficient to filter oil, not the black watery substance.

Dorset said the pillows were placed at the scene of the spill that morning. He said a worker checks the discharge every morning, oftentimes placing the pillows under the pipe.

The flow into the river probably started with the rains Tuesday night and continued all morning, Caspers speculated.

**"IF THE** spill was outside of the bounds that the water permit calls for," Raevouri said, "we could consider taking some kind of action."

The type of the action would be a repeat of 1979-80 citings, hearings and appeal process, he said it could lead to "a double suit on the same grounds."

"It (the preliminary finding) indicates the discharge exceeds acceptable limits at this time," he concluded. "At the completion of the construction project, it should bring the discharge into compliance...that will have to be seen."

"Depending on the test results," Dorset said, "we'll do what we have to in accordance with the state's standards."

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