

pert who reviewed the report.

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POLLUTION - CARGILL

Cargill neighbors ask assurances on stack

By Garry Winter

CARPENTERSVILLE — Concerns over who will monitor emissions from Cargill Inc.'s incinerator smokestack and the security of the monitoring system were raised Wednesday night by Carpentersville residents.

Those who spoke at an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency hearing in Carpentersville Middle School focused their questions and comments on who monitors the system and how the IEPA will

know if there is tampering that bypasses the safeguards.

Cargill, which has an interim permit to operate a hazardous liquid waste incinerator at its Chemical Products Division in Carpentersville, has applied for permanent operating permits from the IEPA and federal Environmental Protection Agency. Wednesday's public hearing was part of the procedure required in processing the permit request. About two dozen people, including some Carpentersville village offi-

cials, attended the meeting and eight presented comments and questions.

At the heart of the residents concerns was that they did not trust Cargill to live up to permit requirements.

Several of those who spoke charged the company with having a "bad track record" of odor complaints, local fire code violations, fines from the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and an explosion which led to a neighborhood evacuation

at the time.

The permit requires monitoring equipment to assure that stack emissions come within parameters set by the IEPA based on a test burn in the stack, said Ted Dragovich, an IEPA engineer who wrote the permit conditions. Conditions include that 99.99 percent of each combustible in the liquid waste is burned in the incinerator, and that the monitoring equipment automatically shuts down the incinerator when any of the conditions exceed IEPA's op-

erating parameters.

DRAGOVICH said that the test burn was conducted by an independent firm hired by Cargill, but said the two combustibles hardest to burn were used in the test and the incinerator passed.

Audience members asked what assurances there are that Cargill will operate within the 99.99 percent combustible factor.

"We monitored all conditions in the trial burn," Dragovich re-

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Stack

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sponded, and added "those are the only conditions we'll let them operate."

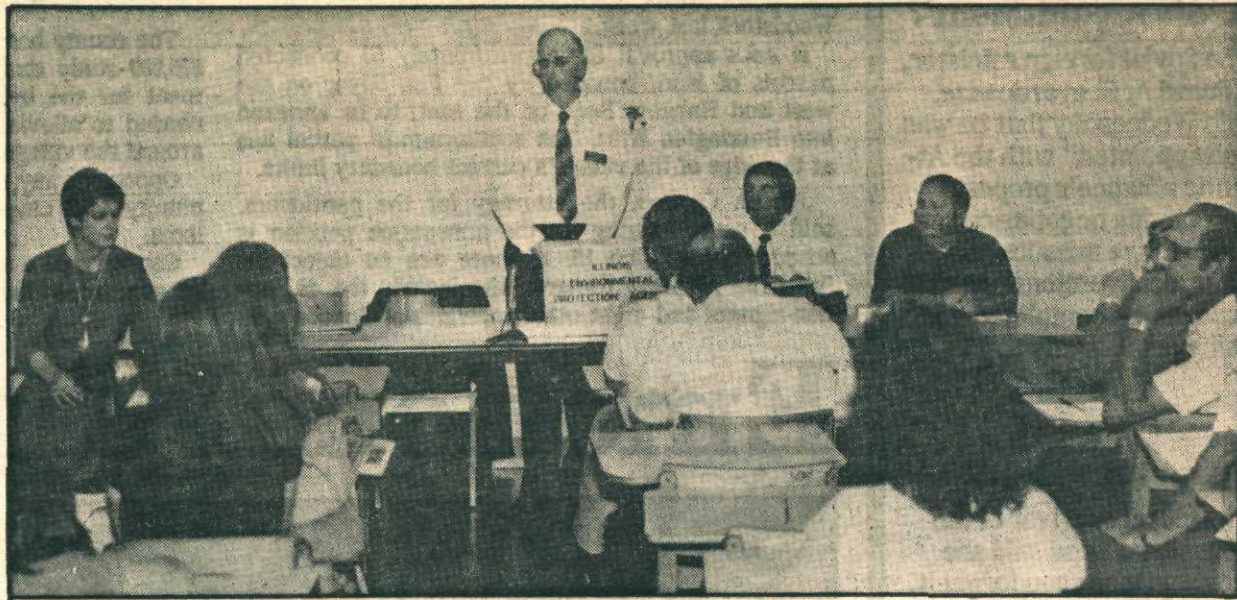
"We can see when they're operating outside our regulations."

In answering further questions on security, IEPA officials acknowledged the agency will not station someone at the plant. They also said maintenance and calibration of the monitoring equipment will be done by an independent contractor hired by Cargill.

They said the monitoring data must be constantly recorded so that IEPA will know if there's been a break in the monitoring. IEPA may also inspect the facility at any time, either announced or unannounced.

Regulations do not permit the IEPA to hire a company to monitor Cargill, although the agency could have its own people do it, said Larry Eastep, manager of the IEPA's permit section.

IEPA has already heavily fined another company which did shut off monitoring equipment on an incinerator, the audience was told. In addition, that company was forced to accept an IEPA agent and a representative of a local citizens group on the site full-time



Courier-News Photo by Jack Putignano

Hearing officer John Williams, standing, takes comments Wednesday at a public hear-

ing the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency held on Cargill Inc.'s incinerator.

stall remote monitoring computers in the IEPA's field office in Maywood.

Even if permit conditions are met, residents Bilita Jacobsen and Marcia Klymko expressed concern that carcinogens would still be released in the .01 percent of waste that would come through the stack.

THE TWO claimed that Carpentersville has higher incidents of cancer and asthma than other communities. If the permit is ap-

proved, Jacobsen said she wanted to see conducted an odor survey, a health survey, a birth defects registration and an annual test burn of the incinerator using Cargill's actual wastes.

Another concern was that some waste products are dumped into the Fox River. Larry Dievert, Elgin's water resources director, said he wanted the permit to require notification of communities downriver whenever there's a spill into the river. He also

wanted monitoring of Cargill's stormwater, which drains into the river.

Elgin gets municipal water from the Fox River. Dievert said later there have been no problems yet, but he wants assurances for the city's 60,000 water users.

A decision on the permits is about two months away. Hearing officer John Williams said he will accept written testimony until June 30. It will be another month after that before a decision is announced.

F. COURIER

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