

DRAFT

Appendix T

Westinghouse Transformer Spill Documents

On November 11, 1975 at approximately 6:10PM I was alerted by Mr. Hildreth of Chemung County Health Department of a complaint, by a citizen, of an oil film on the waters of Coldbrook, Town of Southport. Meeting with Mr. Hildreth and Mr. Manges of the Health Department by 7:00PM, we checked the stream for a source of the film. Samples taken at a culvert located at Laurentian Place showed the most results, with an eddy causing a small gathering of oil at this point. The only two potential sources were checked out and samples taken at the only drain emptying into this section of the brook and at a point at the brook's source, a small pond.

Due to darkness and the fact that the oil was of minute amounts, the investigation was discontinued after some two hours until daylight, at which time the Health Dept. would follow it up and, if necessary, contact me at Avon.

In the course of their investigation on the 12th, they located a potential source at an old manufacturing plant, undergoing remodeling as a dry storage facility. The G & R Machine Equipment Corp. of 151 Chandler Ave., Buffalo had contracted to dismantle and remove machinery and salvage metal from this facility recently acquired by the Westinghouse Corporation. It was alleged by Mr. Scheifen, a westinghouse employee, that G & R personnel had drained at least one of a number of large transformers of its oil content.

I interviewed, on November 13th, members of the Westinghouse and G & R staff and obtained voluntary sworn statements from

Mr. Stephen Dmochowski and Mr. Julius Kramer, both of G & R , that Mr. Kramer, as job boss, had instructed Mr. Dmochowski to remove the drain cock from a transformer.

At the time of the draining the transformer was standing at the edge of a shipping platform and the ground below contained an old storm water drainage system. It is probable that the oil entered the surface water drainage in this manner.

On inspecting the site and taking samples of oil from many locations, inside and outside the grounds of Westinghouse, it appeared to me that no less than four transformers had been drained at four separate points along the shipping platform, and one more had been accidentally dropped and leaked oil at a fifth spot.

Three of the above mentioned four drain sites could have gotten into the drain system. Dye testing is under way to fully establish if this is indeed the case. Attached maps and charts illustrate sample sites and locations of heavy oil deposits.

Estimates of the amount of oil which may have entered Coldbrook, (which is a tributary of the Chemung River) cannot be determined until the initial dye test is complete.

It would appear that total oil lost, if it should prove out that all five sites are transformer oil, would be in the area of 900 gallons. Of this I would judge not more than 400 gallons could have entered the drain. However, indications along Coldbrook are not enough to corroborate this estimate. Brook tracings are slight.

The Health Department has shipped all samples to Albany and will continue dye testing. Of thirteen transformers involved in this salvage operation, I believe six have been removed from the premises. I have seven under seizure pending analysis of the oil content and previously mentioned oil stains, indicate five of the missing six were drained, either by intent or accident.

Ideally, I would like a cross-match of residual oil in the drained transformers, the oil soaked earth and the oil in Coldbrook. With the emptied transformers removed from the premises, a match of the Coldbrook contamination with the residual ground stains is the best we can hope for. I feel that without the establishing of a drain pattern by dye test, a cross-match of oil samples would be the only legal proof we could muster for prosecution.

MAPLE AVE (RTE 427)

LAURENTIAN

TO CHESTER
RIVER
3 1/4 - 1
MILES

(15)

(14)

CULVERT
(4')

← ABOUT 300 YDS

(13) COLD BROOK

MILLER
POND

WEED CROKED
TRAINWAY

CULVERT

(18) OLD MANHOLE

FENCE

WESTMANS
HOUSE
GROUNDS

(12)

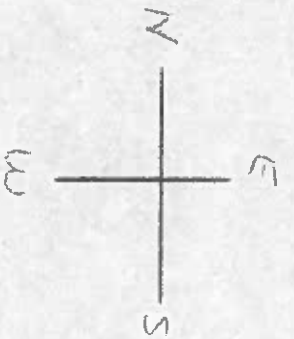
TOWARDS
BUILDINGS
28, 32

DISTANCE FROM
BUILDINGS TO
COLD BROOK - APPROX.
900 YARDS

FROM FENCE TO
COLD BROOK - APPROX
250 YARDS

ELMIRA LINE
←

90
08



TO FENCE

NO SAMPLE
TAKEN TRANSFER #9

WATER
PIPE

BROKEN TRANSFER
SPILL SITE

SITE OF
FIRST DYE
TEST

TI
BUILDING 32

4 5

DISTANCE
ABOUT 6'

LOADING
RAIL

LOADING RAIL (BELOW GROUND LEVEL)

CURB
LINE
SUMP

LOADING PLATFORM

DISTANCE
ABOUT 2 1/2'

BUILDING 28

DISTANCE
ABOUT 10'

<u>SAMPLE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>PHOTO</u>
1	Oil Switch, Bldg. 32	
2	Transformer Nbr. 10	
3	Transformer Nbr. 14	6-A
4	Transformer Nbr. 15	
5	Transformer Nbr. 16	
6	Transformer Nbr. 13	
7	North Sample, Bldg. 28	2 & 7
8	Transformer Nbr. 11	
9	Center Sample	5 & 6
10	South Soil Sample, Bldg. 28	4
11	Sump at Loading Platform	
12	Skimmer	
13	Coldbrook - Upstream	
14	Outfall Culvert - Coldbrook	
15	Laurentian & Coldbrook	8 & 5-A
16	Miller Pond Outlet	
17	Lower Loading Dock (Dye Test)	
18	Manhole Outside Fence	
19	Same as Sample 7 on 11/13/75	

Sample 15 taken 11/12/75 - tested negative PCB

VOLUNTARY STATEMENT

PAGE ONE OF TWO

STATE NEW YORKCOUNTY CHEMUNGCITY or Town HORSEHEADSDATE 11-13-75TIME 2:40 PMPLACE HORSEHEADS STATE POLICEI, JULIUS KRAMER being duly sworn, am 54 years of age and my address is 18 AKA LANE WILLIAMSVILLE N.Y.Occupation SUPERVISOR - G+R MACHINERY DEGREE OF EDUCATION H.S. 3YRSI have been duly warned by CHARLES A. WINANT, who has identified himself as AN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION OFFICER

that I do not have to make any statement at all, and that any statement I make may be used in evidence against me on the trial for the offense concerning which this statement is herein made. Without promise or hope of reward, without fear or threat of physical harm. I have been told I can have a lawyer, but I expressly waive all my rights to counsel before freely giving the following voluntary statement to the aforesaid person.

Q: How long have you been employed by G+R Machinery?

A: Six to 7 years, plus 10 years with affiliated company.

Q: How long have you been at the Westinghouse Site?

A: About two weeks.

Q: On Tuesday, Nov. 11th did you tell Mr. DMOCHOWSKI to drain a transformer on the loading platform at Westinghouse?

A: Yes

Q: Did oil come out?

A: Yes.

Q: How many wet transformers do you handle?

A: This is the first time.

Q: How many transformers were drained on the job?

A: One

Q: Why?

A: I wasn't thinking except of weight.

Q: Do you have knowledge of draining transformers at 151 Chandler St. Buffalo?

A: I'm seldom at site, I do purchasing also.

Julius KRAMER

I, Julius KRAMER can read and write and have read this statement consisting of 2 page (s) and the facts contained therein are true and correct. I have also been told that swearing to a false statement can be held against me in a court of law.

Witness: _____

Witness: _____

Signed by

Page 1 of 2 pages.this 13th day of NOVEMBER19 75

Subscribed and sworn before me

STATE NEW YORKCOUNTY CHEMUNGCITY or Town HORSEHEADSDATE NOV. 13 1975TIME 3:02 PM PLACE HORSEHEADS STATE POLICEI, JULIUS KRAMERbeing duly sworn, am 54 years of ageand my address is 18 AVALANE WILLIAMVILLE NYOccupation SUPERVISORDEGREE OF EDUCATION H.S. 34 YEARSI have been duly warned by CHARLES A. WINANT, who has identified himself as AN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION OFFICER

that I do not have to make any statement at all, and that any statement I make may be used in evidence against me on the trial for the offense concerning which this statement is herein made. Without promise or hope of reward, without fear or threat of physical harm, I have been told I can have a lawyer, but I expressly waive all my rights to counsel before freely giving the following voluntary statement to the aforesaid person.

Q: Are you at the Buffalo office, 151 Chandler St. often?

A: Except for checking in when in Buffalo area, I'm not in the Buffalo office.

Q: Where did transformers from Westinghouse go when trucked out?

A: To the best of my knowledge, to 151 Chandler St., Buffalo.

I, JULIUS KRAMER, can read and write and have read this statement consisting of 2 page(s) and the facts contained therein are true and correct. I have also been told that swearing to a false statement can be held against me in a court of law.

Witness: _____

Witness: _____

Signed by Julius KramerPage 2 of 2 pages.this 13th day ofNOVEMBER19 75

Subscribed and sworn before me

VOLUNTARY STATEMENT

STATE NEW YORK
COUNTY CHEMUNG
CITY or Town HORSEHEADS
DATE NOV 13 1975 TIME 1:55 PM PLACE HORSEHEADS STATE POLICE
I, STEPHEN F. DMOCHOWSKI being duly sworn, am 64 years of age
and my address is 22 GIBSON ST. BUFFALO NEW YORK 14206
Occupation RIGGER-G+R MACHINERY DEGREE OF EDUCATION 7th GRADE
I have been duly warned by CHARLES A WINANT, who has identified
himself as AN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION OFFICER

that I do not have to make any statement at all, and that any statement I make may be used in evidence against me on the trial for the offense concerning which this statement is herein made. Without promise or hope of reward, without fear or threat of physical harm, I have been told I can have a lawyer, but I expressly waive all my rights to counsel before freely giving the following voluntary statement to the aforesaid person.

Q: How long have you been employed by G+R Machinery?

A: Since 1952

Q: How long have you been working at the Westinghouse site?

A: Since Monday the 10th of November

Q: When did you work on the transformers?

A: They were already unhooked, I just took it out on the loading dock.

Q: When was that?

A: Tuesday after dinner

Q: What happened then?

A: Mr Cramer the boss on the job told me to take the plug out and let the oil run out. I took the plug out and went down the cellar of the next building to work.

I, STEPHEN F. DMOCHOWSKI can read and write and have read this statement consisting of 1 page (s) and the facts contained therein are true and correct. I have also been told that swearing to a false statement can be held against me in a court of law.

Witness: Betty M. Putnam

Witness: _____

Signed by Stephen F. Dmochowski

Signed by

Page 1 of 1 pages

this 13th day of NOVEMBER 19 75

Subscribed and sworn before me

VOLUNTARY STATEMENT

STATE NEW YORK
COUNTY CHEMUNG
CITY or Town HORSEHEADS
DATE NOV. 13 1975 TIME 3:11 PM PLACE HORSEHEADS STATE POLICE
I, WILLIAM P. SCHIEFEN being duly sworn, am 59 years of age
and my address is 435 WEST CLINTON ST. ELMIRA 14901
Occupation ELECTRONIC ELECTRICIAN - WESTINGHOUSE DEGREE OF EDUCATION H.S. GRAD.
I have been duly warned by CHARLES A. WINANT, who has identified
himself as AN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION OFFICER

that I do not have to make any statement at all, and that any statement I make may be used in evidence against me on the trial for the offense concerning which this statement is herein made. Without promise or hope of reward, without fear or threat of physical harm, I have been told I can have a lawyer, but I expressly waive all my rights to counsel before freely giving the following voluntary statement to the aforesaid person.

- Q: How long have you been employed by Westinghouse?
A: 23 years.
- Q: How long have you been at this site?
A: 14 months.
- Q: Were you working on Tuesday, November 11th?
A: Yes.
- Q: Did you observe anything unusual regarding transformers?
A: I saw a transformer on the loading dock with oil coming out. I saw Mr. Kramer standing nearby. I told him he'd better shut it off, and we'd find a better location if he had to dump it. Mr. Kramer seemed a little nervous.
- Q: That was the only transformer you saw draining out?
A: Yes, but another one had the plug out.
- Q: Did you see any other oil deposits on the ground?
A: Only where a transformer had previously been knocked over.
- Q: When was that?
A: That was Thursday or Friday, certainly last week.
- Q: Do you have any knowledge where transformers are taken when they leave the site?
A: Not a bit.

I, WILLIAM P. SCHIEFEN can read and write and have read this statement consisting of 1 page (s) and the facts contained therein are true and correct. I have also been told that swearing to a false statement can be held against me in a court of law.

Witness: _____

Witness: _____

Signed by _____

Page 1 of 1 pages.

this 13th day of NOVEMBER

19 75

Subscribed and sworn before me

CHEMUNG COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NUISANCE COMPLAINT

Location Southport (T.V.C.)

Date Nov. 11, 1975

Owner _____

Complainant Clarence Walker

Address _____

Address 401 Fulton St., Elmira, N.Y.

Occupant Former Remington Rand Plant

Interviewed: Yes _____ No _____

Address S. Main St. Twn. Southport.

Phone _____

Complaint oil spill

Oil slick observed by Mr. Walker on 11-11-75 at about 4:30 PM. He notified Sheriff's Dept who contacted CO - Bill Powell who in turn advised me of situation at bridge over Laurentian Place at 5:40 PM. Mr. Walker claimed source to be old Rem. Rand plant. I met w/ Co. Charles Winant and Dick Manges of this Dept and complainant at 7:00 PM 11-11-75. Observed oil seep about shine pipe on Laurentian place and up stream caught on debris in creek. Strong smell of oil too. Took samples

Inspector's Report: 11-12-75 Investigation by Dick Manges and I revealed G & R Machine of Buffalo, N.Y. - a salvage company - to have dumped oil out of at least 2 large transformers on a loading dock of old Rem. Rand plant in the rear of plant. Mr. Schiefen, a Westinghouse electrician caught them discharging oil on ground Monday 11-10-75. He told them to cease this practice. Oil puddle (large) at base of dock which has drain and material got into storm system which then empties into Cold Brook creek. Advised Mr. Green and Mr. Houghtaling of Westinghouse of problem & took 4 photos of incident. Transformer #33 on edge of dock had valve wide open & oil had all drained out. Subject, Jules Crane, said had 6 more transformers and would take them, as is, back to Buffalo. Subject admitted it
Case Resolution Notified Avon and Conservation Officer Winant of our findings 11-11-75
Case turned over to Avon and Co Winant for appropriate legal action 11-12-75.

Follow-Up: Yes _____ No _____

Complainant Notified _____

By J. S. Hildreth
Inspector

Over ->

11/13/75 Co. Winant, Dick Manges and I continued investigation. The C.O. tagged and embargoed 6 remaining transformers. Mr. Schieffer, Manges and I took oil samples from each unit except for 1 which had no valve with which to control flow. Placed several red dye tablets at base of wall of loading dock in pit where oil "disappeared" from day before. Samples and additional photos sent to Aron, N.Y. (DEC)

11/14/75 D. Manges and I checked creek and outfall pipe for signs of dye - Negative.

11/17/75 I checked creek again - No trace of dye.

11/19/75 w/ Chris Lonn - same - Negative.

12/1/75 w/ Roger Gibb - same - Negative.

1/3/75 at Request of DEC (J. Pierson) and D. Manges - placed new dye (green) in sump adjacent to spill area. Heat coming from manhole by dock. Very little water left in it.

2/4/75 checked creek No visible sign of dye, but still quite an oil slick in some parts of creek. Sump still had green dye which was running into manhole from 1 of 3 pipes clustered together on sump side and at top of manhole. Another pipe at top on opposite side of the 3 pipes above. 2 big pipes outlets at base of manhole. dye in base of manhole. No sign of dye in oil separator or pond. No heat coming from manhole. (w/ D. Manges today, water bdy up in loading dock area where red dye placed. water & oil traces running into small 2 1/2" pipe which appears to be tied into line from sump to manhole. Took stream sample.

Pool: Few questioned Southside site when school was built in 1970s

Continued from Page 1A

led out. No one said there was contaminated soil there."

Many others involved in the decision to build the new Southside High on South Main Street can't be located, aren't talking or are dead.

Choosing the site

The old Southside school on Pennsylvania Avenue — now home to the Chemung County Human Resources Building — was landlocked, surrounded by homes and trees.

Although 20 to 26 neighboring homes, mostly behind the old school, were purchased and demolished, the school still didn't have sufficient room to expand and build athletic fields large enough to qualify for state financial aid, Zaccarine said.

In addition, the old brick building had been damaged in 1972 by storms from Hurricane Agnes, which inflicted \$290 million in damage to Chemung County alone — especially on Elmira's Southside. Meanwhile, the county's population had grown slightly from 1960 to 1970, to 51,537 from 48,706.

School officials learned of a federal grant that would finance 80 percent of the cost of building an entirely new school.

"We built an \$18 million new school with \$15 million from federal and state funds," Zaccarine said. That saved the local taxpayers a lot of money. It would have cost us more to renovate the existing school."

The district considered building the new school where Southport Correctional Facility is today, south of Cedar Street in Southport. Then the Remington Rand gift horse opened its mouth.

The project ran into problems when test wells drilled for construction purposes in 1977 showed widespread fuel oil contamination underground. Later, workers uncovered thick concrete foundations and buried storage tanks that would be costly to remove, Zaccarine said.

The test-well contamination report was received by Streeter Associates of Elmira, the construction manager for the \$18 million project.

"Hindsight is always 20-20, but certainly it should have raised some red flags back then. It seems to me that somebody was not seeing those flags."

James Hare,
Elmira council member,
6th District

"I haven't a clue on how we dealt with that," said Charlie Streeter, president of Streeter, the company that oversaw the scores of subcontractors who worked on the school. "I was here at the time, but not directly connected with the project. And none of our employees who were involved with the project are here now."

Ronald Kintz of Pine City, who served on the school board from 1969 to 1979, at times as president and vice president, said, "It seemed like a good deal for both of us" — the district and Remington Rand. The company had closed its plant in 1972.

Kintz said he did not remember any concerns about contaminated land or any reasons to suspect that the property was polluted.

It is not known if factories like the ones on the 83-acre Southside industrial site commonly used metals such as tungsten, chrome steel, beryllium and mercury — some of which are toxic and others that, in high concentrations, can cause cancer.

In the mid-1970s, however, there were neither Superfund laws nor the myriad state environmental safety regulations and mandatory tests in place now.

Contamination wasn't big issue

"Back in the 1960s and '70s nobody was required to make reasonable inquiries about underground storage tanks or possible contamination," said David Munro, an assistant New York state attorney general who works in the attorney general's environmental protection bureau.

"Today you can't stick your head in the sand. You have a duty to make a reasonable inquiry as to if the site's contaminated," Munro said.

Today, a new school requires scores of environmental tests, public hearings, archaeological studies, inspections and approval by state officials, said Barbara Boardman, project manager of the office of facilities planning for the New York State Education Department.

"We tell people today that if they want to build a new school, they have to work on it for two to three years before they can expect to break ground," Boardman said.

The ground the new Southside was built on was almost surrounded by manufacturing companies, said John Keefe, an Elmira City Council member from 1979 to 1980 who opposed construction of a new school and favored expanding the old school to preserve the local tax base.

When Southside High School was built, Keefe said, a number of industrial facilities had been located or were in operation within six blocks of the high school site. These facilities were Chemung Foundry, the Pennsylvania Railroad car shops, American LaFrance and Remington Rand.

"It's inexplicable to me as to why they would build there," said Elmira City Council member James Hare, whose council district encompasses Southside High School. Hare is a teacher at the school.

"Hindsight is always 20-20, but certainly it should have raised some red flags back then," Hare said. "It seems to me that somebody was not seeing those flags."

Hare was among a group of officials and parents who three weeks ago asked the Elmira school board to investigate the possible link of 13 known cancer cases among current or former students to the campus' environmental past.

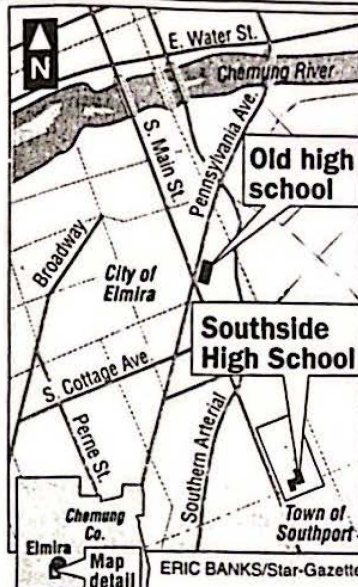
Hare said that he doesn't want to point fingers.

"Building a school is a collective process involving lots of people," Hare said. "And consciousness of the environment today is lot different than it was 20 years ago."

Meanwhile, state environmental regulators say the oil that was found several years ago to be seeping from the campus into local waterways is being cleaned up and isn't a health hazard.

No one to date has attributed any contamination to the cancer cases.

The industrial property next to the school was cleaned of industrial wastes contaminated with various metals, solvents and burned organic wastes. Old storage tanks containing paint cleaners, oils and gasoline also were removed from the former American LaFrance plant site. The four-month cleanup there was completed in March.



Community can learn more at meeting

Star-Gazette

A panel of Chemung County and New York state health and environmental experts and school officials will answer questions about the safety of Southside High School, built on a former industrial site, at a public meeting at 7 p.m. today in the school's auditorium.

Concerns about the school and the health of its students surfaced last month after several parents and two Elmira City Council members asked the Elmira school board to examine why 13 current and former students at the school of 1,100 have been found to have cancer since 1997.

The school, at 777 S. Main St., is built on an 83-acre industrial site that was home to a number of factories making everything from typewriters to bomb parts and fire engines.

State officials conducted tests at and around the site in 1996, after residents noticed an oil sheen on Miller's Pond, about 500 yards east of the school. While earlier tests focused on petroleum products, which are present at the site, a new battery of tests is slated to begin next week to identify any metal and chemical contaminants there.

Tuesday's meeting will be moderated by Thomas Kump, director of environmental health at the Chemung County Health Department. The meeting provides an opportunity for the community to ask questions about the site, past and future tests, and what is likely to happen next.

School board members, City Council members and county legislators also plan to attend the meeting.

Miller Pond worries neighbors



MARIA STRINNI/Star-Gazette

Boys fish after school at Miller Pond on Elmira's Southside in April. The pond, which has been found to be contaminated with slight amounts of petroleum, has been a favorite recreation spot for generations.

■ Some living near contaminated water want quick action; others say pollution doesn't exist.

By HEATHER DUNCAN
Star-Gazette
hduncan@stargazette.com

To many Southside residents, Miller Pond is the prettiest spot in Elmira, the place they ice skated around bonfires as children and fished for bass as adults.

But some have become afraid of the beautiful spot they loved for so long.

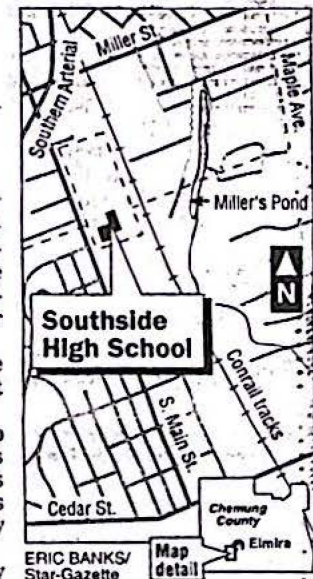
Arthur Symonds, 74, who lives on Parkside Drive across from the 3-acre pond, wanders out to its shore some mornings with neighbors to mark oily spots with stones.

On a recent Wednesday afternoon he stirred the water with a long stick and watched as oily bubbles rose, producing a rainbow sheen that drifted across the water in long streaks. When he lifted the stick, it smelled like oil.

"The odor is terrible," he said. "Something in that water is not right. I'm scared of it."

Symonds said he has seen the oil contamination ever since moving to Parkside Drive 16 years ago. Soccer fields, a playground and tennis

CONCERN on the SOUTHSIDE



Inside

- Editorial/12A
- Pond's history/14A

courts are adjacent to the pond, a recreation spot for kids and adults.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation tested the pond for

See POND/14A

5-7-99

CONCERN on the SOUTHSIDE

Miller Pond battle goes back to '30s

By HEATHER DUNCAN
Star-Gazette
hduncan@stargazette.com

Some neighbors of Miller Pond are unhappy about its condition years before the petroleum contamination came to light. They have spent years fighting to oust the city of Elmira, which owns the pond, to maintain the pond and keep the pond from becoming a swamp. The water level in the pond also has caused disputes among neighbors. Originally known as Sly's Lake, Miller Pond was renamed after William Miller, the first judge in the area, who lived next to the lake, according to the Chemung County Soil and Water Conservation District. The three-acre pond is fed by natural springs that feed into Cold Creek. Homeowners who purchased property in the Parkside Drive area

were told that the park had been given to the city in 1935 on the condition that the city develop it into a recreation area.

But the city refused to take responsibility for the pond for a long time, said Paul Winner, 86, who has lived at his Parkside Drive home since he returned from World War II in 1945.

For example, the Star-Gazette reported in 1941 that a group of homeowners protested when Harry R. Burgess, president of Hampton Roads Realty Corp., dug a drainage channel south of the pond to lower the water level and protect the cellars of houses in the Hampton Road development.

Burgess later offered to return two properties at the south end of



WINNER
55-year resident

the pond to the city if it would "reassume" its obligations to develop the land as a park.

But the city refused.

For many years, Winner and some of his neighbors mowed the grass in the park area across from their homes and petitioned for the elimination of weeds and algae that kept the pond stagnant. The water level was deliberately raised and lowered several times.

Neighbors along Parkside Drive wrote to their state representatives and the U.S. Department of Agriculture at various times during 1960s and 1970s in an attempt to pressure the city into beautifying the park and pond. Finally, in the early 1970s, the city became more responsive, Winner said.

The pond was dredged and stocked with fish, and the park was landscaped.

But it was polluted at the same time. In 1970, a toxic cement additive and diesel oil were dumped into the pond by vandals, killing many

fish. The Star-Gazette reported that the city blamed contractors working on a storm sewer project next to the pond for failing to secure their equipment.

Then came the 1972 flood.

"The Chemung River was about a foot from my front step. There were tires and other stuff that floated down from (Remington) Rand into the pond," Winner said, referring to the company that manufactured typewriter and machine parts from 1936 to 1972 on a nearby industrial site.

But the state Department of Environmental Conservation dredged the pond, which helped, Winner said.

In the 1980s neighbors continued to complain about Miller Pond "being used as a dump." Hampton Road resident Ralph Olson wrote the Star-Gazette in 1985 to complain that large pieces of concrete were being left on the southern shore of the pond by the city.

Environmental agencies became



Provided by Paul Miller

Paul Winner, who lives on Parkside Drive on Elmira's Southside, and his daughter were models years ago for this undated postcard of ice skaters on Miller Pond.

more involved in the past decade.

Soil and water samples were taken from the pond in 1991, and the DEC noted that "the pond has not been environmentally impacted in a negative way."

The Chemung County Soil and Water Conservation District, with

the help of its Schuyler County counterpart, harvested 30 tons of vegetation that was stifling fish and making the pond stagnant. Grass carp also were stocked to help keep vegetation in check.

"Now it's the most beautiful spot in Elmira," Winner said.

Spills: Details of reports 6-7-2000

Continued from Page 1A

American LaFrance factory in Southport.

About 400 gallons flowed into an old storm water drainage system and made its way into nearby Coldbrook Creek, according to DEC reports.

■ 1990: A man reported oil floating on a holding pond on the American LaFrance property, 777 S. Main St., Southport. The pond drains into Coldbrook Creek. A month later, the DEC investigated the complaint and found no signs of contamination.

■ 1992: Soil and groundwater were contaminated when an unknown amount of gasoline leaked from an old 1,000-gallon underground gasoline tank on the former American LaFrance property adjacent to the school. Sixteen underground storage tanks, most of them containing some gasoline and diesel fuel, were later removed.

■ 1993: The state Department of Environmental Conservation listed the former Remington Rand property at 1021 S. Main St., Elmira, as an inactive hazardous waste site. The site is considered a potential environmental or public health hazard.

■ 1997: Workers discovered soil contaminated with diesel fuel after they had removed 500-gallon and 1,000-gallon underground storage tanks. The tanks were removed from the Elmira Fire Department fire station at 213 W. Miller St., about three blocks north of the school.

Health officials have said fuel contamination in the soil does not pose a health risk so long as a person does not come in direct contact with it.

"What you're finding is typical of giant industrial manufacturing sites," said Walter Hang, president of Toxics Targeting. "Heavy metals, tank leaks and PCBs are usually found anytime you have these gigantic industrial-scale operations for a decade or more."

That concerns parents such as Alan Cecce, of Franklin Street in Elmira. Cecce's son is scheduled to attend Southside High School in 2002.

"There's a lot of contamination in the area of the school," said Cecce, 37, a computer network technician. "I'm not knowledgeable enough to know if it can affect your health, but given the current situation at Southside, this just adds to my concern."

"I really don't want to subject my kids to any more harm than I have to. How much more of a risk am I putting my kids in if they go to Southside, rather than EFA, Edison or Horseheads?"

Before the 1970s, a time of few environmental laws, it was common for industrial wastes to be dumped on the ground, buried or burned.

The former Remington Rand Co., which made business machines on

the current school property, used to burn its damaged typewriters outside in giant bonfires, said Robert Schneider, 63, of Elmira, who used to work at the factory.

"They burned it way in the back of the property (near the railroad tracks) right out in the open," said Schneider, who did maintenance work at the factory from 1955 to 1957. "They'd throw the typewriters and (waste) wood into a big 20-foot-tall pile. Then they would throw lacquer thinner on it and set it on fire. They'd burn thousands of typewriters that way. They did it two or three times while I worked there."

The industrial wastes did more than pollute the immediate surroundings. Much of the waste spread out with the watershed and contaminated large areas or was dumped elsewhere, DEC records show.

The oil dumped from the transformers in 1975 was so thick that it formed clumps on the surface of Coldbrook Creek, according to a DEC report issued that year.

A former Remington Rand dump, about a mile south of the school, is undergoing cleanup to remove soil contaminated with PCBs, coal ash and chemical waste products from manufacturing.

The school is in an area that was home to heavy industrial manufacturing for more than 113 years. The Chemung Foundry, a different American LaFrance facility, Kennedy Valve, Remington Rand and the Pennsylvania Railroad car shops all had manufacturing facilities within six blocks of the school.

Despite the presence of factories, the amount of contamination is no greater than in most other industrial areas of the city, said Scott Rodabaugh, a DEC environmental engineer.

"We would expect to find more problems in industrial areas," Rodabaugh said. "You'd expect to find more spills and things like heavy metals (in the soil) and underground tanks."

That is exactly what was found during the 1999 cleanup of the former American LaFrance site, according to DEC documents.

The state is also cleaning up a plume of old fuel oil contamination 15 feet below ground, under the school and east of it, toward Miller Pond. The oil, thought to have leaked from old, buried storage tanks, doesn't pose a health hazard because there's no way for the public to come in contact with it, state officials say.

"Whenever you have a large industrial site, you have innumerable accidents and spills that happen day to day that create contamination," Hang said. "And over time that accumulates on site. And that's what you're seeing today."

■ Pollution near Southside High School called typical of industrial sites.

By JIM PFIFFER
Star-Gazette
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The area around Southside High School, like most industrial sites, has over the years seen its fair share of environmental contamination from

spills, leaking storage tanks, open burning and transformer explosions.

No evidence exists, however, to suggest that the land is still a health risk to the community despite its environmental record.

State health and environmental officials say that the school is safe, the industrial property has been cleaned up, and neither the school nor the property near it pose a health hazard to students, staff members or the public.

But it wasn't always safe, according to information

CONCERN ON THE SOUTHSIDE

obtained by the Star-Gazette. State environmental conservation reports detail years of pollution, and an environmental analysis by a private Ithaca firm has tracked a number of the spills near the school.

In April, news about those years of contamination made headlines when the state Health Department launched an investigation into seemingly high rates of cancer among

students at the school. At least 25 students have developed cancer since the school opened in 1979.

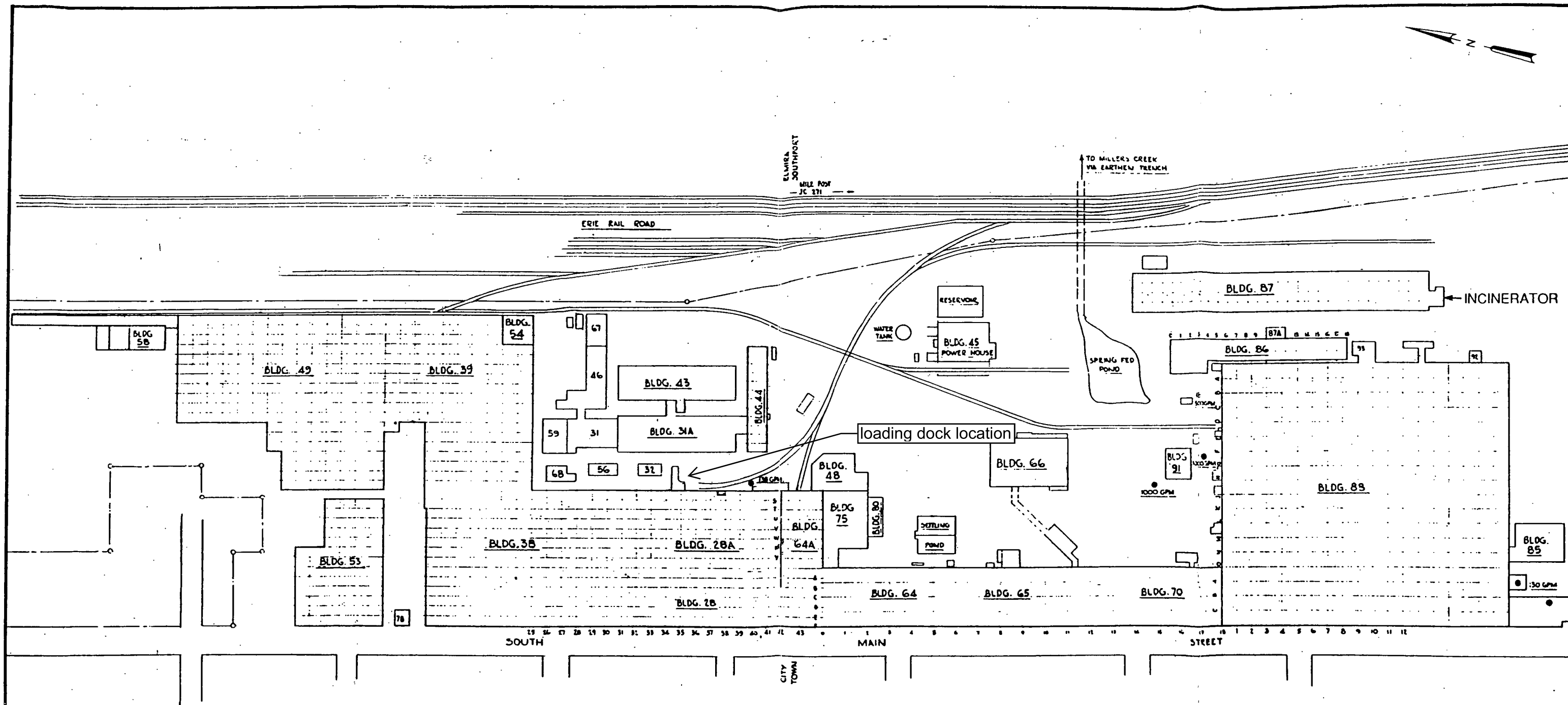
Toxics Targeting, an environmental mapping and consulting firm in Ithaca, profiled and mapped all toxic spills, tank leaks and pollution within a one-mile radius of the school at 777 S. Main St. in Elmira. The mapping included information from federal, state

and private sources. Highlights from the reports by Toxics Targeting and the state Department of Environmental Conservation include:

■ 1975: A salvage company emptied four electric transformers of 900 gallons of oil-laden with polychlorinated biphenyls, known as PCBs, a suspected carcinogen — onto the ground at the former

See SPILLS/4A

Reports detail years of spills



BUILDING NUMBER	PLANT OPERATION
28	Power Washing (Wash, Rust Preventive, Dry)
28A	Power Washing (Wash, Rinse, Infra dry)
38	Power Washing (Wash, Rust Preventive, Dry)
44	Wire Pickling
46 & 67	Maintenance Department
53	Cafeteria and Recreation Room
58	Steel Storage
64	Heat Treatment
65	Plating, Tumbling, Metal Blackening
66	Shipping Department
70	Converting to Cafeteria
88	Painting (Northeast Corner of Building)

LEGEND:
 • Water Well Location and Yield

0 200 400
 SCALE IN FEET

REFERENCE:
 Lancy Laboratories Drawing ROE 2 ELM/000515

REMINGTON RAND PLANT SITE
 UNISYS CORPORATION

FIGURE 6

1967 PLANT LAYOUT

Job No. 15783-005