

Area resident says B.F. Goodrich plant will affect lifestyles, health

Construction of a B. F. Goodrich plant in Bayport will affect the lifestyle and health of Bay Area residents, an El Jardin resident testified during the Texas Air Control Board (TACB) public hearing on a Goodrich permit request in Seabrook.

According to Victor Whitehead, an El Jardin resident and NASA meteorologist, a proposed B. F. Goodrich facility in Bayport will "increase the presence of unpleasant conditions."

"There also will be the possibility

of (industrial) accidents. We never like to talk about the accidents," Whitehead said during Tuesday's proceedings.

"I'm sure B. F. Goodrich has taken the necessary precautions, but accidents do happen," he added.

According to Whitehead, area police, fire, and civil defense personnel aren't trained for industrial accidents.

"They are hampered in what they can do," he said.

Whitehead, a member of the El

Jardin Volunteer Fire Department said his group isn't prepared to respond to chemical spills.

"Not many city's are equipped to deal with chemical spills. We don't know how to handle these gases," he added.

Whitehead said the only "protection," area residents have from other nearby chemical plants is "distance".

"That is essentially my concern. When we moved to El Jardin in 1968, Bayport was a barge canal and

there were a few plants just north of Bay Area Boulevard," said Whitehead.

"It was obvious the area would expand, but not in our direction (east of Highway 146), he added.

Meanwhile, the TACB is expected to rule on an American Hoechst construction permit request Friday in Austin.

American Hoechst is seeking permission from the TACB to continue construction of its proposed Bayport facility.



Goodrich hearing

staff photo by mark toohey

El Jardin resident Victor Whitehead, above left, testified earlier this week that a B.F. Goodrich plant in Bayport will affect the lifestyle and health of Bay Area residents. Whitehead's testimony came during the Texas Air Control Board (TACB) public hearing on a Goodrich permit request. Hearing Examiner John Turney, right, listens.