

BFGOODRICH

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Orange Site Eyed For Goodrich Plant

A \$100 million chemical plant originally scheduled for construction near Houston may come to Orange instead.

The Houston Post reported today that BFGoodrich is considering alternate sites in Texas and Louisiana for the facility.

One of the alternates, the Post said, is reported to be the existing Goodrich plant on Chemical Row at Orange which has unused land.

In an article written by Harold Scarlett, Post environment writer, the newspaper said an alliance of Galveston Bay residents may be winning a long and bitter fight to block construction of the plant in the Bayport industrial complex.

A Goodrich spokesman was quoted as saying the company "by no means has given up" on the Bayport site, but is looking at other locations in both states.

Robert Downey, public relations chief at the Cleveland headquarters of Goodrich, said a final decision on the plant location is expected by mid-September.

Construction of the Bayport plant is now about six months behind schedule, Downey said, largely because of intense opposition from several Bayshore communities and civic groups.

"We are still proceeding along the Bayport route," Downey said. "But it just seemed a

matter of good business sense to explore other options."

He declined to pinpoint the alternate sites, but the Post said one is the Orange location.

The Bayport plant, a joint venture of Goodrich and the Bechtel Corp., would produce chlorine, caustic soda and ethylene dichloride.

After a record five-week permit hearing, the Texas Air Control Board last May approved construction of the Bayport plant by a 7-2 vote.

But one of the opposing groups, the Galveston Bay Conservation and Preservation Association, is appealing the board action in a state court suit filed in Austin.

The group's attorney, Clark G. Thompson, said of Goodrich's site restudy:

"We'd be happy to assist them in moving any place they want to—just so it's outside of Bayport. That's just a horrible location for that plant."

The Bayport plant, with 200 workers, would be within a mile of some residential neighborhoods.

Air board and Goodrich experts say the plant would be absolutely no pollution threat to nearby residents. But residents fear a plant malfunction would result in a disastrous release of toxic chlorine gas.

No court hearing has yet been set in the Goodrich case.

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