PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

CAP-405

The SAGINAW NEWS
July 25, 1983

Route: [illegible] / SGL / [illegible] / LT Return WRP

Residents nervous about pipes

But officials assure asbestos water lines pose no health hazard

BY TERRI FINCH
News Staff Writer

Health concerns about asbestos-cement water pipes being installed in Saginaw Township are unfounded, township officials claim — but some residents say they are still worried.

About 11,000 feet of cement-lined asbestos water pipes are being installed in several areas throughout the township as part of a 10-year plan to improve the water pressure in the area.

Some of the pipes are being buried in front of Marilyn Greenberg's house, in the Glendale-Jameson area.

And she says she doesn't like what she sees.

"I'm not thrilled that this is being used," Mrs. Greenberg said. "I'm not appeased that they say it's safe. How many other things have they said were safe, and then 30 years later you find out they weren't safe at all?

"Maybe there isn't a problem," she said. "But maybe there is."

Fred Scarcella, district engineer for the water supply services division of the Michigan Department of Public Health, says the pipe is widely used and poses no health hazard.

While asbestos — a fibrous, fire-resistant mineral used in electrical insulation — is a known cause of cancer, Scarcella said the asbestos scare of a few years ago was related only to the inhalation of particles.

He said chances are slim that particles could filter from the pipes to the township's drinking water. But even if they did, he said there is no proof it would endanger health.

"We don't have any evidence that ingesting the particles — such as through water — would be a problem," Scarcella said. "The problems have all been related to breathing in the fibers."



News Staff/Donald J. Demers

Worker watches as pipes laid along Glendale between Jameson and Monterey

Scarcella, who is in charge of water services in the Tri-City area, said the water here is "non-aggressive" — meaning it is not acidic enough to eat through the pipe material to the asbestos fibers underneath.

The water is monitored locally each day, he added, and lime is added if the acid level in the water becomes more "aggressive."

The pipe is approved by both the state Department of Public Health and by the Environmental Protection Agency, he said.

Robert Dust, director of public works for the city of Saginaw, agreed there is no need for concern.

"We approve (the pipe), we use it, we have used it," Dust said. "I would guess about 20 percent of the system in the city is asbestos pipe."

Dust said the asbestos cement pipe has several advantages over cast iron or steel, including cost and construction. Rubber joints provide a good seal to prevent leakage, and the pipes will not rust.

But Mrs. Greenberg said she is not satisfied with the explanations.

"If it was a sewer line, maybe it wouldn't be so bad," she said. "But things aren't just going into these pipes — water is going to be coming out. I'm going to be drinking it. My children are going to be drinking it.

"These pipes didn't have to be used — there are other options," she said. "And nobody had a choice — nobody asked us if we wanted these types of pipes put in by our homes."

Township Manager Robert Homan said residents expressed similar concern in past years, adding that he will tell them the same thing now that he said then.

"We've done it for the past decade, and we'll continue to do it," he said. "There must be hundreds of thousands of feet of pipe just like it lining streets all over the country."

The water mains are being built along Bay Road from Weiss to the railroad tracks and along Mitchell from Weiss to State. Among streets to get mains in the Lathrup Park neighborhood are Wilson, Seidel Place, Glendale and Jameson.

Additional work may begin in other areas of the township by the end of the summer, Homan said, but is subject to approval from the township board.