

VOICING A PROTEST — Sandy Shute of Logan brandishes table tar relative to those of 250 angry area residents, who told federal officials just how unhappy they are with plans to burn a suspected carcinogen at the Rollins Environmental Services plant. The meeting Tuesday lasted four hours.

Residents angered

250 blast plan to burn PCBs at Rollins

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LOGAN TWP. — Residents of this troubled community, harassed by plans to burn a suspected carcinogen at the Rollins Environmental Services plant, shouted at federal officials here for four hours Tuesday about their health, their property values, "cancer rate", and broken promises.

"This is going to be the next Love Canal," commented one resident. "What

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are we going to tell those little people 10 or 20 years from now?" asked another, holding a small child.

"This is our town. It's not for sale. Why can't we run it?" yelled one of the 250 angry residents at the meeting. "My investment will go to zero, property value will go down," shouted another.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to monitor a test burn of the toxic substances, PCBs, at Rollins, and if all goes as planned, will issue the firm a permit to dispose of 800,000 pounds of it each month for 10 years.

In addition to the questions about the EPA and state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) could conduct at Rollins were the permit issued, Wayne Pierre of the EPA assured residents that the test runs "very small risks to residents."

"We're supposed to believe you're going to do that too?" asked Sandy Shute, an outraged local resident who wants to know why officials were allowing the test burn of a suspected carcinogen at the Rollins site when burning the compound at a DEP-licensed plant in Bridgeton.

"If you don't choose to believe this, there's nothing I can do about that," replied EPA's senior program deputy director Jeff Robinson who is in charge of the of PCB permit program for the region.

"PCBs are in the environment, and they have to be dealt with in an environmentally sound manner," he said. The EPA estimates there are more than 300 million pounds of PCB residue which must be cleaned up.

"We have chosen to do it in a controlled manner," stated Robinson. "This (PCB disposal) is one of the things we're going to have to live with."

Pierre, who has worked with the EPA in Rollins' communities for two years, assured residents that the Rollins corporation has been "a superior team." The team questions, he said, "is not a reflection on the company's performance."

"Yet" the residents quickly responded in unison. "Your testing cannot take place for days after the high winds," they shouted, "when it blows dust from the dunes."

Many of the persons in the audience explained that they don't want any more chemical wastes here because they are already suffering from the effects of living in a polluted environment.

According to one woman, children in almost every family have come down with some kind of respiratory problem. Others have had to cope with cancer while area factories have had to cope with other types of problems.

A Dover worker said he was hospitalized for seven weeks after inhaling fumes released by a type of PCB the firm no longer manufactures, which caused severe burns to his throat, mouth, lung, liver, kidney and bone marrow problems.

"But it (PCBs) are at here? We don't want it!" screamed Barbara DeVault of Pennsville. "We're fighting for our lives. Are our children not I most precious?"

Many residents fear the PCBs would not be totally destroyed in the Rollins incinerator, creating more of the toxic substance. In order for the test to be successful, and for the state and federal officials monitoring the plant would not believe the public if that happened during the test.

As a result, the township plans to hire a consultant to monitor the air, groundwater and animals and will likewise, those that are among feeds on the

Complete

After during that is licensed to the burning of materials from the collection and the industry of the firm, Rollins plans to construct its toxic chemical to 2,000 pounds for the remainder to use to burn the compound.

Some residents wanted township Mayor John C. Wright to refuse the test, but Wright said they need the money and that to accepting it the township is not obligated to Rollins in any way, as the consultant for the job will be obligated to the town and not to Rollins.

The township committee, along with the county freeholder board, the governing bodies in Woodbury Township and Pennsgrove and the Pennsgrove Fire company, have gone on record against the test burn at Rollins which is expected to take two days.

A group of residents in one of the two other communities where disposal firms plan to burn PCBs took the board to court but lost because their objections were mostly concerned with not technical in nature, according to Pierre.

The plaintiff in the case were residents of Ed Darnell, Ark., where EASCO Corp., the Rollins, has purchased the EPA's for permission to burn PCBs. EASCO, said Pierre, has not yet been issued a PCB permit.

The third Ambassador involved in PCB transaction, he said is Chem Park, Texas, where Rollins has petitioned the EPA for permission to dispose of PCBs in an effort there. No local discussions have been held to yet, said Pierre.

Although Ambassador maintains that the burning process is safe, a full public hearing will be conducted before Rollins is issued a permit to incinerate PCBs here.

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