The Daily Telegraph, June 4 1973

Wider powers soon for councils to stop waste pollution

DAILY TELEGRAPH REPORTER

THE Government is to introduce in the next session of Parliament an environmental pollution Bill to give county authorities wider powers to deal with pollution from waste disposal, toxic or otherwise.

Mr Page, Minister for Local Government, is to outline to the Institute of Public Cleansing conference at Torquay next week a programme for detailed examination of waste disposal.

Mr Page said yesterday that much waste would have to be disposed of in future by more sophisticated means than tipping.

Incineration, pulverisation, and conversion to gas require expensive equipment, and only large local authority units have the resources to cope with waste disposal methods of the future.

Review shows hazards

In April last year, the Minister set up a review of all existing rubbish tips and areas earmarked for tipping. The 1,400 local authorities were asked for site details.

The information has been passed to the Institute of Geological Scientists to study how the waste might be dispersed or held by the kind of soil concerned. Reports by the institute go to river authorities, and they consider possible effects on water supplies.

Mr Page said the review had already justified itself by producing evidence of possible hazards from some 40 tips. But he would not say that Maendy quarry, Glamorgan, was typical.

Maendy had its peculiarities. When it was discovered that the chemical PCB (polychlorinated biphenyls) had been leaking down a hillside, dumping of it ceased.

To find safe tips

Because of the need to identify such exceptional cases and to define quickly a firm policy on waste disposal, the Minister imposed a time limit on the review, and asked for it to be completed by the end of last March.

"I fear it has fallen behind schedule because some 350 to 400 local authorities have not sent in their lists," he said. "But pending completion of the review my department has been planning a programme for the examination of tips and potential tipping areas."

This would be with the positive action of finding safe tips —for example, where soil would cleanse waste deposits—rather than the merely negative exercise of "closing or sealing off the potential non-cleansing sites."

It would cost about £1,500,000 to ensure there were 30 to 40 safe sites for particularly toxic waste.

Some private sites have already been closed down as a result of legislation. After April 1 next year, the new counties will be responsible for refuse disposal, including disposal of toxic waste.

The Times, June 4 1973

'No danger' from chemicals dumped in Welsh quarry

From Trevor Fishlock
Cardiff, June 3

Chemicals dumped in a Welsh quarry during the past seven years present no danger to public health and no public water supply is affected, the Welsh Office said today.

Maendy quarry, near Pontypridd, Glamorgan, has been used as a dump for chemical waste, much of it from the Monsanto works at Newport, Monmouthshire, and contains more than 30 chemicals, of which five are rated as very toxic.

The Government has ordered an inquiry, which will be announced this week, into the condition of about forty similar dumps in Britain. This comes after a survey of tips carried out last year, the results of which were sent to river authorities and the Institute of Geological Science.

The Welsh Office said that the Government's concern about the depositing of chemicals was reflected in the Deposit of Poisonous Waste Act of last year, and in the survey of tips.

"The Welsh Office has had Maendy quarry under review and has had water supplies in the area analysed. The Secretary of State for Wales is satisfied on the evidence available that there is no danger to public health."

Waste has been tipped at Maendy for five years by Purle Waste Disposal (South Wales)

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