Xerox C: DRB, SAE [redacted]

THE NEW YORK TIMES, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1982

# 24 Concerns to Clean Up Waste Dump in Indiana

By PHILIP SHABECOFF
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26— In what the Environmental Protection Agency described today as the nation's biggest voluntary cleanup of a toxic waste dump, 24 companies have agreed to pay $7.7 million to remove wastes from a site in Seymour, Ind.

Under an agreement with the agency, more than 40,000 barrels of dangerous chemicals, including petrochemical byproducts or PCB's, acids, solvents and other substances will be removed from the property of the Seymour Recycling Corporation, which said agency officials described as one of the "largest and noisiest" hazardous waste operations in the country.

However, agency officials said that only the surface of the waste dump would be cleaned up under the agreement with the 24 companies. An estimated 60 million more would be left in place to clean up eventually with federal money beneath the site, they said.

Rita M. Lavelle, the agency's Assistant Administrator for solid wastes, said at a news conference today that 300 other companies that disposed of wastes at the Seymour site would be asked to contribute funds as a protective layer is put over the soil and ground water. There will be no penalty for a failure of any of the companies to pay, officials said, but their refusals will be noted.

### Environmental Group Charges

Meanwhile, the Environmental Defense Fund announced today that financial documents obtained by the group indicated that the agency was overstating the liability for pollution and the profits from dangerous hazardous wastes.

The fund, a nonprofit group that litigates on environmental issues, said that the documents showed that the profits of the disposal companies were far greater than the agency had estimated in setting a penalty level for them. The fund said that the Public Health Service that the health of the disposal personnel is also seriously threatened by the dangers to human health.

The group also said that the agency was planning a weakening of its standards for cleaning up dioxin, a highly toxic substance, in several other hazardous disposal sites.

[redacted] also released a letter from Mike Lavelle to Representative John Paul Hammerschmidt, Republican of Arkansas, in which she reassured the Congressman about the dangers to workers. She said: "It is unlikely in a cleanup of the scope [redacted] of PCB's, the EPA would have to test about 100 grades of all-leather shoes, the superintendent of school buses hangs nearly hours."

### Agency Is Assailed

But Ellen Silbergeld, chief scientific staff for the Environmental Defense Fund, said that "E.P.A.'s command for health and safety [redacted] — dead bodies — is repugnant to any canons of protection of human health." She said that the agency was also overstating the economic value of the PCB's, including their dielectric, chemical blend chemistry, odorless and potent.

The internal documents from the agency contain options for not asking to clean up dioxin to the soil at levels as high as 100 parts per billion, in the face of the agency policy, according to the environmental group, but bows to others by dioxin when they appear even in parts per million.

Dr. Silbergeld said that the proposal for a cleanup was not based on new information about the hazards of dioxin, but that "this agency is merely looking for ways to permit leaking wastes at various sites and in other regulatory terms."

A spokesman for the agency said that a reassessing of the dioxin in southeast Missouri had begun two weeks ago and that no decisions had been made on the level of contamination that would require an emergency response.

As for the PCB's, the program in Arkansas would be addressed through the normal remedial process, the officials said.

### Decision for Serious Cleanup

At the Seymour, Ind., waste site, the agreement to clean up only the surface was made because of the imminent danger of a fire or explosion there and the possibility that the dangerous gases would erode over the winter, according to officials.

The site had been the target for privately funded under the Comprehensive Environmental Response and Liability Act. Under the agreement with the E.P.A., the companies would be reimbursed by Chemical Waste Management Inc. and insured on account of their disposal of wastes in Toledo, Ohio; Carlstadt, N.J.; and Joliet, Ill., Wheeler, Ind., and Boaz, Ala.

Of the 24 identified waste generators involved in the agreement, the largest were Union Carbide Corporation, which is paying the largest sum for the cleanup, $1.23 million, followed by the Chemical Waste Corporation at $1 million.

The other companies involved are E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company; General Electric Company; Velsicol Chemical Corporation; Uniroyal Chemical Company; Monsanto Company; Allied Corporation; Rohm and Haas Company; Shell Chemical Company; Dow Chemical Company; Inc.; Ashland Chemical Company, Inc.; Reichhold Chemicals, Inc.; Stauffer Chemical Company; Inc.; Ethyl Corporation; Hooker Chemical Corporation; Reichhold Chemicals Corporation; Dow Corning Corporation; Owens-Illinois Inc.; Premier & Gamble Company; General American Transportation Corporation; Mobil Oil Company; Gilo Corporation; Allied Corporation; Commercial Region Company Inc.; NCR Corporation, and Waste Resources of Tennessee, Inc.