Associates, Cambridge, Mass., to conduct an economic analysis of highway de-icing environmental impact.

Other EPA contract awards included $49,000 to Duke University, Durham, N.C., to develop screening methods for evaluating the neutrotoxic potential of pesticides and toxic substances; $49,000 to Research Triangle Institute, Research Triangle Park, N.C., to study oxidant precursor relations under pollutant transport conditions; and $32,000 to SCS Engineers, Long Beach, Calif. to study the cost effectiveness of waste water reuse.

Energy

U.S.-USSR SIGN COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT ON DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY TECHNOLOGY

A U.S.-USSR agreement on cooperation in energy development with proper regard to the protection of the environment was signed June 28 in Moscow by President Nixon and Soviet President Podgorny.

The objectives of the agreement are to use the potentials of both nations to accelerate research and development of existing and alternative energy sources as well as to increase effectiveness in the use of energy and its conservation.

The agreement provides for exchanges of scientists and scientific information and calls for cooperation in developing technology for exploration and extraction of oil, shale, natural gas, and coal. Emphasis will be placed on finding new ways of drilling that will increase the amount of oil and gas taken from the ground.

A joint committee will be set up to meet once a year on the energy situation and outlook in the respective countries and to approve specific projects. The committee will set up the necessary working groups to carry out the projects and exchanges contemplated by the agreement.

Chemicals

INDUSTRY RECOMMENDS ALTERNATIVES TO OSHA STANDARD FOR VINYL CHLORIDE

A standard requiring the gradual regulation of vinyl chloride in the workplace was recommended by the Society of the Plastics Industry, Inc., during Labor Department hearings June 25-26.

The hearing was scheduled by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration which proposed a standard requiring "no detectable exposure" to vinyl chloride. In its environmental impact statement on the proposal (See p. 259), OSHA said the measures required by the proposed standard probably would reduce vinyl chloride levels in the external environment as well.

The following provisions for polyvinyl chloride resin plants were included in the plastics industry recommendations:

(1) Effective October 5, 1974, a ceiling of 40 parts per million (ppm) of vinyl chloride monomer and a maximum daily time-weighted average of 25 parts per million. Levels above 40 ppm would require the use of practical and effective respiratory protection.

(2) Effective October 5, 1975, a ceiling level of 25 ppm with no time-weighted average. Levels above 25 ppm would require the use of practical and effective respiratory protection.

(3) Effective October 5, 1976, a ceiling level of 25 ppm with a maximum time-weighted average of 10 ppm. Levels above 25 ppm would require the use of practical and effective respiratory protection.

For vinyl chloride monomer producing plants, the industry proposed the following provisions:

(1) Effective October 5, 1974, a ceiling of 25 ppm and a maximum time-weighted average of 10 ppm. Levels above 25 ppm would require the use of practical and effective respiratory protection.

(2) Effective October 5, 1977, a ceiling of 10 ppm and a maximum time-weighted average of five ppm. Levels above 10 ppm would require the use of practical and effective respiratory protection.

Litigation

COURT TELLS RESERVE TO FORMULATE ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND DISPOSAL PLAN

Reserve Mining Company must find a way to dispose of its Silver Bay, Minn., taconite tailings wastes in a manner that is sound from "the ecology point of view," Judge Miles W. Lord of the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota said July 2.

Lord made his comment during a hearing held to formulate a plan for on-land disposal of the tailings, which currently are being discharged into Lake Superior. In April, Lord ruled that the discharge of the tailings, which contain fibers similar to the carcinogen amosite asbestos, constituted a public health hazard, and he ordered the discharge stopped immediately (6 ERC 1449). The U.S. Court of Appeals, ruling that no imminent health hazard was shown to exist, stayed that order for 70 days, conditioned upon Reserve's working with the Federal Government, Minnesota, and the other plaintiffs in the case to develop an alternate plan for disposing of the tailings.

In the hearing before Lord, Reserve recommended disposal of the tailings at a site near Palisades Creek, located three miles from the Silver Bay plant. Minnesota disputed this site, however, charging that fibers could seep into the lake from the dumping site. The state urged that the disposal area be located near Babbitt, Minn.

Reserve attorney Maclay Hyde told Lord that the Minnesota plan would cost $307.5 million, compared with a cost of $185 million for Reserve's proposal. Lord said, however, that "what we do to the ecology is what I'm interested in at this point in the hearings," and "We're wasting our time talking about economics if we're talking about ecology."

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