

MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY
Division of Solid Waste
Enforcement Section

Status Report of Oakdale Dump Site

November 25, 1980

ISSUE STATEMENT

The staff reported to the Board on October 28, 1980, the status of an abandoned chemical waste disposal site located in the south ½ of Section 18, Township 29 North, Range 21 West in Oakdale, Minnesota. The Ground Water Section has since then developed an outline of a hydrogeologic study for the site. That study's purpose is to define the impact of the site on ground water quality and to establish steps for alleviating any impacts on ground water. The Agency staff will, by the time of the November 25, 1980, Board meeting, have sent letters to all known parties who bear any responsibility for the Oakdale dump site and requested them to review the outlined hydrogeologic study and indicate their willingness to do the study. Based upon the response of the parties involved, the Agency staff will report to the Agency Board at the November 25, 1980 meeting the status of the arrangement reached relative to the implementation of the hydrogeologic study.

I. Background:

The staff reported to the Board on October 28, 1980, upon the status of the Oakdale dump site. Attached, for the Board's information, is the chronology of events involving the Oakdale site since that time:

October 13, 1980 - The DSW requested technical assistance from the Ground Water Section in the Division of Water Quality concerning the potential ground water problem that may occur as the result of chemical waste being disposed of at the Oakdale dump site.

October 13, 1980 - A meeting was held with all known parties involved in the Oakdale dump site, including representatives of local government, major waste generators, transporters and private land owners. The meeting was held to set in motion action that will be essential in evaluating and correcting problems that may exist at the Oakdale dump site.

Exhibit
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State of Minnesota v. 3M Co.,
Court File No. 27-CV-10-28862

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October 16, 1980 - The Ground Water Section in the Division of Water Quality assigned two (2) staff members to provide technical assistance to the DSW.

October 17-23, 1980 - Agency staff received numerous calls from the public about the Oakdale dump site and other possible disposal sites the Agency should investigate.

October 20, 1980 - A meeting was held with representatives of the MPCA, Minnesota Health Department, Washington County and the City of Oakdale to discuss the preliminary results of the well and surface water samples taken by the Agency on October 6, 1980. The preliminary results indicated detectable levels of benzene, heptane, iso-propyl ether and ethyl benzene in surface water samples as well as municipal and residential well water samples.

October 21, 1980 - A member of the Agency staff met with members of the Oakdale city council to update them on the Agency investigation concerning the Oakdale dump site. The Oakdale council was also informed of the future formation of the task force which will be responsible in establishing guidelines for the major soil, surface and ground water study for the Oakdale dump site.

October 22, 1980 - An Agency staff member interviewed a woman whose husband worked for St. Paul Terminal Warehouse Company during the 1960s. The woman was able to provide to the Agency staff photographs of the Oakdale dump site during its time of operation. Several of the photographs also depicted a burning trailer truck that her husband was driving and which contained barrels of chemical waste from 3M.

October 27, 1980 - A representative from the Minnesota Health Department called a member of the Agency staff to indicate that several additional wells had been sampled. The Health Department sampled the five (5) municipal wells in Oakdale, five (5) municipal wells in North St. Paul, two (2) municipal wells in

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Lake Elmo, three (3) municipal wells in Woodbury and 26 residential wells surrounding the Oakdale disposal site.

October 29, 1980 - A representative from the Minnesota Health Department called an Agency staff member to indicate that residents of three (3) private wells north of the Oakdale disposal site have been told not to use their well-water for domestic purposes. The wells are approximately sixty (60) feet in depth and preliminary results indicate the presence of iso-propyl ether in the water.

October 29, 1980 - A field inspection and interview was conducted by Agency staff with a former employee of Arthur Abresch, the Oakdale site owner and operator. During the course of the interview it was discovered that during a period of time between 1946-1950 3M dry scrap waste was being hauled to a burning site on the Ebberle farm north of the Oakdale dump site. The burn site was located due west of what is presently Oakdale's well number 3 pumping station and residential dwellings are now located on top of the site.

October 31, 1980 - Through several telephone conversations and continued investigation the Agency staff was able to confirm another burning site which was used by 3M for the disposal of their dry scrap during the early 1940s. The site was located on the Gillett farm which lies west of the Oakdale disposal site.

November 5, 1980 - An Agency staff member and a representative from the City of Oakdale conducted a field investigation at the Oakdale dump site to determine the location of an abandoned well. The well was located and the Minnesota Health Department was notified so that an investigation and eventual closure of the well will be carried out.

November 5, 1980 - Representatives from 3M met with Agency staff to discuss additional information they have uncovered during their interviews with retired

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company employees. 3M indicated that they did business with Arthur Abresch as early as 1945. Another type of waste that could have gone to the Oakdale site was methyl-iso-butyl ketone. 3M also confirmed the use of the burn site north of the Oakdale dump which was located on the Ebberle farm.

November 7, 1980 - The Minnesota Health Department held a meeting with representatives of the MPCA, City of Oakdale and Washington County to discuss the results of their analysis of the municipal well water samples. During the meeting the Health Department gave all attendees a copy of a news release that they were going to present that afternoon. In summary, the news release said that all municipal wells except Oakdale's municipal wells 3 and 4 could be considered "free from contamination and safe for human consumption". Oakdale's wells 3 and 4 will remain shut down until additional testing can be done.

November 10, 1980 - The Ground Water Section in the Division of Water Quality sent a proposed hydrogeologic study outline as a Phase I investigation of the Oakdale site to the DSW. The purpose of the hydrogeologic study is to define the impact of any site contamination on ground water quality and to establish steps for alleviating any impacts on ground water.

November 10, 1980 - Representatives from 3M met with Agency staff to discuss the Agency-proposed hydrogeologic study for the Oakdale site.

November 12, 1980 - An Agency staff member contacted a representative of American Can Company to discuss with the company their involvement in disposal of waste at the Oakdale dump site during the 1950s.

November 12, 1980 - Agency staff attended an Oakdale city council meeting to inform the council and public participants of the progress made in the Agency's investigation of the Oakdale site and discuss the proposed hydrogeologic study that will be carried out at the site.

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November 13, 1980 - An Agency staff member contacted a representative of Flintkote Company (U.S. Gypsum Company) to discuss with company representatives their past involvement in disposal of waste at the Oakdale dump site during the 1950s.

November 14, 1980 - The Agency sent out letters to all known parties involved with the Oakdale dump site requesting them to review the outlined hydrogeologic study and indicate within ten (10) days of receipt of the letter their willingness to do the study.

II. Discussion:

The staff has developed the outline of a hydrogeologic study for the Oakdale dump site. The purpose of that study will be to define the impact of the site on ground water quality and to establish steps for alleviating any such impacts.

Prior to the Agency Board meeting on November 25, 1980, Agency staff will be sending copies of the hydrogeologic study to all known parties who bear any responsibility for the Oakdale dump site and requesting them to, within ten (10) days of receipt of the study outline, indicate their willingness to do the study.

Based upon the response of the parties involved, the Agency staff will report to the Agency Board at the November 25, 1980 meeting the status of the arrangement reached relative to the implementation of the hydrogeologic study.

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