

SOME COMMENTS BY A FORMER MADISON-KIPP EMPLOYEE

ON THE OPERATING PRACTICES OF THE MADISON-KIPP CORP.

Passed out to everyone
at June 1996 open
house by
DWR
State
Health
Dept.,
City
Health
Dept.
I
know
the
writer
but
he
didn't
want
his
name
used
on
this
expla-
nation-
A.

↳ left in '89
Kipp

June 24, 1996

As a former Madison-Kipp employee (for 6 years), I observed practices which it may be helpful for the neighbors in that area to be aware of. Although I resigned in the summer of 1989 and specifics of this information may not be current, I find it unlikely that the policies and essentials of the practices of Kipp have changed.

The Kipp has advanced the argument, against those who choose to express concern, that the factory has been on the current site for close to 100 years and that, if the people in the area find it uncomfortable to live near the Kipp, they should move out.

First, 100 years ago we (as a society) did not know about the danger of many airborne pollutants commonly expelled from the Kipp—for instance, toluene and benzene, which are used to wash dies and are vaporized in the process, or hydrocarbons from the combustion of oil left on metal while it is remelted from scrap on site. The oils mentioned here are not common automotive oils, but specially engineered complex synthetics used in the manufacturing process.

Second, just the fact that someone doing something objectionable or harmful to another has been around longer does not allow that individual (or corporate entity) to violate another's right to a safe and healthy life.

Third, while the Kipp has been doing business in the area for some time, the manufacturing processes carried out there have become increasingly more noxious, both to the neighbors in general and to its own employees.

ON THE SUBJECT OF NOISE POLLUTION:

The sources of this type of pollution at the Kipp are chiefly compressed-air release and the actions of heavy machinery.

These sources have increased manyfold since the Kipp began automating most of their production machinery in the 1970s, as well as upgrading to larger machinery.

As recently as 20 years ago, most of the die-casting machines at the Kipp were small-closet-sized machines known as "stompers." The hydraulic closing pressure of these machines was measured in hundreds of pounds, while the smallest die-cast machine used at the Kipp when I left in 1989 had a closing pressure of 250 TONS.

In addition, the robots, oiling systems, and other servo-mechanisms are mostly operated using compressed air, which is released with each part processed, making a loud popping noise. These changes in the noise level have made it necessary for the Kipp to provide hearing protection

and monitoring of hearing damage to its employees. Not only does the Kipp not provide this protection to neighbors, who are exposed 24 hours a day (at a range of sometimes less than 100 feet from the noisiest machines on the Waubesa side of the Kipp), but information on the subject is not generally circulated—except when public and media pressure is felt by the Kipp's management.

ON AIR POLLUTION:

For the majority of the production processes at the Kipp, there is no filtration of the air exhausted, while more volatiles and noxious elements are currently being released than in the past. These elements now include chlorine gas, whose extremely unpleasant effects I had the pleasure of experiencing during a recent late-night walk past the open windows next to the Central Melt facility on South Marquette Street.

It might be useful at this point to visualize the air-handling and exhaust system at Kipp. Air is drawn from the roof of the plant with large fans and after passing the machinery and furnaces is exhausted either through the windows over the houses on either side of the plant, or forced out of the building through large ground-level garage doors at the North and South ends of the plant.

ON WATER POLLUTION AND HANDLING:

Although the Kipp filters and processes its waste liquids through a number of systems which seem to be adequate for routine operational needs, I have observed many times broken water lines, as well as overflow during the filling and dumping of tanks, resulting in water flowing from the floor of the shop out the garage doors and into the parking lots (often adjacent to neighbors' yards). This water, which is not potable to begin with, also picks up oils, industrial chemicals, and surface debris from the shop floor, carrying it to the sewer drains in the lots.

Also on the subject of water, the Kipp's die-cooling system recirculates water from the machines to a cooling tower facing South Marquette Street, and finally to large underground tanks built during the Second World War. To my knowledge, there has been no public agency monitoring possible groundwater leakage and contamination from these tanks.

In conclusion, while some of these types of pollution are monitored during daytime hours by professional staff as well as the DNR (at least several DNR Letters of Noncompliance have been issued to the Kipp), most of the unacceptable releases of pollutants occur at night, when the DNR does not monitor and the Kipp's own professional staff is at home in bed.

I think that if the owners of Kipp lived 24 hours a day, seven days a week next to the open windows of Department 40 (on the Waubesa Street side), or under the downwash from Central Melt's exhaust (on the South Marquette side), these conditions would be addressed promptly, either by abating the noise and fumes or by moving the entire operation to a more appropriate, nonresidential area.

★
now there
a new
water
tower
"Cheap one
from
TWINN"
- toluene
+
benzene
also
used

↳ people next to Kipp found green
slime in back yard from cooling
tower (old one). Then
they got new water tower.
The People