

Firm is called victim of false scare on waste

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Madison, Wis. — A Virginia-based environmental group soliciting money in the Madison area is spreading false information about toxic waste at a foundry here, according to a Madison Public Health Department official who received a mailing from the group.

The group, Citizens Against Toxic Waste Foundation, of Warrenton, Va., asked Bernard Saley, health department environmental specialist, to help its campaign against Madison Kipp Corp. The group lists the foundry as an "official EPA toxic waste site."

"They are falsely alarming the people living near the Kipp Corp.," Saley said. "It leads people to contribute money to what they believe to be a worthwhile cause."

The group's letter said it was campaigning to force the government to release information about toxic waste sites, under the Freedom of Information Act. The group claims the US Environmental Protection Agency has 26,000 such sites on a current list. The meaning of "toxic waste site" was not explained.

According to both EPA and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources officials, however, Madison Kipp Corp. is not a toxic waste site.

"I've never heard of the Kipp Corp.," said Mike Gifford, an EPA official who works with the Superfund hazardous waste program.

Under the federal Superfund program, sites given a sufficiently high hazard ranking are eligible for clean-up money. Latest EPA figures include 987 established Superfund sites.

Mark Giesfeldt of the DNR's solid waste section said the Citizens Against Toxic Waste Foundation probably got Kipp Corp.'s name from a large list of potential toxic waste sites. The EPA dropped the company from the list after determining there was no problem, he said.

Kipp's name was on the original list because several barrels of PCB-contaminated hydraulic fluid from the firm were incinerated out of state in 1983, Giesfeldt said. The company had notified the DNR and the EPA of that fact, he said.

"This is unfortunate," Giesfeldt said. "Kipp was being a good corporate citizen."

Kipp's senior engineer, Tom Draper, said he was irked by the allegations.

"You just don't tell people that a potential EPA toxic waste site is near you," he said. "They could be opening themselves up to a huge lawsuit."

Larry Roberts of the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs said the group had applied to register as a charitable organization in July. The application form listed 50,000 expected contributions of \$20 each for 1987-'88, according to Roberts.

Efforts to contact the group's director were unsuccessful.

