

ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

MINUTES OF REGULAR INFORMAL MEETING, JANUARY 25, 1971
189 W. MADISON ST., CHICAGO

The Board heard from the Institute's task force on noise, headed by Mr. Jack Desmond of the University of Illinois.

Dr. Harlow Ades explained that excess noise can damage hearing by injuring the hair cells inside the ear. Noise is measured according to its intensity in terms of decibels, a logarithmic scale so that intensity doubles with each three db. 60-70 db, he said, is normal speaking range; at 80 db there is a definite interference with speech and constant exposure to 80 db will cause harm to some people. At constant exposure to 95 db, the sound of a loud car engine at 6', speaking becomes quite difficult and half the people will suffer hearing damage. 105 db for 8 hours a day over perhaps a year will cause anyone to suffer hearing loss. Aircraft maintenance crews are exposed to 140-150 db. "Normal" hearing loss with age may be due at least in part to noise.

Mr. O'Neill of the task force described the chief sources of noise: transportation (aircraft, vehicles, etc.), manufacturing (both in-plant and neighborhood noise), construction, heating, cooling, and ventilation, and daily activities such as office machines, home appliances, and lawnmowers. He exhibited a hand size sound meter, available for \$300, that measures sound intensity and that with extra equipment can discriminate between frequencies. Sound intensity, he said, decreases with the inverse square of the distance from the source.

Professor Sheldon Plager of the task force noted legal issues raised by noise regulation, saying a 1968 law authorizes the FAA to set aircraft noise standards, which are now in force for new aircraft, and it has published proposed standards for older planes that are not yet adopted. California has a statute setting noise levels and authorizing a commission to adopt regulations, and several local governments have attempted to regulate overflights. The Hempstead decision finds some degree of preemption by federal law, and local control powers may be greater at locally-owned municipal airports where the government has the authority of landlord as well as of regulator. NY Port Authority regulation of the planes using its airports seems accepted. There is little federal regulation of noise from vehicles; states often require mufflers, California, New York and Connecticut have detailed regulations, e.g., California 82 db cars, 92 trucks--but how strict this is depends on the point of measurement. Many cities have general ordinances banning nuisance noises but few have technical standards. There are some standards for industrial exposure to workers, and much private litigation over nuisances and takings by noise. He also adverted to drafting problems.

Mr. Adam Zack of the task force discussed the effects of noise on materials. 150 db can break structures in a few minutes; jet planes in England are hard on old churches, and here they crack plaster and the like even without sonic booms, which can break windows. Jet engine noises are as high as 170 db and can shake buildings, causing material fatigue. Damping of noise sources with small rubber vibrators can help reduce noise, and Mr. Desmond said the task force would undertake a state-of-the-art review of noise control technology and submit a critique of the CAP proposal for airport noise standards.

Mr. Romanek reported that transcripts could not be promised in time for compliance with the 90-day rule in TAMMSCO and Texaco, and he said Tammsco had waived the 90-day rule. He was attempting to contact Texaco. Mr. Currie said he would write opinions in Jacksonville, Owens-Illinois, and Springfield Sanitary District, and the Board continued the meeting to the next Wednesday in order to consider these opinions.

Miss Ryan said the Board should hire an office manager as the job was too big to be handled by the clerk. The Board then discussed the problem of office space, several members expressing dissatisfaction with the problems of the present building. Because moving was such a disruption, Mr. Currie asked that the Board not move yet but Mr. Kissel agreed to discuss the problems with building management and to make it clear that the Board would have to move if matters did not improve.

Mr. Currie noted the proposed rules for procedure on appeals from Board decisions and asked whether Board members had comments. The Board then discussed whether it or the EPA should take an active part in appeals and suits to enforce Board orders. It was agreed that the Board should, not so much because the Review Act designates the Board as a party, which could be merely formal, as because this would enable the Board to exercise more control over the enforcement of its decisions.

Mr. Kissel reported that hearings were concluded in #70-21, the Dresden permit case, and the Board discussed the case briefly.

The Board authorized a hearing in the variance request of Modern Plating Corp. and consolidated it with the pending enforcement case.

Mr. Kee reported on a federal-state meeting regarding thermal standards on the Mississippi River, and said that the federal government was seeking a 5° above natural temperature limit with monthly maxima, and that it was unclear whether a mixing zone would be permissible.

I, Christan Moffett, Clerk of the Pollution Control Board certify that the Board has approved the above minutes this 25th of April, 1972, by a vote of 5-0.

