

Copy to: Ill. Pollution Control Bd., c/o Jon Theriault, *Per copy to Richard Mc Gill*

Rep. Ray LaHood, (copies: Sens. Risinger, Koehler; Reps. Gordon, Leitch, Schock)  
Dear Ray, **RECEIVED  
CLERK'S OFFICE**

*AS 08-10* *PC 327* DEC 03 2008

As I have informed you before, Illinois is one of only 13 states that has a ~~Smazardys~~ **PEORIA** (toxic) waste landfill" still in public use, Peoria Disposal Co.'s. Peoria is ~~also the most~~ **PEORIA** only urban area with such a landfill a) sitting even near let alone directly (50 feet) above the aquifer from which most of its water is drawn, and b) nation's only city with such a landfill immediately adjoining it *and* directly upwind of the air its people must breathe.

And a 5-country study in Europe found that babies born of mothers living near toxic waste landfills had 41% more birth defects [*The Lancet*, 1/26/02], and a New Jersey study revealed twice as many premature births and a five-fold increase in low birth weights near its former Lipari toxic waste dump before its \$125 million clean-up. Love Canal, with less than a 100th of PDC's volume of toxics, cost \$247 million to rectify in 1980s.

> Now a peer review\* of all New York State (outside NYC) hospital records revealed "strikingly elevated" and diverse health problems near hazardous waste sites. Based on "hospitalization discharge rates", for patients from areas near a landfill containing "hazardous" wastes compared to patients from "clean" areas, the differences were:

Diabetes hospitalization rate -- 25% greater, but 36% greater among people living along the Hudson River (attributed to [probably fumes of] toxic wastes going into the river from upstream sources). [ Note: Could this apply as well to the Illinois River? ]

Coronary heart disease hospitalization rate -- 15% more, and 20% more for "acute myocardial infarction" (dying heart muscle); plus higher overall blood pressure. But, like diabetes, along the Hudson River the rate was 35.8% more, and 39.1% more for AMI. These differences are despite people along the Hudson having "higher average income" and "there is less smoking, better diet, and more exercise."

Stroke hospitalization rate -- 15% more among people living near toxic waste sites.

Hypertension rate -- 19.2% higher in people living near toxic waste landfills containing PCBs, dioxins, and chlorinated pesticides as well as "other" toxic wastes, and 10% greater in sites containing "other" toxics, but not the particular above culprits. (PCBs are an issue at Peoria Disposal Co.'s landfill, but dioxins and pesticides are on EPA's permitted list.)

Asthma and infectious respiratory disease hospitalization rate -- 15% higher for infectious respiratory disease in people living in the vicinity of toxic waste sites, 19% higher for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and 9% higher for asthma.

One of the "major routes of exposure" is "inhalation of contaminated air near hazardous waste sites," the study states. [ 53,000 live within 3 miles of Peoria's toxic waste landfill.]

As to the above findings, there are still more to come, the researchers say.

**NOTE:** If the state or federal government wants a hazardous waste landfill in Illinois, it needs to find the safest location possible -- and the government itself must run the landfill, or directly contract out its operation, but with constant government oversight.

There are far less dangerous locations than PDC's right in Peoria. Even in just the four-county area surrounding Peoria there are over 100,000 acres of former stripmined land, of which 15,000 in Fulton County are still owned by the Cook County Reclamation District, farmland already permitted for sewage sludge recycling, but now only farmed.

And there certainly are better ways of dealing with toxic waste than simply burying it under a layer of dirt where it, literally forever, remains a toxic hazard.

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