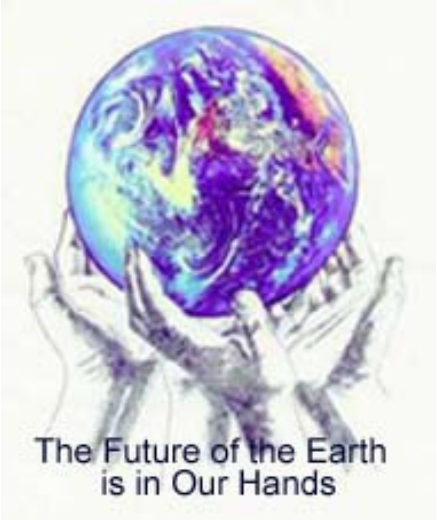

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CACC News

Visit www.caccmi.org

Big Rock

Submitted by: Victor McManemy

NEWS RELEASE: A U.S.A.F. B-52 bomber crashed into northern Lake Michigan, two miles from a small, boiling water reactor nuclear power plant. An eyewitness said the bomber was heading directly in line with the reactor when it crashed, raining a fireball 200 to 600 feet in the air. It has been speculated by the Grumman Aerospace official (builders of the B-52) that the plane may have flown into radioactive gases normally discharged by the reactor's effluent stack. The radioactivity could have interfered with the planes electronic guidance system. No report has been made available to the public. (And, likely, never will be, I might add!)

The opportunistic and shameless attempt by the nuclear power industry to hitch a free ride on the wave of interest in the movement towards safe, clean, renewable, sustainable energy is one of the most insidious undertakings in the history of this country!

Having vested all their hopes of escaping from the responsibility of having to deal with the tons and tons of plutonium wastes piling up at their plants on the federal repository under construction at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, it is now known that that site is being built in porous rock and is also on an earthquake fault line! As an old Odawa Anishinaayba friend of mine used to say, "Schwee-ja-ma-gee!" (Oops!)

Apparently, the nuclear power industry and their friends in the Bush Administration think the American people are ignorant (lacking knowledge) or stupid (ignoring knowledge). We frequently hear and see public service announcements about radon —the tasteless, odorless, invisible radioactive gas that seeps into basements, causing lung cancer in approximately 600 Michigan residents per year. Warning! Warning! Danger! Danger! Alarm! Alarm!

But when's the last time you heard a public service announcement about the dangers of the radioactive gases and liquids spewing from the effluent stacks and discharge pipes of nuclear power plants? When's the last time you heard about the tremendous amounts of thermal discharge from nuclear plants that's heating up our rivers and lakes? (An infrared photo of the thermal discharge plume from the Bruce reactor complex on the Canadian side of Lake Huron shows it reaches all the way to Lake Erie). Or when's the last time you heard anything about the past and on-going decimation from lung cancer and congenital birth defects of the Navahos who worked in the uranium mines of the Southwest or the Anishinaaybeg who work and live around the gigantic piles of uranium mill tailings in northern Ontario?

Depending on which way and how hard the wind blew over the Big Rock Point effluent stack from 1962 to 1991, 3,357,620 curies of various radioactive fission and activation gases spread all over the lands and waters of northern Michigan. When the fetch of wind and waves of northern Lake Michigan backed water up in the discharge channel at Big Rock Point, radiation monitor alarms went off!

If nuclear power is pollution-free, as Chairman and CEO of DTE Energy, Anthony Earley, attested (Detroit Free Press, 2-14-07), would he take his family on a hot-air balloon ride and hover (even for a minute) over the effluent stacks of Fermi II? How about the Board of Directors of Consumers Energy having a family outing at Big Rock Point, catching a few salmon for a fish-boil, and letting their kids take a swim in the discharge channel? Better yet, could we have the Nuclear Regulatory commissioners come up to Charlevoix and participate in a public water tasting from the tritium, cesium, strontium, plutonium, et. al. contaminated aquifers beneath their recently declared "greenfields"?

(For more information, go to www.nirs.org and check the "Backgrounder on Big Rock Nuclear Power Plant" report by Kevin Kamps. Michael Keegan, Kay Cumbow, Kay Drey and Hugh McDiarmid, Jr. contributed research to this report.)

Victor McManemy is a longtime nuclear activist and a CACC Board Member.
Photo credit: Kay Cumbow.

From our Chapters

HEAL

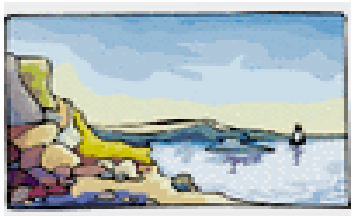
Submitted by: Bill Freese

In the past I have mentioned the waste cement kiln disposal areas here in Alpena. We have an 82 acre pile on the shore of Thunder Bay, Lake Huron, and a 165 acre quarry that was filled with waste cement kiln dust (CKD) and every other type of industrial waste from Huron Portland Cement, National Gypsum and now Lafarge. It is nicknamed Pike's Peak for a retired Lafarge CEO. Southeasterly storms come right up Thunder Bay, beating on and washing that CKD into the bay. It coats the lake bottom in that area with up to three feet of CKD. It has destroyed the spawning beds of fish for a considerable distance, forever. That pile was listed as a source of danger to the health and environment of Alpena's residents.

Pike's Peak was covered with sludge from the Alpena sewage treatment plant. Nothing is strong enough to grow on it. It is the same at the lakeshore dump. The wind has eroded the pile. The run-off from rain or melting snow is caustic enough that it will burn your hand if you touch it. National Gypsum refused to claim ownership of these two sites when it was taken over in the leveraged buyout by Lafarge, now called New National Gypsum.

Just recently a creek running near Pike's Peak was listed as a health hazard by Alpena's Department of Community Health. The leachate from the pile was running into the creek. The water was 100 times more caustic than bleach. This stream runs directly into Thunder Bay, which just happens to be the drinking source of water for the majority of Alpena County residents. We had been informing the MDEQ, city, and county officials for about 5 years of this with no action by any of them. New National Gypsum finally became aware of the problem and drained the creek. They bought CKD from Lafarge and mixed it with the sludge, hauling it away to a licensed landfill. The cost to the company was $10.00 a ton for the CKD and the landfill charged $6.50 per ton.

Lafarge thought that they finally had a way to dispose of their CKD. They were contacting the CAFOs in the lower part of the state to see if they wanted to mix it with the liquid manure so farmers could spread it on their fields. We have contacted the Sierra Club of Michigan and advised them that we have analysis of the CKD. I am sure the that farmers would not want to be blamed for putting those types of heavy metals on their crops. Lafarge has been placing up to 1200 tons of CKD in its active quarry daily since 1988, which is even worse because most was the product of burning hazardous waste. A retired MDEQ analyst describes the facility's being licensed as a landfill as similar to "An uncle we invited for Christmas who decided to stay forever."



EPA Do-Nothing Rule on Cement Kiln Mercury Pollution Ignores Court Order, Public Outcry

Activists back in court to challenge EPA's latest refusal to control mercury emissions

Washington, D.C. – Environmentalists are filing litigation today challenging EPA's latest refusal to limit cement kilns' mercury emissions. EarthJustice is representing Sierra Club, Downwinders At Risk (Texas), the Huron Environmental Activist League – (HEAL) (Michigan), Friends of Hudson (New York), and Montanans Against Toxic Burning in the lawsuit.

In December 2000, a federal court found that EPA's refusal to control cement kilns' mercury emissions, and ordered the agency to set the missing standards. Six years later, EPA has issued only do nothing housekeeping requirements that will have "essentially … zero" impact on the kilns' toxic pollution. The agency estimates that approximately 118 cement kilns emit over 11,000 pounds of mercury each year. The nation's single largest mercury polluter of any kind is a cement kiln in southern California, which emitted over 2,500 pounds of mercury in 2004.

"Under this administration, EPA's disregard for Congress and the courts has hit a new low," said EarthJustice attorney James Pew. "The Clean Air Act required EPA to set mercury standards for cement kilns almost a decade. A federal court ordered EPA to issue those standards six years ago. This is an agency that thinks it is above the law."

In addition to defying the Clean Air Act and repeated court orders, EPA's refusal to set mercury standards, EPA's refusal to set mercury standards ignores the pleas of more than 20,000 people who wrote to the agency urging to finally bring cement kilns' mercury pollution under control.

"It's as if EPA only hears what it wants to," said Marti Sinclair, chair of Sierra Club's National Air Committee. "First they ignored the law. Then they ignored the courts. They ignored the public when we asked for better protections and we're right where we were all along, exposed to pollution that is harming our health."

Mercury is a dangerous and powerful neurotoxin that can cause developmental problems in newborns and young children. Mercury pollution is deposited in waters and bioaccumulates. Humans are exposed to unhealthy levels of mercury when we eat contaminated fish. EPA estimates that 15% of women of childbearing age, or one out of every six, have unsafe mercury levels in their blood.

The EPA has been under fire recently for its failure to implement required rules to reduce toxic air pollution from a variety of industrial pollution sources. In July 2006, the Government Accountability Office issued a report that blasted EPA for failing to take action on scores of specific pollution control measures that Congress required the Agency to complete years ago. Later that summer, a federal court found that EPA's implementation of key

toxics requirements in the Clean Air Act has been "grossly delinquent" and that, "EPA … currently devotes substantial resources to discretionary rulemakings, many of which make existing regulations more congenial to industry, and several of which since have been found unlawful."

Just this month, the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works held an oversight hearing on EPA, where chairwoman Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), said in a statement that, "The pattern of these year-end actions is striking—the public interest is sacrificed and environmental protection compromised. Who gains from these rollbacks? Just look at who asked for them, like Big Oil and the battery industry. EPA's actions and proposed actions make it clear who EPA is protecting."

Who will protect our children?
ECO 2005

MDEQ Hearings on Proposed Kennecott Mine

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) will hold public hearings on a proposed metallic sulfide mining permit for Kennecott's Eagle Minerals company in the U.P. The hearings schedule:

- Marquette: March 6,7 & 8 at Northern Michigan University Center, Michigan and Huron rooms 1pm-4:30pm - also 6pm to 9pm.
- Lansing: March 12 at the Lansing Center 1pm-4:30 pm - also 6pm-9pm

Written comments may be sent until April 5, 2007 to:
Steve E. Wilson, MDEQ, Geological Survey Office
525 W. Allegan, PO Box 30256
Lansing, MI 48909-7756 or email
wilsonse@michigan.gov

Sierra Club, Michigan Environmental Council, Michigan League of Conservation Voters, and National Wildlife Federation present a public workshop March 3 at NMU's University Center, 1 to 4 pm, Cadillac/Brule rooms to help citizens with comments.

Contact Save the Wild U.P. at 906-228-4444. Click on their website - www.savethewildup.org/ to read Dave Dempsey's editorial: "Sulfide Mining and the Soul of Michigan," and also to learn the devastating effects metallic sulfide mining could have on our waters.

Thanks to Save the Wild UP for this information.

Water, Ours for the Taking?

Nestle, otherwise known as Ice Mountain, has been pumping water in Stanwood Michigan since 2002. Now Ice Mountain is planning to withdraw 150 gallons per minute (216,000 gallons per day) of "spring water" from a new site in Osceola County, Evart, Michigan. According to Nestle, its proposed withdrawal will have no adverse impacts. The water would be taken from Twin Creek and Chippewa Creek, two designated trout streams.
Again the DEQ is allowing Malcolm Pirnie, the same company Nestle used when applying for a permit in Stanwood, Michigan, to say there will be no adverse impacts. As you remember, Nestle announced before Mecosta County pumping that there would be no adverse impacts! The trial court and Court of Appeals found substantial impacts and harm. Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation, MCWC, won those two court cases, after spending almost a million dollars hiring its own environmental experts and trial lawyer.

With lessons learned from the past situation in Stanwood please consider an official comment to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality on issuing any future permits to private companies in the sale of our groundwater, by March 15, 2007.
To comment submit letters and emails to:
Brant Fisher, DEQ Water Bureau,
PO Box 30273, Lansing, MI 48909-7773,
or by email at fisherb@michigan.gov.

Mr. Steven E. Chester, Director - Michigan Department of Environmental Quality -
P.O. Box 30473 - Lansing, MI 48909-7973

Governor Jennifer Granholm - State Capitol - P.O. Box 30013- Lansing, MI 48909- 7513.

For letter writing tips and suggested points to include visit http://www.savemiwater.org/ or call 231-972-8856.
Thanks to Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation for this information

Chemical Use In Schools

Did you know that products are used on our school lawns every year that require special application permits? Did you know that these practices cost tax dollars? Did you know that some of these product Material and Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) warn of side effects such as poisoning in children? Do you think these practices should change? Contact your school superintendent, maintenance director, and school board to voice your opinion. Pesticides do not know when to stop killing. Contact CACC if you have questions regarding pesticide use in schools, please email admin@caccmi.org or call 989-544-3318 and leave your contact information.

The CACC NEWS is published by Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical Contamination (CACC).
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Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical Contamination
8735 Maple Grove Road
Lake, MI 48632-9511
Phone and fax- 989-544-3318
On the web at: www.caccmi.org

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Mark Your Calendars

- **The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development Speaker Series**
  - "Creating a Sustainable Future - What Every Educator and Student Needs to Know" **Dr. Debra Rowe, March 14th**
  - "Financing Our Future - Higher Ed's Responsibility for Teaching and Practicing Responsible Investing." **Dr. Julie Fox Gorte, April 4th**
  - "Healthy Individuals and Healthy Communities - How Can Higher Education Help?" **Laury Hammel, April 11th**
- ***First Annual Alternative Energy Fair*** in Sanilac County Saturday, **March 17**,
  More information: www.altenergyfair.com or Kimberly Cory, (810)376-4333.
- ***5th Annual Renewable Energy Conference***: **March 17, Saturday,** 8:30 - 4 pm
  Pierce Cedar Creek Institute (near Hastings, MI) More information: 269-721-4190
  www.cedarcreekinstitute.org/conferences.htm
- ***National Day of Climate Action*** - **April 14**
- ***Earth Day*** - **April 22, 2007**. Many communities hold local events.
- Inconvenient Truth slideshow on global warming: www.theclimateproject.org, and click on the Michigan map to find location near you.

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CACC

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