

*(Excerpt From Portage County Groundwater Citizens Advisory Committee Thursday, May 17, 2001 DNR Update On Stillage Spill From Alcohol Plant In Town Of Plover)*

John Grump, Regional Spill Coordinator for the DNR, attended the meeting to answer questions regarding Eco Products, the ethanol plant in the Town of Plover.

Back in 1993, Eco Products was storing/using whey to produce alcohol. Whey permeate is a byproduct of milk. Through taking the protein out of milk, creating whey, then treating the whey with enzymes and chemical reactions, whey permeate and ethanol are created. The whey permeate was then stored in the slurry store, which later developed leaks. Over 200,000 gallons of whey permeate leaked into the groundwater over an extended amount of time (approximately 1 weeks). The material leaked had both high chloride and Biological Oxygen Demand levels. Once the DNR was notified of the leak, the owner was contacted and notified of the clean-up procedures he was to follow. These procedures included draining the tank, landspreading the remaining material, having material laboratory tested prior to landspreading, and installing groundwater monitoring wells. To date, the majority of the contents of the tank have been drained (approximately six inches of whey permeate remain), and three groundwater monitoring wells have been installed (one up gradient, and two down gradient). The owner has not complied with all the terms laid out by the DNR; however, he will need to provide additional information to the DNR, if he wishes to start up the plant again. The tank is not in use at this time. Currently, the DNR has not pursued from an enforcement standpoint.

Langer questioned why the County was not notified of this spill. Grump indicated there is no statutory regulation requiring the County be notified. The only statutory requirement is to notify the DNR. DeGross suggested developing an ordinance requiring the property owners to report spills to the County, as well as the DNR. Because landowners would not know of new requirements stated in the ordinance, Kell felt future spills would still go unreported. DeGross stated Emergency Government keeps a listing of individuals who need to comply with SERA Title 3 requirements. If an ordinance was developed, copies could be mailed to these individuals.

Grump indicated all spill information is open record and can be reviewed at any time. When requested by Schmidt, Grump did not see any problem

with exchanging spill information with Portage County. Schmidt provided Grump with his e-mail address so future information may be forwarded.

When questioned on citations issued to the owner, Grump notified members his department does not have authority to issue citations. If an individual does not comply with the terms set forth by the DNR, an administrative order and referral are forwarded to the Department of Justice for further action.

Corbett questioned if any wells were affected by this spill. Grump indicated there was one contaminated well; however, the contamination was not due to this spill. An earlier spill by the same individual did result in one contaminated well to the north of the property, which has been replaced by the owner of the plant.

Langer questioned what would have occurred if this material was hazardous. If the material is hazardous, plans need to be submitted to the local Emergency Government for approval. Although not monitored, if there is a spill, there would also be additional recording requirements to the State, national response center (federal government), and the Local Emergency Planning Committee.

Zimmerman asked whether Grump would mind if we added his name to our website. Grump did not mind; however, he notified members he is on the DNR website, so a link could be added to the DNR site.

Grump was thanked by those present for all his time and information.