

Hills contamination problems addressed

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Contamination at two Farmington Hills sites — among those on a state Department of Natural Resources contamination and cleanup list — have been addressed.

One of the sites is on city property west of Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 11 Mile. The other is at TRW Automotive Systems Laboratory, 24175 Research Drive.

"This (listing) is under the state Environmental Response Act 307.

But it is not limited to just landfills. These are those sites that need evaluation and response," said Gary Klepper, chief of site assessment in the DNR's environmental response division in Lansing.

Both contamination sites involved underground storage tanks, said Michael Czuprenski, DNR environmental quality analyst in Northville.

The DNR is at a standstill with the city since the source of petroleum-based contamination is unknown.

"We don't know what the source

is. We would be considering a hydro-geological evaluation of that property," Czuprenski said.

But as far as city officials are concerned, "it's resolved," said Thomas Blasell, public services director.

A CONTAMINATION problem in well water of at least one residence near city hall was found by the state Department of Public Health a year ago.

"They are saying that because we had an (underground) tank, we are a likely source," Blasell said.

But the underground tank that was west of city hall in a storage area — where the new police building now sits — was tested and found to be secure. New tanks installed with construction of the police building also were tested, Blasell said.

"I can't really fault the DNR because it's the only tank in the area. It's the only logical conclusion," Blasell said.

The residence whose well water showed traces of benzene was hooked up to city water. Well water

of other nearby residences was also tested and found to be safe, Blasell said.

Though the DNR is aware of action taken by the city, efforts are afoot to conduct more testing.

"We anticipate getting some money through the EPA for leaking underground storage tanks. They (the city) would be a prime candidate," Czuprenski said.

AT THE TRW site, small 550-gallon underground waste oil tanks were found to be leaking. TRW officials removed the tanks as well as surrounding soil. Monitor wells have been installed to determine if the ground water has been affected, Czuprenski said.

"They (TRW officials) have done a super job. They embarked on their own investigation and responded very responsibly," Czuprenski said.

A TRW spokesman would not confirm or deny the DNR's report. The spokesman asked that all questions regarding the issue be put in writing to the company's Cleveland office for approval.

School capital improvements prompt debate

By Casoy Hans
staff writer

Several capital projects planned by the Farmington Hills district prompted discussion Tuesday and a split vote on one of the larger purchases — a new roof for Harrison High School.

The projects are part of the \$2.5 million budgeted in 1986-87 for a portion of the needed \$10 million in capital and building improvements.

According to deputy superintendent

Michael Flanagan, the projects will use up the remainder of the \$2.5 million in the budget.

Vendors swarmed into the Farmington school board meeting to get in a last-minute sales pitch before the board took a final vote on roof bids and relocatable modular classrooms for several elementary schools.

The board discussed whether the district should spend \$377,000 and install a Tremco brand "built-up" roof at the three-story Harrison

building or take an alternate bid from another company for a single-ply Carlisle roof, which would have cost \$209,185.

THE BOARD voted 5-1 to approve the costlier roof, with trustee John Cotton abstaining. Trustee James Abernethy voted against the measure.

"We were the only company who apparently chose to offer a savings to the district," Jerry Warren of Michigan Roofing of Detroit told the

board. Warren's company had proposed the alternate Carlisle roof.

Although Michigan Roofing was awarded one of the smaller roofing jobs, Warren said the company's total alternate bid could have saved the district about half a million dollars, or about \$2.25 per square foot of savings. The company also bid on the specified system, but was not the low bidder.

"The specified system is also a very expensive system," Warren

added. "Our alternate is tried, tested all over the state."

Jack Lawing, director of facilities management for the district, called the Harrison building "unique." He said the district "uses built-up roofing for most of our applications except at Power Middle School."

LAWING SAID he recommended the Tremco roof for several reasons:

- Harrison's roof is subject to wind damage;
- the extra stone used in a single-ply roof adds too much weight to the building;

the built-up roofing stands up to foot traffic, vandalism and abuse better.

If the board decided to consider a single-ply roof, the project would have to be re-bid, Flanagan told the group.

Abernethy, a professor of architecture at Lawrence Institute of Technology, said, "Fifty percent of the roofs being installed are single-ply, and mostly loose-layered."

police/fire calls

AP — Already facing a state probe, top executives of a Birmingham insurance company now face a class-action lawsuit alleging that they used profits to boost their salaries instead of cutting rates to policyholders.

Oak Park attorney Jerry Kaufman said May 6 he filed the lawsuit in Oakland County Circuit Court on behalf of his mother, Fayanne G. Kaufman, a Farmington High School teacher.

Kaufman, an unsuccessful candidate for the Supreme Court last fall, said his mother has had insurance with the Michigan Educational Employees Mutual Insurance Co. for at least 10 years.

State and company records show the company's executives cut sales commissions and raised rates, then increased their six-figure salaries by as much as \$53,600 over four years,

pocketing \$9.3 million in excess profits.

The state Insurance Bureau will hold a hearing to decide if the financial arrangements were illegal.

IT'S JUST AMAZING what they've been doing," Kaufman said. The suit, assigned to Circuit Judge Gene Schnitz, seeks damages of more than \$10,000.

From 1982 to 1986, officers of the Michigan Educational Employees Mutual Insurance Co., and its agency, MEEMIC Agency Inc., twice cut commissions to agents, the State Insurance Bureau said.

They also boosted rates to 34,000 policyholders seven times for an overall rate increase of nearly 51 percent.

In the same period, the salaries and dividends paid to the company's five top officials rose to at least \$200,100 a year, with one of the five receiving \$462,826, state and

company records show.

During the same four years, the company cut its rates once, trimming them by 1 percent in July 1986, according to Insurance Bureau records.

STANLEY PROKOP, an attorney for the company and the agency, issued a three-page statement this week denying charges that officers took excess profits.

The Insurance Bureau staff has recommended that officers of the company and agency be removed and that their licenses to sell insurance be revoked.

MEEMIC specializes in selling auto insurance to teachers and other educators, most of them in the Detroit area. The company sold \$29 million in insurance coverage in 1986, according to state records.

The company also sells home, commercial and life insurance.

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police and fire calls received during the past week.

• ATTEMPTED THEFTS

Two attempted car thefts were reported to the Farmington Department of Public Safety May 5.

One occurred in the lot of Speedy Printing, 32519 Grand River, where damage of \$200 was reported to a 1976 Firebird. The other occurred in the lot of the Downtown Farmington Center, where \$200 in damage was reported to a 1986 Firebird.

• THEFTS REPORTED

Jewelry valued at \$1,000 was reported stolen from an apartment at Muirwood Apartments April 10-25.

City of Farmington fire equipment valued at \$800 was reported stolen from a car on Westmoreland between April 21 and May 4.

A lawn mower valued at \$600 was

reported stolen from a shed on Brookview between April 29 and May 5.

An off-road vehicle valued at \$1,900 was reported stolen from a shed on Folsom May 1-4.

A snowblower valued at \$900 was reported stolen from a yard on Belmont May 4-5.

Jewelry, stereo equipment and a color TV valued at \$6,200 were reported stolen from a house on Randall May 5.

A mink coat, a fox jacket, a leather coat, jewelry, an answering machine and a black and white TV valued at \$17,100 were reported stolen from an apartment at Gateway Apartments May 5.

Hubcaps valued at \$75 were reported stolen from a car parked at Gateway Apartments May 5.

A radar detector valued at \$132 was reported stolen from a car parked on Regency Lane May 5-6.

An in-dash radio valued at \$200 was reported stolen from a car parked on Wendy Brook Court May 5-6.

A 1986 Nissan valued at \$12,000 was reported stolen from Bob Saks, 35300 Grand River, May 6. It was recovered in Detroit.

An in-dash radio valued at \$614 was reported stolen from a car parked on Clubhouse Lane May 6.

A bicycle valued at \$100 was reported stolen from a garage at Hunters Ridge Apartments May 6-7.

A bicycle valued at \$350 was reported stolen from outside a house on Mullane May 7.

A wire wheel cover valued at \$125 was reported stolen from a car parked on Gettysburg May 8.

• DAMAGE REPORTED

Damage was estimated at \$430 when rocks were thrown through 13 windows at Children's World, 29375 Halsted, May 6-7.

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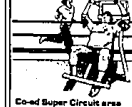
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