

# EPA <sup>Stu</sup> for Ohio waste cleanup

**The Ohio EPA director  
is reorganizing the  
division that deals with  
industrial waste sites.**

**By Randall Edwards**  
*Dispatch Environment Reporter*

A shake-up in the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency may lead to action at Ohio's long-neglected industrial wastelands.

Director Christopher Jones has begun overhauling the agency's cleanup programs to reinvigorate a sluggish EPA division that has been overburdened and underfunded for 10 years.

He has ordered agency officials to make progress toward cleaning up 142 polluted factories and dumps.

This is a prelude to asking state lawmakers to create a multimillion dollar fund that will address hundreds of contaminated properties in Ohio, Jones said. But first, "We need to make sure we are working efficiently within our means and our sites cleaned up."

**Ohio EPA chief  
Jones wants a  
multimillion  
cleanup fund.**

The reorganization has focused on the Division of Emergency and Remedial Response, the EPA unit that deals with chemical spills and cleaning up polluted properties. Jones recently moved three major programs out of the division because they were unrelated to the division's central tasks. He also relocated 21 employees to other divisions. He has asked the legislature for an additional \$500,000 for emergency spills and has ordered the remaining 136 employees to focus on the 142 properties where the agency now is working.

Jones said the division has done a good job of attacking new spills and documenting hazards, but has had trouble obtaining "measurable results" with completed cleanups. "It's been effective as far as emergency response is concerned, but bringing things to an end point has been a problem," he said. Many of these issues were raised



**Ohio EPA chief  
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cleanup fund.**

Two years after voters rejected the Blue Jackets hockey team, National Swindell...  
Site base 1998...  
Ohio

## Before and after What approval of the May 1 PROJECT

- 21,000 seat Downtown soccer stadium
- 35,000 seat Downtown soccer stadium
- Land acquisition, site work

### FUNDING

A 3-year, 0.5 percent sales tax stadium for the Columbus Crew team. The rest of the funding private funds and interest earn

## What the Crew is getting in PROJECT

- 22,500 seat stadium at the (30,000 seats for concerts)

### FUNDING

Hunt Sports Group is the sole back up to 50 percent of its credit that allows the Crew's otherwise would have to share

## What Downtown is getting in PROJECT

- 18,500 seat Nationwide Arena (20,000 for concerts)
- Nationwide Arena District (offices, retail-entertainment)

### FUNDING

Developed by Nationwide Mall Paving Co. as a 10 percent plus a 10 percent state share of the 95-acre arena district.

percent of ticket revenue is for ed from the teams to the league. Hunt said for a 10-year period team can deduct 5 percent of construction cost from the league. The team to hold b

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WEDS-10-07  
waverly news watchman paper pg. 1 of 2

DOCKETED  
USNRC  
January 23, 2007 (3:47pm)  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY  
RULEMAKINGS AND  
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF  
Docket No. 70-7004-ML

I oppose a 30 year license, I feel more evidence should be supplied to the public & surrounding areas (concerned about a Hazardous waste storage). I don't believe Environment is at the top of the plan list, apparently the Public Safety isn't either, it's all about \$ and there's no price on a human life?

Surrounding communities have endured enough SUFFERING  
Mark A Long  
1-18-07

Pike Co. Resident

TEMPLATE  
SECY-043

SECY-02

## EPA from 1A

last year in the Toxic Troubles series published by *The Dispatch*, which described the EPA's lack of progress in cleaning up contaminated sites.

Most of the sites are industrial properties or former landfills the EPA has known about for years. Some are under court-ordered cleanups while others are being investigated.

The primary problem, Jones said, is lack of money.

When the division was created in 1989, lawmakers levied a tax of \$1 per ton on trash and earmarked the proceeds for cleaning up waste sites.

Within a few years the fund had \$45 million, but that was quickly depleted. The legislature siphoned \$11 million in 1991 to deal with a budget crisis and \$3 million went to create a voluntary cleanup program.

Over subsequent years, the voluntary program and other unrelated programs whittled away at the fund. Ten sites were cleaned up.

The EPA now uses the trash tax to support the division's daily operations. About \$12 million remains in the cleanup fund, but \$7 million of that is set aside for the state's share of a federal cleanup of Ashtabula harbor.

The program won't work until the division has more money, Jones said. For example, the state needs money to clean up "orphan sites," properties with unknown or bankrupt owners who don't have the money to clean the site.

Jones said he has no specific

timetable for going back to the legislature to create a much larger cleanup fund, but said it could be as early as summer.

He said he doesn't know how much money the agency will need or how the state should go about raising it, but cleanups are expensive.

For example, at the Marion Engineering Depot, a former military dump in Marion County where two River Valley schools were built, the Ohio EPA has spent nearly \$1 million to evaluate contamination; no cleanup has been done.

Michigan recently approved a bond issue that would raise \$400 million, much of which will be devoted to environmental cleanups, Jones said. New Jersey has spent more than \$350 million over the past two decades. New York has issued \$1 billion in bonds for similar programs.

Jones also pledged to correct problems with the division's voluntary action program, which has been criticized for accomplishing little during its five years.

The voluntary program was supposed to encourage redevelopment of industrial sites in urban areas, known as brownfields. Jones asked lawmakers for an additional \$725,000 for the program and for permission to forgive the \$3 million loan that was used to establish the brownfields program. The money was taken from the trash-fee fund.

The reorganization was welcomed by Bruce Dunlavy, who supervises seven site coordinators in the northwest Ohio district.

"I think its going to allow us to direct our attention more closely to the sites that need the attention," Dunlavy said.

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