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Debbie. read the book  
"Highly sensitive"

Note For: Vandy Miller  
John McGrath  
From: Don Mackenzie *Don Mackenzie*  
Concerning: Public Meeting on Neutron Products, Inc.

On June 12, 1989 I attended a public meeting in Barnesville, Md. that was intended to provide area citizens with a report of the status of Neutron Products, Inc. (NPI) progress in meeting the State of Maryland safety requirements. The meeting was arranged by Del. Gene W. Counihan and the State of Maryland was represented by Lawrence Ward, deputy assistant secretary of the Department of the Environment and Roland Fletcher, administrator of the State's Center for Radiological Health. Jack Rasnoff was present as a representative of NPI. Also, Ray Manley and Carl Trump were present in the audience. Both the State of Maryland and NPI presented their views of the progress of NPI in meeting the Maryland safety requirements. There were several comments from the audience that were primarily directed toward Mr. Rasnoff. Spiros is planning to include the public meeting ~~meeting~~ in the "weekly". Attached are two articles concerning the meeting that appeared in the Frederick newspaper.

In summation both the State and NPI agreed that progress was being made towards meeting the requirements although the necessity of the requirements is still a matter of contention between the State and NPI. At the conclusion of the meeting Del. Counihan thanked the participants and expressed his support of the State of Maryland. contention between the State and NPI.

Enclosures: As Stated.

A17

# The Frederick News-Post

D-8 FREDERICK, MD., THURSDAY, JULY 6, 1989

## Neutron Products safety report planned July 12

A meeting to provide up-county Montgomery citizens with a report on the status of Neutron Products' progress in meeting Maryland environmental and operating safety requirements will be held Wednesday, July 12 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Pavilion in Barnesville.

Lawrence Ward, deputy assistant secretary of the Department of Environment, and Roland Fletcher, administrator of the state's Center for Radiological Health, will provide complete information regarding the problems and current status of the state's work with Neutron Products.

"Our citizens have a right to know what's happening. They must know that state officials will not allow environmentally unsafe conditions to exist," said Del. Gene W. Counihan, who arranged the meeting. There will be an opportunity for questions and answers.

# Neutron Products bemoans delay

By RUTH W. ELLIS  
Montgomery Bureau Chief

**BARNESVILLE** — Since Neutron Products Inc. was ordered in March to suspend manufacture of Cobalt 60, about 30 percent of the company's business has been shut down, thereby affecting employee wages and benefits.

Jack Ransohoff, Neutron president, told a group of citizens meeting at St. Mary's Pavilion on Wednesday night that his workers, numbering between 70 and 80, have had their wages and benefits deferred because of the financial hardship imposed on the company since it was shut down.

In March the state ordered the company to suspend manufacture of the radioactive material used for cancer therapy after a Neutron vice president tripped an alarm while visiting a power plant in New York. Although Mr. Ransohoff said corrective measures have been taken at his Dickerson facility, the company has received only "very limited" authority to operate.

"We're not very happy," he said, adding that "they (state officials) are killing us with delay."

According to Roland G. Fletcher, administrator of the Center for Radiological Health for the state, Neutron has only "partially satisfied" the state's demands. "They are only permitted to do operations that are most risk free."

Carl E. Trump Jr., public health radiation specialist for Maryland's Department of the Environment, said, "We have outlined what Neutron has to do to get back in full operation. If we feel the intent is there, we may" approve renewed operation.

Some citizens living in the vicinity of the company have continued to question the safety of Neutron's operation, but Mr. Fletcher said the company now has installed required equipment to detect even low levels of radiation and has taken other safety measures.

"They are working to meet our conditions," said Mr. Fletcher. "If they (Neutron) come through with reasonable alternatives, we might adjust our regulations."

Mr. Ransohoff has appealed the state action against the company and is scheduled to appear at a hearing in Baltimore next week. Larry Ward, deputy secretary for toxic and environmental health with the state, said he hoped an interim resolution of the differences with Neutron could be reached later this month.

A hazardous waste inspector for

the state now has given Neutron a "clean bill of health" in that regard, said Mr. Ward. "The enforcement action was taken because we lost confidence in Neutron Products."

THE NEWS, FREDERICK, MD., THURSDAY, JULY 13, 1989 A-11

# Montgomery plant gets permission to resume radioactive production

By Dennis O'Brien

Maryland environmental officials have granted a Montgomery County company permission to resume making radioactive materials. Five months after production was ordered stopped when a company official tripped a radiation alarm while visiting another plant.

Neutron Products Inc. of Dickerson will be allowed to continue producing cobalt 60 — used in hospitals for radiation therapy — as part of an agreement reached July 25 with the Maryland Department of the Environment after four months of negotiations.

Jackson Ransohoff, president of Neutron Products, said the company has installed a sophisticated, \$100,000 radiation detection system that includes a portal monitor — similar to metal detectors found at airports — capable of detecting microscopic amounts of radioactive materials on any worker leaving the plant.

Neighbors of the plant, in a rural corner of upper Montgomery County, said they continue to be skeptical about Neutron Products' safety measures.

"No one wants the plant to go out of business. They just want it to op-

erate safely," said Beverly Thoms, vice president of the Sugar Loaf Citizens Association. "I don't feel reassured that that's really going to happen."

While the state will continue to monitor Neutron Products, the agreement still prohibits the company from resuming a sensitive part of its operations, said Ray C. Feldmann, spokesman for the Environment Department. The company is prohibited from cobalt 60 melting — a process where the materials are melted down in a concrete-lined cell — until an independent health consultant has evaluated the exhaust and ventilation system being used.

The cobalt 60 melting process constitutes about 25 percent of the firm's operations, Mr. Feldmann said.

"They're still not completely back in business. They still have a few hurdles to clear as far as we're concerned," he said.

Production of cobalt 60 was ordered halted March 3, about two weeks after a company vice president, Frank Schwoerer, set off radiation alarms as he left the Robert E. Ginna Nuclear Power Station near Rochester, N.Y.

It was the second time Mr. Schwoerer had set off alarms at the

plant. In May 1988, his company was fined \$3,000 and ordered to improve the monitoring of radioactivity on departing workers after Mr. Schwoerer, who is on a safety committee at the New York plant, set off alarms there.

The company had monitors to detect low levels of radiation on workers, but the equipment had not been functioning properly, and hand-held monitors weren't being used as a backup check, state officials said.

Mr. Ransohoff said yesterday that the New York power plant's monitoring equipment, tripped by Mr. Schwoerer, was more sensitive than the 8-year-old equipment used by his company to detect radiation.

But Mr. Ransohoff defended the technology as sufficient to ensure worker safety. The more modern detection system the state ordered will pick up even lower levels of radiation, he said.

He compared Neutron Products to "a kid who's done a good job keeping his room clean and then going off to West Point and being subjected to a white glove inspection."

But Mr. Feldmann contested that analogy.

"Maybe the analogy is that the room should have been up to West Point standards all along," he said.

# Inner Harbor oil spill source not known

## British frigate, barge inspected for leaks

By David Simon

Authorities investigating an oil spill of 200 to 300 gallons in the Inner Harbor said yesterday that the

ing checked, according to Lieutenant Commander Hunt.

The spill was first reported to Coast Guard officials at 6:40 p.m. Wednesday by the Baltimore harbor dock master, who indicated that the oil may have leaked from the H.M.S. Cumberland, a British anti-submarine frigate visiting here.

The frigate had been taking on oil

ing his ship at 6:10 p.m. Wednesday and reported the spill to the dock master when the oil was still 150 feet from the frigate.

By 8 p.m., the spill had drifted around the ship. The Coast Guard laid a floating pollution boom to enclose the oil around the frigate's berth near Harborplace.

Coast Guard officials confirmed that several possibilities had not been