

## **Appendix 2**

### **Some Public Comments and Questions On Southeast Kansas Health Study**



**Community Information Meeting  
March 24, 1998  
Central Park Pavilion  
101 South Forest  
Chanute, Kansas**

Questions and Answers

**Comment:** I have a concern that the respiratory component of study is not comprehensive enough. It will not answer the questions originally asked of EPA--how many people are there with respiratory ailments that are not diagnosed with asthma, sinusitis, and bronchitis--the study needs to get data from local physicians at clinics.

**Response:** The health questionnaire will pick up on a number of those issues. You will see rate of population with complaints in different communities.

**Question:** I would like to see the study look at the number of diagnosed [cancer] cases in the clinics as well as in the hospitals. I don't think the questionnaire is going to truly reflect what's going on. The clinics do have codes. We know that the liver detoxifies. Was liver cancer include in the number of cancer cases?

**Answer:** It was included.

**Question:** In cases like these, isn't it a common practice to look at the liver? I would really like that to be looked at.

**Answer:** It is looked at in firefighters. One predisposing factor for liver cancer is alcohol. Incidence of primary hepatoma is not high.

**Comment:** I have talked with several young mothers who live at the base of the Ash Grove Cement Company, it's amazing how many cancers are showing up in these young people who live directly south of the area.

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question:** With respect to the particulates that you are studying, will there be any study of these particulates that are in the body and/or the cumulative effects?

**Answer:** We will be looking at particulate matter in the 2.5 to 10 micron range. Particulate matter 10 microns and smaller goes into the lungs. We will be able to determine if the PM is 10 microns or smaller and if it 2.5 microns or smaller. We also will analyze these particulates for chemical composition. In a homogenous

atmosphere, particulates are uniformly distributed. We will look at specific compounds that are potential causative agents. If we see higher concentrations of them, then we will have to explore where they're coming from. We have looked at the permit papers, and we know that extensive stack sampling has been done, and we know what chemicals are out there; but we may find something entirely different, and that will have to be investigated.

This is not a mechanistic study or an air pollution study. Environmental and medical consequences don't necessarily occur the same day as exposure. There is a delay. If you can detect by odor, then you can get out of there. Seasonal variations are important. Attack rates are important.

**Question:** How about those individuals who are diagnosed with cancer in Rochester, Wichita, Kansas City, will you be able to pick up those cancer cases?

**Answer:** Cancer Registry has difficulty in interstate reporting.

**Comment:** Sometime in the early morning downtown nearly the Memorial Building--at the lowest part of Chanute, there is something that looks like fog, but it isn't fog. (Mr. Lynn Ranabarger (sp?) 431-2390.

**Question:** Is there another study that has been done in the past that this is similar to?

**Answer:** Not exactly. There are fairly traditional protocols for carrying out this type of study. With this size population, if something falls out then we will have to do additional studies. We hope to be able to say, "We think there is a problem" or "there isn't a problem." There is enough here that we can say there is something there or there doesn't appear to be anything there.

**Question:** There numbers are big, but I wonder if there really is enough money there to do the study. Your protocol won't be out for awhile. Do you have another study that we could look at now before your final protocol is out?

**Answer:** Not really.

**Question:** I can't find anything that says agent orange, PCBs, and dioxins, etc., that say they're good for you. These chemicals can be completely destroyed. Is that true? (Mr. Rinne)

**Answer:** Their form is changed and they become less toxic.

**Question:** What's coming out of the smoke stacks is going somewhere--in streams. There are cattle that have 38 percent distribution of dioxin in their bodies. Dioxin gets

into mother's milk. Is there any way that it can be shown that dioxins cause cancer?

**Answer:** Cancers that are associated with hazardous waste--what does the literature show--frequently environmental agents can be shown to cause cancer.

**Question:** Would you say that people might choose a life style without knowing the consequences?

**Question:** With a 25 to 30 percent response rate to the questionnaire, will 1,000 household be enough?

**Answer:** We have to get more than 50 percent back, so we will have to find a way to get a good response.

**Comment:** News media will help, and must be postage paid.

**Question:** Regarding the occupational hazards of some jobs: I have a real concern about people who work in the plants. Is there any way to [tap] into people who work in these plants to see if there is an increased incidence in [disease/cancer]?

**Answer:** Anyone who works in these plants can fill out the questionnaire. Some of the people who work in these plants are getting medical surveillance examinations. The companies invest in making sure that their people don't leave. . .

**Comment:** I would be cautious about getting data from companies themselves--they can be skewed.

**Answer:** I was talking about the raw data from the clinics here. But the individuals would have to agree to that. Their perception is welcomed.

**Comment:** Aptus monitored their people. They swab their tools. No dust or water samples are done at Ash Grove.

**Question:** Isn't OSHA supposed to check on these plants?

**Answer:** It's MSHA. OSHA has inspected only about three percent of the workplaces in the country.

**Comment:** I'm very appreciative that you are here. I hope that when you're done that you will answer that this is a safe place to live and raise our children.

**Comment:** I worked in a cement plant for six years and safety was their number one concern.

**Question:** When you know what you know about hazardous waste, I wonder how many of

you would feel safe raising your children here?

**Answer:** There has been enough concern expressed to do the study. I don't see anything here to panic about, but I do want to see everyone involved.

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**Community Information Meeting  
April 7, 1998  
Coffeyville Community College  
Coffeyville, Kansas**

*Questions and Answers*

- Question:** Aptus/Laidlaw is idling. What affect will that have on the study?
- Answer:** It will affect the air monitoring, but not too much on the cancer study.
- Comment:** Regarding asthma: Contact school district to find out how many children have asthma. Most of our people go outside this area for diagnoses.
- Response:** Have asked KDHE to give me a list of hospitals that people go to outside of the area.
- Comment:** I lost a daughter to cancer last month. [We went to] Tulsa and Bartlesville for diagnosis.
- Comment:** Most of the winter I couldn't go outside because of dirty smell. I couldn't breathe. Had to stay in house because of Co-op--dirty smoke. You can't find anything without doing soil sampling.
- Response:** We will sample, and we will find out what we will find out.
- Response:** Perhaps John Smith can respond to the soil sampling issue.
- Answer:** We have an interest in doing soil sampling as a way of determining past exposure. We would use as a record of past emission. Some of every compound will be there.
- Comment:** Refinery has changed its operation in the past two or three weeks, and I have been able to breathe better. I live just south of the Co-op refinery.
- Comment:** Some soil sampling has been done at the [SW] plant. Just have metals I think.
- J. Smith:** Yes.
- Comment:** We have had a blue haze a couple of times. Can't hardly breathe because of that haze. (But we're talking about people's jobs.) See this blue haze in the fall about twice a year.

**Response:** This is one of the most fascinating parts of this study. Namely, we don't see this with pollutants we expect to have in this area. This is perplexing at the present time.

**Comment:** I live in the north central part of the city. We have white wall--like fog--it's just white. It gone by 10 or 11 a.m. but see it all year long.

**Comment:** In schools, there are whole walls filled with inhalers.

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**Community Information meeting**  
**May 13, 1998**  
**Fredonia High School Theater**  
**Fredonia, Kansas**

*Questions and Answers*

**Question:** Harold Campbell of the *Independence Reporter* asked if soil sampling will be done during the study.

**Answer:** Dennis Lane responded that the EPA has asked a consulting firm to look at the possibility of doing soil sampling. Consulting firm send back a proposal and we are reviewing that proposal. We found serious flaws in their plan. Now EPA has asked us to look at how we could do soil sampling. It will take another month for us to figure out if we can do it or put together some sort of a plan.

**Question:** Mrs. Shirley Walton, who owns a kennel, asked if a monitor could be placed in her area. She explained that she has had problems with birth defects in her puppies.

**Answer:** Dr. Barkman responded, yes. He referred Mrs. Walton to Dr. Fred Oehme at Kansas State University.

**Question:** Will you be surveying high schools and middle schools regarding asthma, or trusting only parents for that information?

**Answer:** Dr. Barkman explained that the survey will involve sending questionnaires to every household in Fredonia. In addition, we will be collecting data on hospital emergency room visits for acute respiratory illnesses from local hospitals.

**Question:** Several families have been interviewed regarding brain cancer, was that a part of this study?

**Answer:** Dr. Neuberger responded, no; this was a separate issue, which was a particular interest of mine.

**Answer:** Dr. Barkman noted that these cancers will get into the study.

**Comment:** Karen Bostick (sp?) Of the American Cancer Society noted that the ACS is very interested in studies like this one. She is a cancer specialist. She encouraged the people of Fredonia to support this study.

**Question:** Paul Peters of Lafarge Corporation asked about the makeup of the study's Advisory Committee and whether or not it included any members from the cement industry.

**Answer:** Dr. Barkman explained to Paul about the philosophy for selecting committee members and said that we would send him a membership list.

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**Community Information Meeting**  
**March 2, 1998**  
**2 - 3:30 p.m.**  
**Civic Center**  
**Memorial Hall**  
**Independence, Kansas**

**Judy Neeley**

Would like to verify that the cancer data collected will be data driven and not questionnaire driven?

**Judith Rutledge**

Reported that she has kept diary of when odors are smelled of date, time, and wind direction, and has called Aptus, Farmland, and Heartland to determine if there has been a vent. February 14, 1998, a blue haze blanketed Independence. Farmland confirmed to her that sulfur dioxide scrubbers were down.

1. I want to make sure that you will be able to identify where the sulfur dioxide is coming from.
2. Why are permits issued before studies are done?
3. When fines are collected for air pollution, why are they not put into a trust fund for use by ....
4. Why aren't you going to Cherryvale and Neodesha to study children's cancers? Will you be checking in those communities.

**Fred Rinne**

We don't understand why . . .

1. A survey was not done in south Kansas and Oklahoma (across stateline) hospitals to collect health data pertinent to air pollution problems.
2. Why farm land and water were not sampled.
3. Why EPA allowed location of dioxin burning facility in this area, which is primarily farm area, instead of in Utah where Aptus has another facility.

4. Why can't disposal of hazardous wastes/toxics been done in Gallop, New Mexico.

Noted that Aptus and Farmland burn at night, not during the day. Stated that he was allergy-free until about 8 years ago. Pointed out that there have been 8 cases of AML cancers in Labette County, and 20 cancer patients in Labette and Montgomery Counties.

Would ask that the study include more hospitals than just those in the area.

### **June Self**

Reported that she has emphysema and that she has been told that it has been caused by the air she breathes. She is a non-smoker. She reported that when there was a paint solvent smell in the area, she contacted the EPA. It was determined that the school complex was dumping barrels of solvent into the rain sewers which flow into the Verdigris River. She pointed out that the drinking water comes from the river.

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