

Please accept this addendum to my "Superfund Site" written testimony of April 21, 2025.

This addendum includes:

my oral testimony (I ceded my oral testimony time)

four articles from the Gazette-Times 1977

twelve articles from the GT 1979

Please note this was a cursory -and by no means exhaustive- search of the literature related to **radioactive waste from Wah-Chang dumped at Coffin Butte** during the mid/late seventies over a roughly five year period. Wah-Chang became a superfund site in 1983. Through a rigorous federal process Wah-Chang landed on the National Priorities List and from there became a designated Superfund Site. Radioactive waste including radium 226 which has a half life of 1600 years went to Coffin Butte. This is a history that no doubt bears further scrutiny.

One article concerns picric acid from Chedelin Middle School disposed at Coffin Butte.

I mention this to point out that a more thorough research effort would no doubt turn up other toxic waste of concern. Things were more lax then.

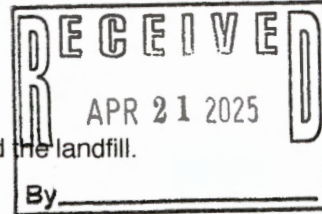
Context, history is everything.... It is critical that Coffin Butte be looked at over its long and complicated history.

DATE RECEIVED:	5/8/25
FROM:	Elizabeth Conover
PHONE OR EMAIL:	egconover1@gmail.com

April 20, 2025

TO: Benton County Planning Commission, Nick Fowler, Chair

RE: LU-24-027



As a resident of Benton County, I strongly oppose the application to expand the landfill.

Welcome to Corvallis: We have a superfund site.

It's called United Chromium Products.

Because superfund sites include so many forever chemicals, they are our forever friends.

But, we might actually have another Superfund site; that will be for you to decide.

In the late 1970s, toxic waste dumps such as Love Canal received national attention when the public learned about the risks to human health and the environment posed by contaminated sites. In response, Congress in 1980 established the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). CERCLA is informally called Superfund. Superfund was created to address health and environmental risks posed by contaminated toxic waste sites. Through a federal process sites like Love Canal-1984, Rocky Flats-1989 and Hanford-1988 ended up on the NPL (the National Priorities List) and became designated Superfund sites.

Oddly, the Hanford site is also in Benton Co, Benton County Washington on the Columbia River.

United Chrome Products is a superfund site just south of Corvallis and owned by the city. Past activities contaminated the soil and groundwater with chromium and other hazardous wastes. EPA added the site to the Superfund list in **1984**. **Chromium contaminated soils were taken off site for disposal**. Today 40+ years later, the city pumps and treats groundwater to remove contamination and continues to perform long term groundwater monitoring. Forever chemicals, forever friends.

Where were the chromium contaminated soils taken?

I don't know the answer to that question, but I do know that at the Superfund site next door in Linn County waste went to Coffin Butte.

That site, **Teledyne (now Wah Chang)** was added to the Superfund list in **1983**. It is one of the country's largest producers of rare earth metals and alloys. Waste from Teledyne/Wah Chang went to Coffin Butte moreover, it apparently went into an unlined cell. After it began leaking and contaminating groundwater, DEQ required it to be moved to a lined cell in 1992.

So if Teledyne/Wah Chang is a Superfund site, and its waste went to Coffin Butte, maybe Coffin Butte too is a Superfund site.

Consumers Power Inc (CPI) formerly located in Corvallis near Ninth and Circle (now Buffalo Wild Wings, Jimmy Johns and Walmart) produced soil contaminated waste containing wood preservatives (used to treat power poles) and PCB's from leaking transformers. It went to Coffin Butte.

Following the Santiam wildfires in 2020, the EPA identified and removed about 300,000 pounds of hazardous waste from affected properties. It's a long list but included: fuel, petroleum, car batteries, solvents, pesticides, propane tanks, ammunition and asbestos. It went to Coffin Butte.

Toxic fly ash from Covanta's Marion Waste Incinerator containing dioxin and heavy metals is used as a daily cover at the landfill.

The following are headlines from the Gazette-Times:

1976 "Wah Chang waste ignites, landfill operator cannot use water for fear of explosion"

1977 "Radioactive material found at Coffin Butte, Radium 222, as deadly as plutonium, concerns about groundwater contamination"

1979 "Commissioners require home developer to notify buyers of proximity of home to dump"

1979 "~~Diesel soaked pot plants to be taken to landfill~~"

GT more

1996 "Local Landfill got OK to pump polluted water into Willamette"

All this toxic waste **deposited** over decades at Coffin Butte produces leachate -in 2021, 31 million gallons- which is pumped and trucked to local municipal wastewater treatment facilities unequipped to deal with it, so many toxics including PFAS -forever chemicals- pass through the plant and are discharged into the Willamette River. The subsurface geology at CB is poorly understood, so the extent of groundwater contamination is unclear, but groundwater connects to surface water and the landfill is only about ten miles from the Willamette River.

Finally ENRAC -the Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Committee for the county, after lengthy and extensive research published a substantive report on the Coffin Butte Expansion and voted 5-1 to recommend denial of Republic's application to expand the landfill.

Welcome to our town.

I understand the local theater company is contemplating a production of An Enemy of the People. We have a superfund site, we may soon have another.

Respectfully,
Elizabeth G. Connor
1465 NW 13th St
Corvallis - OR 97330

Oral Testimony
Elizabeth Conover
(note I ceded my time, but wish to include my oral testimony as part of this addendum)

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In the late 1970s, toxic waste dumps such as Love Canal received national attention when the public learned about the risks to human health and the environment posed by contaminated sites. In response,

Congress in 1980 established the Superfund. Love Canal, Rocky Flats and Hanford became designated Superfund sites.

Because superfund sites include so many forever chemicals, they are our forever friends.

United Chrome Products is owned by the city. EPA added the site to the Superfund list in 1984. Soil and groundwater was contaminated with chromium and other hazardous wastes. Today over 40 years later, the city pumps, treats and monitors groundwater. Forever chemicals, forever friends.

Next door in Linn County is Teledyne/ Wah Chang a major producer of rare earth metals including zirconium.

By products of zirconium production include: water soluble radioactive chloride and radium 226.

Radium 226 has a half life of over 1,600 years.

For about 5 years in the mid-70's Coffin Butte received an unknown quantity of radioactive industrial waste from Wah Chang.

It was deposited in an unlined cell. After it began leaking and contaminating groundwater,

DEQ -in 1992- required it to be moved to a lined cell.

So if Teledyne/Wah Chang is a Superfund site, and its waste went to Coffin Butte, does that make Coffin Butte a Superfund site.

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1976 "Wah Chang waste ignites, landfill operator cannot use water for fear of explosion"

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Soil contaminated with wood preservatives and PCB's from CPI went to Coffin Butte.

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hazardous waste from affected properties, including: fuel,

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Welcome to our town.

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184

Wah Chang 'trash' blows up

By William Moore
Of The Gazette-Times

ADAIR VILLAGE — A bulldozer operator at the Coffin Butte landfill, a few miles northwest here, narrowly escaped being badly burned this morning when several barrels of unidentified waste exploded beneath his machine, which then caught fire.

The fire occurred in a pit used only by Teledyne Wah Chang, a Millersburg firm which manufactures rare metals, to dump wastes.

The driver of the bulldozer, Mark "Cal" Elliott, 2315 NW Green Circle, was not hurt by the explosion and drove the bulldozer, which had caught on fire, out of the flaming waste.

After he drove about 30 yards, he leaped off, moments before the fuel tank containing 135 gallons of diesel fuel exploded. The bulldozer was engulfed in flames.

"She was red hot, I'll tell you," Elliott said. "It (the bulldozer) just blew up, like

gasoline."

The Adair Rural Volunteer Fire Department arrived within minutes and fought the blaze in the bulldozer. However, firemen are under instructions not to try to get out flames in the Wah Chang waste area. They stood by until the blaze in the pit died down.

Members of the department said it was the worst time they have been called to the Wah Chang pit since the first of the year.

Elliott said he was working the Wah Chang pit about 9:30 a.m., spreading out piles of trash and barrels before starting to push dirt over the waste.

"I was up above and all of a sudden I saw this huge mushroom-shaped cloud," said Paul Archibek, the foreman of the Coffin Butte Landfill. "I ran to the edge and there was Cal backing the cat off the fire, but it was on fire, too. When I got down there, he had jumped off and ran up a ways. He was really out of breath."

An hour after the first explosion, while Archibek and Elliott stood at the edge of

the pit talking with reporters, smaller explosions continued to go off in the middle of the smoldering area.

Archibek himself nearly died last year during another fire in the pit, when he inhaled smoke from the burning material. Since then, he has been on daily medication to assist his breathing.

"We're going to have to complain about this," he said. "It's just too dangerous."

Dennis Williams, Teledyne Wah Chang's fire chief, was also at the scene and said that there is no zirconium waste brought to the landfill from the Albany firm. Zirconium is the rare metal produced in Albany for use in nuclear reactors.

Williams was asked what wastes are brought to the pit.

"Trash," he replied before leaving the area, "just trash."

The landfill is operated by Corvallis Disposal Co., Corvallis, but officials of the firm weren't available for comment.

The explosion today came on the heels of an announcement Thursday that Wah Chang will be issued a state citation

charging the industry with exposing employees to hazardous levels of chlorine, hydrochloric acid and ammonia without providing adequate protection.

Mike Rodia, assistant manager of the occupational health section of the State Accident Prevention Division, said, however, that the citation concerns past occurrences at the Millersburg plant, and is not for any disposal problems at Coffin Butte.

"This is the first we've really heard about the explosion or the hazard to any landfill employees by the firm, for that matter," Rodia told the Gazette-Times in a telephone interview late this morning.

The DEQ (Oregon Department of Environmental Quality), you know, was supposed to be looking into these fires, but I think we might have to take a look at it ourselves if the safety of employees is involved.

Rodia said that in the past, before Wah Chang was taking trash to Coffin Butte, his department investigated numerous explosions at the Millersburg plant.

why didn't they not stop it 176 acid fire

TWC pit (exclusion)
TWC - manufactures rare metals (zirconium)
fire site under orders not to put out
fires in WC site
6th cell since Jan 1
Archibek
foreman described mushroom cloud
176 nearly died in WC
inhaled smoke from that fire
also fire chief for WC took just took
Th. day of WC issued state citation
for exposing employees to h.c.
leak chlorine
hydrochloric acid
ammonia
DEQ was supposed
to be investigating fires but...
+ the 10/1/77 numerous explosions at Millersburg plant

fire dept called
but can't do anything

Jackie Bel

now Jackie Lane
Sleeping class -
do -
Willard

244

Wah Chang must tighten checks of what it dumps

By William Monroe
Of Gazette-Times

ADAIR VILLAGE — Cleaning up the act of Teledyne Wah Chang at the Coffin Butte landfill site, a few miles northwest of here, was being given top priority today by the landfill's operators, state officials and Wah Chang itself.

And the Millersburg rare metals firm may be asked to start dumping its wastes somewhere else.

A bulldozer operator at the dump leaped from his burning machine Friday after it caught fire in an explosion in the special Wah Chang dumping area at the site. It was the latest of several fires in the pit in the past several months.

Tom Nelson, an environmental biologist at Wah Chang, a rare metals firm in Millersburg, near Albany, said that the fire was apparently caused by contamination of the firm's waste with zirconium particles.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has given Wah Chang until Tuesday to submit a plan for a more rigid inspection process

on waste material leaving the Millersburg plant for disposal at Coffin Butte.

"What we have done is to make a change in the process of inspections," Nelson said today in a telephone interview. "We've made it 10 times more rigorous."

Nelson said that the plant is supposed to send only office papers, boxes and wood to the landfill site.

In the past, he said, the waste material at seven disposal sites in the plant has been inspected by one person. Starting today, however, that inspection process has been expanded to include plant supervisors and the Wah Chang fire chief, Dennis Williams.

Valley Landfill, Inc., which operates the site, is also investigating the fire and Richard Eisenbrandt, general manager of Corvallis Disposal Co. (both firms have the same major stockholders) said that his firm will begin discussions this week with Wah Chang to ask the metals firm to either insure that no more fires

(Continued on page 12)

half of down

th

Wah Chang or...

Contaminants of W/C work
fresh w/ zirconium particles / filings
DEQ deadline for W/C to submit inspection plan

— Wah Chang

(Continued from page 11)

will occur in the Wah Chang waste or find another place to take it.

Eisenbrandt said that the presence of the special dumping area poses no threat to the public using other portions of the landfill.

According to DEQ spokesmen, the issue of whether or not Wah Chang can dump its waste at the landfill is between the disposal corporation and the firm.

All we do is issue permits," said Dave Gemma, a spokesman for DEQ. "We check to make sure that the material is environmentally safe, that is to say that there are no poisons or toxic substances getting into the environment."

Gemma said that the problem at the dump has been one of handling the wastes, which have been contaminated with the zirconium dust to varying degrees at several times in the past, with the knowledge of the DEQ.

The presence of zirconium in the waste materials creates a material which is highly combustible and could explode with little jarring or jostling around.

Normally, according to Nelson, zirconium filings (particles) are reprocessed at the plant.

But zirconium, while posing a hazard to the lives of its handlers, is not considered by the DEQ to be toxic to the environment and for that reason and the fact that the permit issued to Wah Chang is based on an agreement between the firm and Valley Landfill to "minimize" and not eliminate zirconium from the waste, Wah Chang will not likely be fined for Friday's explosion and fire, Gemma said.

Meanwhile, the DEQ is investigating the fire from the standpoint of safety for the handlers of the Wah Chang waste.

It may not be the only state agency involved, either.

Mike Rodia, assistant manager of the occupational health section of the State Accident Prevention Division, said Friday that his agency may step in and investigate the incident.

Rodia was not available for comment today.

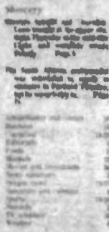
!! re Vally + W/C
Corvallis Pulp & Co

??
really 7/11

what material
what does that
statement mean

I wouldn't say
that's the problem
problem @ dump
is really
Combustible waste

Zirconium
makes
highly combustible
explosion



peaks due to the
deformation

radioactive content of W/Carbon
exceeded by 400X
hazard level established for
Radon 226 in drinking water

Radioactive waste

(Continued from page 1)

has placed in order for one.

Parrott said a more immediate health risk from radioactivity may exist in the vicinity of the Wah Chang refinery itself. There, an estimated 4,000 tons of radioactive wastes have been disposed of inside the company's compound and on a nearby

field where sludge from the company's settling ponds has been dumped.

The company has been ordered to remove that material at once for disposal at the Hanford nuclear reservation in Washington or at a disposal site in Nevada.

Parrott said the health division's investigation began in February, when an inspector noticed an apparent change in the company's zirconium manufacturing process. Residue from a chlorinating process used in the extraction of zirconium from ground sand was found to be 6,000 to 10,000 times more radioactive than allowed by law. The radiation, which was detected by company inspectors and reported to the health division, led to the inspection of Wah Chang's wastes at Coffin Butte, Parrott said.

The penalty for violating Oregon's radioactive waste-disposal law is a \$1,000 fine or a year in jail or both. State law also empowers the Department of Environmental Quality to impose additional fines for uncorrected violations. Parrott said the health division has not yet discussed possible punitive action against Wah Chang.

The important thing now is to get the situation neutralized," he said. "Then we'll see whether anything else needs to be done."

Bill Webber, general manager of Valley Landfills, Inc., Corvallis, said he asked the health division to test Wah Chang's disposal area at the landfill for radioactivity as a result of recent publicity about radioactivity being detected in wastes at the Wah Chang plant.

Prior to that time, he said, "I had no knowledge whatever, nor any reason to suspect that radioactive wastes were being disposed of at Coffin Butte. Otherwise I never would have permitted it."

Webber added that waste material going from Wah Chang to Coffin Butte is being monitored for radioactivity before it leaves the plant, "so that under no circumstances is radioactive material coming in now."

Of more immediate concern to him, he said, is the problem of explosive wastes from Wah Chang being buried at the landfill.

A bulldozer operator at the landfill leaped from his burning machine last Friday after it caught fire when wastes in the Wah Chang dumping site exploded.

Most districts

(Continued from page 1)

1,821-418 vote

Crook — Crook County voters approved a \$1.5 million levy.

Douglas — Glide district faced an automatic recount as its levy request lost by one vote, 330 to 329. Sutherlin and Yoncalla levies approved.

Harney — Levies approved included Burns Union High, Burns Elementary, Suntext, Drewsey and Pine Creek.

Lake — Lakeview levy request for \$909,380 defeated.

Lane — Springfield, Crow Applegate and Oakridge levies passed. Lowell's rejected.

Linn — Levies approved for Lebanon Union High, Lebanon Elementary, Knox Butte, Gore Elementary and Santiam High. Seio levy defeated.

Marion — West Stayton and North Santiam levies approved. Astoria's budget request ended in a tie vote, causing the proposal to fail.

Umatilla — Levies defeated for McLoughlin Union High, Milton-Freewater Elementary and Echo.

Philomath

(Continued from page 1)

this year is now up to the City Council. Meanwhile, Collins is to appear in Corvallis Municipal Court June 2.

Police said Collins was released to the custody of a friend after taking a breathalyzer test at the Benton County Jail.

Collins' car was stopped by police in the 100 block of NW 3th Avenue at 2:24 a.m. today after the arresting officer said he had seen the car turn off NW 9th Street onto NW Buchanan Avenue against a red light.

4,000 tons of radioactive waste at factory refinery
disposal w/in company compound

now... which sludge on site/offsite

investigation began in Feb. 77 in manufacturing process

residue fr. a chlorinating process (used in extraction of zirconium from ground sand) 6-10 x more radioactive than legal

h'mmm...

has been marked

2 problem weeks
- 21 filings
- Radium 226

N. Albany septic checks

By Michael Bradley
Of The Gazette-Times

Benton County's health department is pushing the state to continue a survey to determine if failing septic tanks are a health hazard in the North Albany area of northeast Benton County.

That's what Mark Magenheim, county health director, told the county board of commissioners Wednesday. The commissioners were meeting as the board of health.

The Oregon Health Division has said it has made a survey of the area and has found that no serious sanitary problems exist.

However, Magenheim isn't satisfied with that and wants the health division to

continue the survey. If the health division isn't willing to continue the tests, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality has indicated it is, said Roger Heyden, county sanitarian.

If septic tanks were found to be a hazard, the health division could order the area annexed to the City of Albany. This would open the way for a sewage disposal program that would connect to Albany's sewage treatment plant. North Albany voters turned down a plan to finance their own sewage treatment system.

The health division has said its survey indicated the hazard was not sufficient to order annexation to Albany. Since 1975 the Department of Environmental Quality has banned housing subdivisions of

more than four tracts in the North Albany because of possible health hazards that might come from the added septic tanks.

Magenheim said the survey was made during the driest winter on record and was not a true indication of conditions as they might be during a normal winter. He agreed that the information that was gathered justified the health division's conclusions under the circumstances. But he believes the survey should be made during a more normal winter, when higher water tables and more surface water spread effluent that leaks from failing septic tanks.

The health division said it was closing its books on the survey.

Heyden said he had talked to officials of Department of Environmental Quality and was told that the department was willing to make further studies if the health division doesn't. However, health division action is necessary to force annexation without an election.

The commissioners approved of the health department's actions in pressing for a continuation of the survey.

"It is not fair to the citizens" for the county to be satisfied with the state health division's conclusions at this point, Commissioner Barbara Ross said.

The county has sent a letter to the health division expressing its views, Magenheim said, but it has not received a reply. It will press for an answer before taking further action, he said.

Discovery of radioactive material at the Coffin Butte garbage dump in north Benton County has the county health department concerned, Magenheim told the commissioners.

He has asked the state health division to determine how much radioactivity there is and its possible effect, he said.

There is a possibility of wells being contaminated, he said. But because of the apparent lack of danger at this time, there is no need for a moratorium on the use of the landfill site west of Highway 99W about seven miles north of Corvallis, he said.

Wells are being sampled, Magenheim said, and anyone with a well in the area who feels concern should contact the health department.

The radioactivity, caused by the dumping of waste from the Teledyne Wah

(Continued on page 14)

\$537,000 gift to go for jobs

By William Monroe
Of The Gazette-Times

After a day of scurrying around to find out exactly where the gift came from, officials of the City of Corvallis, the Corvallis School District and Benton County are now wondering what to do with all or part of a \$537,000 windfall from the federal government announced Wednesday.

The city and the school district have been told they will share \$343,000, and Benton County must spread its \$194,000 around the county.

The grant is from the second phase of the Public Works Employment Act, which will bring an additional \$55.7 million to Oregon this year to put people to work.

The purpose of the act is to provide money to local governments to reduce unemployment.

Whoever claims what parts of the \$537,000 in grants, the final decisions about the disposition of the money will

be left to elected officials.

The grants to Corvallis and the Benton County area were among the lowest received by governmental agencies in the mid-Willamette Valley.

Last fall, communities, governments and school districts submitted requests to the Economic Development Administration for labor-intensive projects to be financed under the act.

Corvallis got money for the SE Alexander Avenue paving and sidewalk improvement project and several other sidewalk projects now under construction throughout the city.

Although Benton County government and the Corvallis School District also submitted applications for money, neither received any.

Now, in essence, the federal agency is saying that it cannot decide which projects are the most deserving, so the federal government will leave it up to local governments to split the spoils.

And local governments don't

(Continued on page 14)

start

County

(Continued from page 1)

Chang-Albany rare metals plant north of Albany, is of concern because the amount found at Coffin Butte exceeds the amount permitted under state law. However, the state law is more strict than that of other states and a similar amount would be within the tolerances allowed in other states, Magenhein said.

Wah Chang has taken steps to prevent future dumping of radioactive material at the site, he said.

Questioned by Sheriff John T. Dolan, who lives in the area, about the distance the radioactivity may reach, Magenhein said that radioactivity that escapes into the air drifts with the wind and "it's hard to know exactly where it goes." Also, he said, radioactivity from long-lived elements can accumulate in time to the point of being hazardous.

The commissioners appointed five new members to the North Albany service district board of directors to replace five whose terms had expired. The board is advisory to the commissioners and is designed primarily to help the commissioners determine how to proceed regarding sewer services in the district.

Named to represent the Fairmount school district were Charles Knoll, to a three-year term, and Stephen Evans, to a one-year term; representing the North Albany school district, Philip Griffin, three years; representing Oak Grove-Fir Grove school districts, Dennis Davis, two years; at large, Kenneth Cosler, three years.

They replace Joseph Novak, at large; Thomas Hewson and Marshall Swink, Fairmount; William Wisecup, North Albany, and Edward Thorn, Oak Grove-Fir Grove.

Still on the board with terms to expire at the end of the year are Lou H. Hildebrandt and Danton Paulson.

END

Schools around state remove dangerous acid

By The Associated Press

Calls poured into state police offices Friday as schools across Oregon found old bottles of potentially explosive picric acid in laboratories and cobwebby storage areas and moved to comply with a state directive to get rid of it.

Verne Duncan, state superintendent of public instruction, has called the chemical a serious danger and ordered it removed from the schools.

The substance is used in laboratory experiments and dye work. But when it's old and crystallized, it becomes explosive. The Japanese used it in bombs and hand grenades in World War II.

Al Davidson, executive assistant in the Oregon Department of Education, said picric acid generally has been replaced with less dangerous chemicals. He said experts in the state science department say there is no reason for school laboratories to have the chemical

around.

Oregon State Police Lt. Jim Forney said his office was flooded with calls from school districts throughout the state Friday, reporting finds of the acid to be removed.

State officials expect the reported findings to continue to increase as word of its potential danger spreads through the state's more than 300 school districts.

Davidson said high schools reporting picric acid to be removed Friday included:

Milwaukie, West Linn, Gladstone, Yoncalla, Scio, Tigard, Prairie City, Ashland, Sherman County, Siuslaw and Fern Ridge.

In Corvallis, a bottle of the crystallized acid was removed Friday from Cheldelin Intermediate school by Corvallis police.

Officers took the bottle to the Coffin Butte landfill about 4:30 p.m. Friday and attempted to detonate it by gunfire, but the bottle merely blew apart from the impact of the bullet, dispatcher Bob

Eastland said.

Picric acid was also found at Oregon State University and was awaiting disposal Friday, according to an earlier statement by safety officer John Campbell.

Campbell could not be reached today for comment on the disposal process.

No picric acid was found in other Corvallis or Benton County public schools, officials said.

In Portland, two additional high schools — Wilson and Roosevelt — had some picric acid picked up by the city bomb squad. This followed the removal of the substance from six other city high schools on Thursday. It was detonated in a compound near Portland International Airport.

Also on Thursday some of the acid was detonated after being found at South Salem High School and at Tillamook and Neah-Kah-Nie high schools on the North Coast.

picric acid
A Cheldelin → CB
OSU ??
old, crystallized → explosion
Japanese used in bomb wars

Coffin Butte water safe, tests show

The water around Coffin Butte is more than safe enough to drink, state Health Department officials said Friday — based on their tests this spring.

However

The federal Environmental Protection Agency has decided to evaluate the Health Department's testing procedures and has taken some samples of its own from the Coffin Butte area.

Concern about the radium content of water from Coffin Butte first brought Health Department inspectors to north Benton County earlier this year.

The preliminary results showed a higher-than-allowable radium content, indicating contamination of the water table by dumped materials — most likely those from Teledyne Wah Chang of Albany, which was suspected of dumping low-level radioactive waste at the dump.

But the first test samples used muddy water, the department said, which resulted in faulty readings.

The latest samples were collected in February and April and radium levels were found in only two of nine collection points, both in test wells. Ground water and residential water supplies near the butte were clear of radioactive contamination.

The radioactivity that was found was one-fifth of the tolerable limits allowed by the department, inspectors said.

The issue is not dead, however, since the EPA's tests still must be run.

Benton and Polk County officials have not been successful in their attempts to get either the state or federal agencies to take more samples from the dump itself to find out what types of materials Wah Chang disposed of in a special section of the butte.

Some of the industrial material lies upon the slightest cutting, officials say, and should not be disturbed. Wah Chang has said it does not know what it was dumping at Coffin Butte.

keril underneath with
on multiple levels
bottom line
make you feel safe??

OK Health Dept safe
EPA ... well maybe

Radium content
health

prelim. results
showed contamination of
water table

2 of [9]
in Feb 79 sufficient
Apr

Core samples
requested by state. feel ??
why not

??

Overall ambiguous article

June 4

AMBULANCE CALLS

Monday

2 p.m. the Adair Rural Fire Department responded to a call from the Coffin Butte Landfill. A fire in the waste disposal area of Teledyne Wah Chang. No damage was reported from a fire that apparently ignited inside a partially empty paint can. Firefighters said the blaze was not related to any burning industrial waste in Wah Chang's pit. The fire was extinguished and buried by about 6:30 p.m.

1977 6 calls at new
News ^{POWERED BY}papers™
June 5 1979 fire

1977
Sun → mid May
6 calls

1979 fire June 5

firefighting
technique
for
hot work sites
has Δed since '77

Zirconium

Coffin Butte problems not from zirconium, officials say

**By Mike McQuinn
Of The Austin Mirror**

Speculation that a recent explosion and fire at the Dofco Buxa landfill were caused by dangerous waste from the Tootsye Wali Ching plant in Albany is unavowed, according to officials of both

the company and the state Department of Environmental Quality.

Recent reports in two area newspapers have indicated that steel liners from containers used in making the explosive chemical may have been the cause of a June 5 fire at the landfill.

agree that the fire may have been caused by sparks from the buried steel liners, igniting a flammable substance, as they were accused by the landlord's husband.

On Thursday they expressed doubt, however, that residues of aluminum — a pyrophoric (self-igniting) metallic chemical — on the steel liners was

After the fire, landfill operators

Webster — who was out of town at night — added the steel doors to the list of hazardous materials Wah Chang is forbidden to dump at the site, 10 miles north of Corvallis.

"But we have been able to identify only a limited number of things we can look at

"The fire appears to have involved plastic, wood and other combustibles, but we haven't been able to determine if chemicals (other than paint thinner) were involved," Shellen said.

pose a fire or explosion hazard but because they are a physical hazard to

Barrett said he doubted that the liners could have contained asbestos residue, since any residue probably would have gotten at the plant when the liners were shredded.

"Fireworks started off the show, might have caused a flash (when the lightning hit over them), but probably not an explosion... but that's imaginative."

"I don't know how much more we'll be able to find out," Burden said, adding that the investigation of company records was nearly complete.

Asked if other chemicals at the site might have combined to form a flammable mixture ignited by the helicopter's passage, Barker said this has been ruled out as a possible cause.

Joe Barrett, public relations officer for Wah Chang, said Thursday that as far as the company could tell, the fire was started when the bottom of the building

scraped the steel liners and caused sparks to ignite some flammable material.

"The liner itself won't cause a fire," Barrett said, adding that chemicals residue from the steel liners is removed before recycling or sale.

The stainless steel liners come from barrels, about 2 feet high and 4 feet across, which are used in the production of zirconium, magnesium and titanium alloys.

After their use, they are shredded, transported to the dump and, usually, buried there — not because the

...they probably would have exploded or burned at the plant "if they were interfering with them to that extent (shredding them)."

The company agreed to cease transporting the logs to the plant after the fire, until a more accurate determination of the cause could be determined.

insure) is what caused the fire," Barker said. "But we have discontinued taking the insure in the dump because we want to cooperate with the people there."

He added, "We have no gripe against the people there. They have been very nice to us."

Harrett said company officials will be meeting with landfill operators "in a few days" to determine if Wuh Chang may resume the dumping of the sludge.

He said the shredded metal had been located at the site in the same area a point and point thinner case. Tags on other identifiable material and the

sparks from the metal probably ignited one of these substances as the builders worked the site.

Motocross part of work on new park

By Cynthia Byrd
Of The Gazette-Times

The fast-growing nationwide sport of bicycle motocross has become a part of a local volunteer effort to develop a new city park, Pioneer Park East.

As part of the project, a volunteer work effort called "Back and Street Day" will be held from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday at the park site, located at 3rd Street and Crystal Lake Drive.

The park will be landscaped and revamped by volunteers into four main areas: a lake motorcross track, picnic grounds, day and overnight camping grounds and the existing boat basin.

Scheduled to be completed first, according to Father Schiano who initiated the project, will be the rubberized track. Schiano, of 818 N.W. Linden Ave., said the



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Radioactive waste no problem at dump

By Michael J. Hennessey
OF THE GAZETTE-TIMES

Radioactive waste dumped at the site of the former Corvallis Naval Air Station, which was used by the U.S. Navy as a storage site for nuclear weapons, is not a problem, according to a report released by the state health department.

State officials have long known of elevated levels of radioactivity at the surface of the dump, but they have not been able to determine the cause. The dump is located on the site of the former Corvallis Naval Air Station, which was used by the U.S. Navy as a storage site for nuclear weapons.

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test water samples
from monitoring wells
if nuclear readings
all is well...

OR officials have long known
of elevated levels of radioactivity
at the surface of CB
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Zirconium production operators
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Aug/Sept 1975
No estimate of tonnage given!
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no elev. kids of radioactivity fr
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of 1 acre area flagged
by Vally
(as containing the waste)
waste overlain by 15' of dirt

RECRA HRC
CWA
CAA
Superfund

Well water east of Corvallis being checked for radiation

By Ronald J. Schleyer
Of The Gazette-Times

State radiation control officials have collected water samples from monitoring wells surrounding the Roche Road landfill east of Corvallis.

Five samples from water quality monitoring wells around the dump were taken July 13 in response to a request by Michael M. Randolph, public works director for Corvallis.

According to George Toombs, Portland-based supervisor of the state Health Division's environmental radiation surveillance program, there is no reason to anticipate elevated levels of radioactivity in the water.

According to an earlier report by Randolph to the City Council, the precautionary tests are to reassure citizens there is no danger from in-

dustrial waste dumped at Roche Road in August and September 1975.

Waste of unknown composition and quantity was buried at Roche Road by Valley Landfills Inc., of Corvallis, for Teledyne Wah Chang-Albany Corp. of Millersburg.

Similar waste buried at Coffin Butte landfill 10 miles northwest of Corvallis has produced measurably elevated surface levels of radioactivity but no significant radioactivity in area ground water, according to tests.

The radiation at Coffin Butte comes from radioactive radium particles mixed with tons of paper, metal, sand and other trash from Wah Chang.

State officials have said they think the radium is bound up in insoluble compounds and is not likely to migrate as ground water passes through the waste.

Surface-level radiation tests at Roche Road, requested by Randolph under a July 2 mandate from the City Council, revealed no elevated radiation in an area flagged by Valley Landfills as containing the four-year-old waste.

However, the waste is said to be overlain by 15 feet of dirt. Earth is an effective shield against radiation.

At the Health Division, Toombs said measurement of the Radium-226 content of the Roche Road water samples will not be complete for at least 20 days.

Meanwhile, he said, another series of tests is being done on new water samples collected July 13 from monitoring wells surrounding Coffin Butte.

In addition, Toombs said, the division is planning to sample domestic water wells near Coffin Butte later this year, possibly in September.

—Radiation levels

(Continued from page 1)

jury" from fires and explosions at the site caused by pyrophoric (self-igniting) zirconium particles also mixed in with the trash at a section of the landfill, Owens noted.

"We have repeatedly asked for core sampling to find out what is there," Owens added.

School board plans to award contracts

The Corvallis School Board has scheduled a special meeting for Wednesday to award contracts for \$300,000 in painting and roofing work on Corvallis elementary, intermediate and high schools.

The board, to meet at the district administration building, 1535 S.W. 35th St., at 12:30 p.m., will decide whether to accept, modify or reject the bid recommendations of its building and finance committee.

The scheduled bids have no connection with work planned by the school district to deal with the problem of flaking asbestos materials in some Corvallis schools, according to Fred Quake, assistant superintendent.

Meanwhile, state Rep. Nancie Fadeley, D-Eugene, whose House Environment and Energy Committee called for the federal agency's water testing at Coffin Butte, said she is not satisfied.

Without core testing at Coffin Butte, there is no way to be certain that the buried waste is no threat to public safety, Fadeley said in a telephone interview this morning.

"When it (the radioactivity) does get out, it is not just Coffin Butte that we'll have to clean up, but everywhere it moves in the water supply," she said.

Although it might not include core testing, a study of radioactive waste disposal sites in Oregon required by Senate Bill 394 — now law — will include Coffin Butte, according to Fadeley, whose committee dealt with the bill.

"The (state) Health Division is to contract with an independent agency to find out what radioactive waste we have in the state," she said.

"The bill says the study must find out what is there (at Coffin Butte)."

In the Coffin Butte case, Wah Chang has to pay for the study, she added.

The Health Division has not yet let the contract for the SB 394 study, according to David Wagstaff of the Health Division.

What did it find?

Landfill may be part of radioactivity study

By Ronald J. Schleyer
Of The Gazette-Times

The Coffin Butte landfill north of Corvallis soon may be on a list of radioactive waste disposal sites to be scrutinized for safety by a state-sponsored, independent investigator.

The Oregon Health Division plans to let a contract for the year-long study by Nov. 1, according to George Towns, the

division's health physicist in Portland.

About 30 query letters already have been sent to potential investigators, Towns said, most of them out-of-state companies that might be interested in the project.

"It calls for an independent study of public health hazards associated with the storage of radioactive wastes," Towns said in a telephone interview Wednesday afternoon.

LBCC to be closed

The Lin-Benton Community College campus and its community centers will be closed Monday for the college's annual convocation meeting.

All campus business and student service offices will be closed from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The community education centers in Corvallis, Lebanon and Street House will be closed all day.

However, on Wednesday Towns said no list of potentially hazardous sites falling under the mandate of the bill yet exists.

He said he and Marshall Parrott, state radiation control manager for the Health Division, plan to meet with Padeley Sept. 12 in Eugene to "define what the study should encompass" and "pin down what must be done."

Towns said the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Seattle office also would be involved in the discussion of the study required by SB 394.

Between 1975 and mid-1978, according to a report to the Legislature by Gov. Vic Atiyeh, the privately owned Coffin Butte received an unknown quantity of radioactive industrial waste from Teledyne Wah Chang Albany Corp. of Hillsboro.

In state-sponsored tests since — at the prodding of worried citizens in Polk and Benton counties — slightly elevated levels of radioactivity have been documented at the surface of the area of the landfill reserved for Wah Chang.

But state and federal tests for radioactivity in subsurface water adjacent to the butte have revealed no migration of radioactivity — now known to be some insoluble compound of Radium-226 — into well water.

Furthermore, Parrott and Kenneth Feigner, head of the federal environmental agency's waste management branch in Seattle, say it is sufficient to monitor well water in the area regularly to ensure public safety.

The officials, especially Parrott, have resisted calls from Feigner and from Polk County's commissioners for drill-

ing into the Wah Chang waste to assess its radioactive content.

Parrott has pointed out that the waste is not only radioactive but "pyrophoric" in nature — it can explode at when disturbed and could endanger the lives of core-drilling investigators.

Towns said the Health Division's regular monitoring program will be expanded in October to include domestic water wells in the vicinity of Coffin Butte which lies in Benton County near the boundary of Polk County.

Polk County is concerned because subsurface water in the area is believed to flow north from the butte.

According to county planner Jim Owens, Polk County has received no answer to a late-July request to the Environmental Protection Agency that Coffin Butte be placed under federal jurisdiction as a hazardous waste site.

SB 394

Between 1975
and 1978

CB received
an unknown quantity
of radioactive
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State says landfill's wa

By Ronald J. Schleyer
Of The Gazette-Times

ADAIR VILLAGE — State officials say the Coffin Butte landfill north of Corvallis contains some of the same radioactive waste now routinely shipped to the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, but not enough to worry about.

The waste — technically called water-soluble radium chloride, containing long-lived radium-226 — came from Teledyne Wah Chang Albany Corp. of Millersburg in occasional truck loads between 1973 and mid-1977, say the officials.

By state order, radium chloride, a byproduct of Wah Chang's zirconium production plant, is now carefully packaged and shipped to Hanford, Wash., according to Marshall Parrott, state radiation control manager.

Parrott and two other state officials reviewed the problem for the North Benton Citizens Advisory

Thursday night at the invitation of committee chairman Shirley Deardorff, of Soap Creek Valley.

Parrott told the small group at the Adair Clubhouse, the presence of small amounts of radium chloride is not a "problem" in his view.

He said radiation measurements on the land surface and in shallow and deep wells show what little radioactivity there is at Coffin Butte is not going anywhere.

Nevertheless, the officials said, test wells around Coffin Butte will require quarterly monitoring and there should be no human habitation between the Butte and nearby Soap Creek for an indefinite time because of the potential for contamination of well water.

Parrott said the Health Division conferred with Coffin Butte's operators, Valley Landfills Inc. of Corvallis, and

dumping as soon as it was discovered in May 1977.

However, information released in mid-June by Gov. Vic Atiyeh revealed that the Department of Environmental Quality — which supervises landfills — did not prohibit the dumping of other unidentified radioactive industrial waste from Wah Chang until March 1978.

To this day, Parrott said, the Health Division has been unable to compile a complete list of the kinds and amounts of radioactive materials buried at Coffin Butte.

— And even though the presence of radium chloride has been confirmed, Parrott said, the division hasn't the faintest idea how much is there.

"But we know it can't be very much," Parrott said, because the amount shipped to Hanford — 5,500 tons — appears to equal the amount produced at the plant, so not much could have ended up at Coffin Butte.

In addition, the Wah Chang dumping zone at Coffin Butte, said Parrott, to wait until digging it up and shipping it to Hanford.

The North Benton Citizens Advisory Committee, which exists to advise the commissioners on land use, also heard from George Toombs, state health surveillance chief, and William Toombs, state water resources director.

Toombs reported measurements of the radiation showed the particular radium can produce a radiation level what comes from no other sources in the sky and

However, he said, the distribution of the waste produces an elevated level only about three times less than levels could be expected. As for radium-226

says landfill's waste no threat

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And even though the presence of radium chloride has been confirmed, Parratt said, the division hasn't the faintest idea how much is there.

But we know it can't be very much, Parratt said, because the amount shipped to Hanford — 3,500 tons — appears to equal the amount produced at the plant, so not much could have ended up at Coffin Butte.

In addition, the Wah Chang radioactive dumping area at Coffin Butte occupies only about 4,000 cubic feet — far too little, said Parratt, to warrant the expense of digging it up and shipping it away.

The North Benton advisory commission, which exists to advise the county commissioners on land-use questions, also heard from George Toombs, radiation surveillance chief of the Health Division, and William Bartholomew, of the Water Resources Department.

Toombs reported that radiation measurements of the radium chloride showed the particular waste involved can produce a radiation dose 100 times what comes from normal background sources in the sky and earth.

However, he said, at Coffin Butte the distribution of the waste is scattered and produces an elevated radiation reading only about three times normal, but far less than levels considered dangerous.

As for radium-226 in underground

water, a summary of measurements taken from test and domestic wells surrounding the Butte show water there contains no more radium than water in the Willamette River at Beers Vista and in wells at Independence.

Indeed, said the officials, they have found radium-226 in water all around Oregon in amounts comparable to those found at Coffin Butte — in all cases less than a fifth of the maximum allowable under federal rules.

Rep. Mae Yih of Albany, who represents most of north Benton County, listened to the presentation and said she was fully satisfied with the state analysis.

The members from the surface measurements show there is no problem, the members from the deep wells show there is no problem, so I think people should take what these men have to say and lay their fears to rest, she said.

In a telephone interview this morning, Parratt said the Health Division will decide within 30 days whether to include Coffin Butte among about 10 radioactive waste sites to be studied under a measure passed by the Legislature this year.

Parratt said that if Coffin Butte is included, it probably will be studied only to check what the state and federal measurements have already discovered — that Coffin Butte is not a hazard to public health.

He said core sampling and other study methods which will be used in some of the sites would "cost a small fortune" at Coffin Butte because of the self-gassing character of the Wah Chang waste.

The cost of the study will be paid by the company that created the waste — in this case, Wah Chang — but Parratt said the state Emergency Board will have to authorize spending to get the study moving.

State says landfill's waste no threat

By Russell J. Watkins
Of The Gazette Times

ADAIR VILLAGE — State officials say the Coffin Butte landfill north of Corvallis contains waste of the same radioactive waste now routinely shipped to the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, but not enough to worry about.

The waste — industrially cooled water-while radioactive chloride, containing long-lived radium-226 — came from Pacific Northwest Atomic Energy Corp. of Millersburg in occasional truck loads between 1953 and mid-1977, say the officials.

By state order, radium chloride, a byproduct of Wah Chang's aluminum production plant, is now carefully packaged and shipped to Hanford, Wash., according to Marshall Perrott, state radiation control manager.

Perrott and two other state officials reviewed the problem for the North Senate Citizens Advisory Committee

Thursday night at the invitation of committee chairman Shirley Dearholt, of Soap Creek Valley.

Perrott told the small group at the Aday Clubhouse the presence of small amounts of radium chloride is not a "problem" in his view.

He said radiation measurements in the land surface and in shallow and deep wells show what little radioactivity there is at Coffin Butte is not going anywhere.

Nevertheless, the officials said, test wells around Coffin Butte will require quarterly monitoring and there should be an ongoing dialogue between the state and nearby Soap Creek for an indefinite time because of the potential for contamination of well water.

Perrott said the Health Division conferred with Coffin Butte's operators, Valley Landfills Inc., of Corvallis, and ordered an end to the radium chloride

dumping as soon as it was discovered in May 1977.

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And even though the presence of radium chloride has been confirmed, Perrott said, the division hasn't the faintest idea how much is there.

"But we know it can't be very much," Perrott said, because the amount shipped to Hanford — 5,500 tons — appears to equal the amount produced at the plant, so not much could have ended up at Coffin Butte.

In addition, the Wah Chang radioactive dumping zone at Coffin Butte occupies only about 1,000 cubic feet — far too little, said Perrott, to warrant the expense of digging it up and shipping it away.

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Tomlin reported that radiation measurements of the radium chloride showed the particulate state involved can produce a radiation dose 100 times what comes from natural background sources in the sky and earth.

However, he said, at Coffin Butte the distribution of the waste is confined and produces an elevated radiation reading only about three times normal, but far less than levels considered dangerous.

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Rep. Alan Yih, of Albany, who represents most of north Benton County, listened to the presentation and said she was fully satisfied with the state analysis.

"The numbers from the surface (measurements) show there is no problem, the numbers from the deep wells show there is no problem, so I think people should take what these men have to say and lay their fears to rest," she said.

In a telephone interview this morning, Perrott said the Health Division will decide within 30 days whether to isolate Coffin Butte among about 10 radioactive waste sites to be studied under a measure passed by the Legislature this year.

Perrott said that if Coffin Butte is included, it probably will be studied only to check what the state and federal measurements have already discovered — that Coffin Butte is not a hazard to public health.

He said core sampling and other study methods which will be used in some of the sites would "meet a small portion" at Coffin Butte because of the self-sealing character of the Wah Chang waste.

The cost of the study will be paid by the company that created the waste — in this case, Wah Chang — but Perrott said the state Emergency Board will have to authorize spending to get the study moving.

State OKs probe of radioactivity in 18 dumps

By Ronald J. Schleyer
Of The Gazette-Times

The state Health Division is preparing to award a \$100,000-plus contract for studying 18 radioactive waste locations in Oregon, including two sites near Corvallis — the Coffin Butte and Roche Road landfills.

"The study is to establish whether and to what extent such waste presents a hazard to the health and safety of the people," according to George Toombs, supervisor of the agency's environmental radiation program.

The study is in addition to a state Department of Environmental Quality safety review of abandoned sites of hazardous waste disposal operations. That review is being conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

An announcement earlier this month by the state environmental department said the survey of 20 Oregon locations includes both Coffin Butte and Roche Road landfills. Results are scheduled for release early in 1980.

In a telephone interview from his Portland office this morning, Toombs said only Coffin Butte, about 10 miles north of Corvallis, and four other sites will be studied in detail by the Health Division.

The others, including Roche Road immediately east of Corvallis, will be "looked at to see if they merit further study," said Toombs.

Previous state announcements have revealed that until about mid-1976, the privately operated Coffin Butte landfill was licensed to receive slightly radioactive waste from Teledyne Wah Chang Albany Corp. of Millersburg.

It has been further established that Wah Chang waste, some of it a soluble mud-like substance containing Radium-

226, also was allowed into the Roche Road landfill for at least two months in 1975.

Both sites are operated by Valley Landfills Inc., a Corvallis firm.

Toombs said the new study, at a cost "to exceed" \$100,000 paid by Teledyne and other waste producers, is scheduled to be completed in draft form by Nov. 15, 1980, for eventual submission to the 1981 Legislature.

Besides establishing whether the waste is a hazard, the study would determine what methods are available and appropriate for disposing of the waste if removal is found advisable.

State officials have repeatedly stated, to reporters and in public forums, that Wah Chang waste in Coffin Butte poses no hazard to the public and should not be moved because of its self-igniting properties.

There have been fires at Coffin Butte when heavy equipment has disturbed the zirconium-containing waste. Finely pulverized zirconium can explode and burn when disturbed.

A network of monitoring wells around Coffin Butte, monitored quarterly by the Health Division and the state Department of Environmental Quality, has revealed little migration of the Radium-226 into ground water.

Toombs said similar tests of ground water, collected from wells around the Roche Road landfill on July 12, have been completed and reveal "no detectable radium."

The Roche Road well-water tests were requested by the Corvallis public works director, Michael M. Randolph, who was ordered by the City Council to investigate Roche Road after it was revealed that it received radioactive waste.

Toombs said the Health Division expects to award the study contract by Dec. 1.

226
Radium 226
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Chung to
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Radium 226

E-Board action on studies criticized

By Ronald J. Schipper
of The Gazette-Times

The state Health Division plans to report Dec. 31 on a legislatively mandated study of radioactive waste dumps in Oregon, following orders by the Emergency Board not to include two sites near Corvallis.

Earlier this month, the legislative Emergency Board reduced the scale of a \$250,000 study suggested by the Health Division to comply with terms of a law passed by the 1979 Legislature at the urging of the House environment and energy committee.

In so doing, according to Larry Roche of the division's radiation control section in Portland, the board forced the division to delete the two Corvallis sites due to lack of funds.

The interim House committee will not be pleased with the Health Division's decision, according to Nancy Fadelley, D-

Engle, the chairman of the committee.

Roche said on Friday that only four major sites are left in the proposed study — now planned to cost \$182,000 and to focus on two locations in Albany and two in Portland.

Roche said a contract for the year-long study, to be done by a private contractor, is scheduled to be awarded by mid-December.

As late as last month, the proposed study included Coffin Butte and Roche Road landfills, located north and east of Corvallis, respectively.

Zirconium production waste from Teledyne Wah Chang Albany Corp. of Millersburg, containing radioactive radium-226, was dumped at the Corvallis sites at various times within the last five years, according to a report of a state investigation released by Gov. Vic Atiyeh earlier this year.

Roche said members of a committee of the Emergency

Board clearly questioned the division representatives as the said for further study of the privately owned Coffin Butte and Roche Road landfills.

He said the committee was told that water from test wells adjacent to both sites had been sampled and tested for radium-226 that could move into groundwater — with negative results.

The monitoring at Coffin Butte, about 10 miles north of Corvallis, is continuing quarterly, according to the

Health Division.

At Roche Road, immediately east of Corvallis, the division found "no detectable" radioactivity in the samples, Roche said.

At Coffin Butte, the measurable levels found were within — and in some cases below — the natural range of radium-226 generally found in Oregon water supplies.

Fadelley, chairman of the House environment and energy interim committee, said Friday that the seven-

member committee still strongly favors including Coffin Butte in the Health Division study.

"The legislation was clear that Coffin Butte was to be included in the study," she said.

"The legislation still calls for a study of Coffin Butte," she said. "If this study as authorized doesn't do it, we'll have to go at it again."

In response, Fadelley said, the committee might suggest to the Emergency Board that it consider providing more money for the study of Coffin

Butte — delegated by Roche to be another landfill.

Noting that the law provides that Wah Chang pay for the costs of the study involving its waste, Fadelley said Wah Chang is resisting having Coffin Butte included in the study.

Roche confirmed that the division is anxious to keep costs low because the industries involved have warned that the law's provision requiring that they pay for the study is unworkable.

The dropping of the Corvallis

sites from the study radioactive dumps appear still leaves Coffin Butte and Roche Road among the "hazardous waste disposal operations" now being regulated by the Department of Environmental Quality.

Results of the division's study scheduled for release next year.

The Emergency Board did legislative financial matters when the Legislature is not in session.

For \$2 million, they'll name it after you

OSU needs money for building

The Oregon State University Foundation has appealed to

donors this month from N. B. Giustina, foundation

Donors will be recognized in the order in which their contributions are received.

the theater dressing rooms, according to the foundation.

the building possible. This Hall of Honor will be a permanent part of the C

CP + PP
CP inquiry related in study (radioactive waste dumps in OR)
\$ funded by T/WA, ult. concluded unenforceable

Legislator to ready bill for probe of Coffin Butte

By Ronald J. Schleyer
Of The Gazette-Times

Legislation will be prepared for the 1981 Legislature to force reluctant Oregon officials to investigate the allegedly radioactive Coffin Butte landfill northwest of Corvallis, a key state representative says.

"We will prepare legislation to make it clear that we're going to find out what is in there," said Rep. Marlene Fadelley, D-Englewood, chairman of the House Environment and Energy Interests Committee.

In addition, Fadelley said she will ask the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to test Coffin Butte to determine its contents as soon as the federal agency has the money to do so.

Fadelley made the statements today following a report last week to her committee by the state Health Division on an independent study of radioactive waste which originally was scheduled to consider Coffin Butte.

The division this fall obtained state Emergency Board backing to drop Coffin Butte from the radioactive waste dump study mandated by the 1979 Legislature and presented by Fadelley's committee. The Emergency Board — made up of 13 legislators — makes state spending decisions between legislative sessions.

During 1979, both the federal environmental agency and state officials collected water from monitoring wells surrounding the butte's privately operated landfill, where an unknown

amount of radium-226 was dumped during the mid-1970s.

No direct pollution of groundwater by radium was found, officials reported.

The waste, a byproduct of plutonium production, was buried by Valley Landfills Inc. of Corvallis for Teledyne Wah Chang Alloy Corp. of Milwaukie.

Although state officials have said they don't know exactly how much radioactive material is buried at the butte (some material also went to Rocke Road landfill east of Corvallis), they have said it is too dangerous to find out because of an additional ingredient in the waste: extremely toxic plutonium.

Officials, including Marshall Parrish, Oregon's radonics control manager in Portland, have said repeatedly that monitoring the groundwater is sufficient to protect public health.

They have said it is too dangerous to dig up the Wah Chang waste or drill into the new buried pits to sample their contents. There have been fears and explanations at the butte.

"They said just keep testing (the well water) so you'll know where it gets into the environment," Fadelley said. "But then it would be too late."

Fadelley said she was flabbergasted by the argument made late last week to her committee by the Health Division representative who said there is no place for Coffin Butte in the radioactive waste study.

"The idea was that because it's got more than just one kind of hazardous waste... it shouldn't be covered by a bill that applies to radioactivity only," Fadelley said.

"We will be more specific" in the bill

the committee will draft for the next Legislature, Fadelley vowed.

"We must find out what is in that place (Coffin Butte), and if it poses a threat to the health and safety of those who live around it, we must get it out," she said.

Fadelley said the reasons for the opposition regarding Coffin Butte are partly political, partly financial and partly a matter of scientific disagreement on the best approach to public safety.

Health Division officials "do have one good point though: as long as we have the explosion staff as well as Coffin Butte — it's a real Mulligan stew — it will be extremely dangerous to investigate," she said.

"The moral of all that seems to be, if you are a politician, make the right decision so nobody can find out what you have."

She said she sympathizes with the reluctance of Oregon officials, who do not, she admitted, have the money to study Coffin Butte safely.

But she noted that the study that was to include Coffin Butte provided for an independent investigation by a qualified geologist with full costs to be reimbursed by Wah Chang.

"The EPA is really more interested in hazardous waste like Love Canal," Fadelley said, referring to an episode near York, Pa. in which non-radioactive chemical wastes were buried and then caused health problems for residents of houses built in the area.

"But they are going to find out that low-level radioactive waste may be even more dangerous in the long run," she continued.

"It stacks up on you," Fadelley said.