

September 24, 1990

① That the City Manager be and hereby is requested within two weeks to obtain for the City Council relevant reports and documents from the MBTA management and from MBTA union personnel relating to toxic substances allegedly seeping through the walls of the Alewife Red Line Station, according to reports mentioned in the attached August 30 article in the Boston Herald. 20

② That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the Law Department to prepare within two weeks for the consideration of the City Council an amendment to the city ordinances which would require that cars illegally parked in a handicapped zone to be towed. 21



City of Cambridge

20.

IN CITY COUNCIL
September 24, 1990

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY

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In City Council September 24, 1990.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph E. Connarton".

Joseph E. Connarton
City Clerk.

Union: T puts workers at risk

Transit union officials charge that a mysterious, toxic substance is corroding the walls of the MBTA Alewife Red Line Station in Cambridge, causing health problems for transit workers.

Union officials said they were told by MBTA officials that the amounts of potentially harmful chemicals in the station are minuscule and pose no threat to employees or the riding public.

But the MBTA management told union officials it doesn't know the source of the chemicals, the Patriot Ledger of Quincy reported yesterday.

Carmen's Union Vice Presi-

Says toxic substance causing health problems

dent James Duchaney said continual complaints by workers led the union to take samples of the walls and a seeping liquid to a laboratory twice this year.

Duchaney said results shows low levels of "toxics and corrosives," among them carbonic acid, chloroform and trichloroethylene, a carcinogen.

About 70 to 80 Red Line workers and about 25 engineering and maintenance workers have complained of dizziness, nausea and eye irritation, ac-

cording to the union.

Theresa Conte of Quincy, a former train driver who worked in the Alewife station in 1985 and 1986, said doctors told her that her recurring episodes of coughing blood and vomiting came from exposure to toxic chemicals.

"Frankly, I left my job as a yard motorman for that reason," she said.

In the five years the Alewife station has been open, workers and MBTA management have disagreed over the seriousness

of chemicals in its tunnel.

Consultants hired by the MBTA to test parts of the station over the five years have found low levels of the chemicals. Although some MBTA documents indicate concern about potential health hazards, other documents classify the presence of chemicals as "nuisance odors" because they are "below standards for occupation exposure."

Nancy Sterling Gleason, MBTA spokesman, said, "The MBTA has recognized we have

"The MBTA has recognized we have a problem out there. We've invested a lot of time and money investigating it."

— Nancy Gleason

a problem out there. We've invested a lot of time and money investigating it" and will continue to do so.

She said the MBTA has a contract with the firm of Arthur D. Little to make eight sampling visits to the station this year.

—AP

Joel Lerner

Dir of Conservation
Services

John De Villars



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attachment

SEP. 24 1990

City Council

Adopted by the affirmative vote

of 9 members

Joseph E. Conerton

City Clerk

Order # 20 *F-520*

Councillor Duehay re: toxic substance
seeping thru the walls of the Alewife
Station.

In City Council,

Sept. 24, 1990

Order adopted