



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

To James L. Sullivan
City Manager

Date February 26, 1979

From Richard F. Conway *RFC*
Assistant Commissioner

Reference Council Order #10
February 12, 1979

Subject POLLUTION IN VICINITY OF DEWEY & ALMY PLANT

Transmitted herewith are reports from Patrick Sullivan, Sanitary Inspector of the Cambridge Health Department and Bruce Maillet of the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts regarding the pollution in the area of the Dewey & Almy plant. Also enclosed is a statement from Norbert K. Mader, Production Superintendent of Dewey & Almy relative to the proposed remedy of said violations. I shall inform you when all necessary steps have been taken by Dewey & Almy to prevent further violations of this nature.

cc: Donald P. Dressler, M.D.
Acting Commissioner

/kml



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

To Kevin Doherty, Staff Assistant
to the Commissioner

Date February 23, 1979

From Patrick J. Sullivan *[Signature]*
Sanitary Inspector

Reference

Subject POLLUTION IN VICINITY OF DEWEY & ALMY PLANT

On Monday night, February 12, 1979, while on call at 1382 Mass. Ave., I received a call from Deputy Fire Chief Griffin regarding a yellow substance on the ground in the Russell Field, Clifton and Jackson Street area. I called Engine 4 and spoke with Capt. James Rafferty. He stated that he had received several calls from residents regarding this substance. I investigated the affected area at approximately 9:00 p.m.

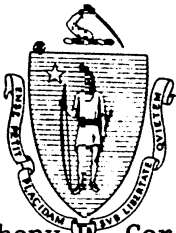
The following morning, February 13, 1979, I made an inspection of the area and verified the presence of the yellowish substance. I proceeded to W.R. Grace & Co. and met with Mr. Norbert Mader, Production Manager. Mr. Mader explained that the substance was a product known as Daxad 17. According to Mr. Mader, the product is non-toxic and water soluble (see enclosure). We proceeded to the processing plant and spoke with Mr. Merlin Whitney, a supervisor.

Mr. Whitney explained that on the previous night, between 2:00 - 4:30 a.m., a pump malfunctioned, releasing the substance into the air in the immediate area. I suggested to Mr. Whitney that an alarm system be installed to notify the person on duty of an equipment malfunction. This alarm system would also act as a shut-off. The stack has a scrubber system which appears to be effective when operating properly.

Also, on February 13, 1979, Mr. Joseph M. Nicoloro, Senior Sanitary Inspector, spoke with a Mr. Stein of D.E.Q.E. regarding W.R. Grace & Co. Mr. Stein investigated the same area that day and the enclosed letter outlines his findings.

On Wednesday, February 14, 1979, I received a complaint from Ms. Deborah Latt of 62 Clifton Street regarding a smell of naphtha in the neighborhood. I visited the area on February 14 and 15 but detected no such odor. On February 16 at approximately 11:00 a.m., I again visited the area with Asst. Sanitary Inspector Schultz and detected an odor of "moth balls". I spoke with Mr. Mader of W.R. Grace & Co. and told him of my findings and suggested that he extend the vent stack of the processing plant. Mr. Mader stated that the "moth ball" odor is characteristic of the substance, naphthalene.

/kml



Anthony D. Cortese, Sc.D.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Commissioner
727-5194

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Department of Environmental Quality Engineering

Metropolitan Boston - Northeast Region

600 Washington Street, Boston, Ma. 02111

February 15, 1979

W. R. Grace & Company, Inc.,
Dewey & Almy Chemical Division
62 Whittemore Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02140

Attention: Mr. Norbert Mader, DAXAD, Supt.

Re: MBAPCD - Cambridge - Notice of Violation
310 CMR Section 7.09
62 Whittemore Avenue
February 13, 1979

Gentlemen:

The Department of Environmental Quality Engineering, on February 13, 1979 observed a condition of air pollution due to the emission of settleable particulate matter from your DAXAD process stack of Plant No. Three, located at 62 Whittemore Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

This constitutes a violation of 310 CMR Section 7.09 (formerly Regulation 9.1) of the "Regulations for the Control of Air Pollution in the Metropolitan Boston Air Pollution Control District," which were adopted by the Department under provisions of Sections 142B and 142D, Chapter 111, General Laws,

The Department acknowledges your intent to install a new fabric filter collector for the DAXAD process stack and the intent to leave the existing scrubber in place as a backup control. Enclosed please find "Guidelines for the Submittal of Plans, Specifications and Standard Operating Procedures for Commercial & Industrial Facilities" along with the appropriate Design Data Sheets.

You are requested to take such appropriate steps as may be indicated to stop violating the "Regulations" which are designed to prevent air pollution and to enhance the quality of the ambient air.

It is further requested that you inform the Department, prior to March 2, 1979, of the action you have taken or intend to take to stop violation of the said Section 7.09.

C- Board of Health
Cambridge
C- MBAPCD
C- DAHM-Engr. Branch

M/Ersdep

Very truly yours,

Bruce K. Maillet
Bruce K. Maillet
Chief

Air Quality Control Section

GRACE

Organic Chemicals Division

Industrial Chemicals Group
W.R. Grace & Co.
55 Hayden Avenue
Lexington, Mass. 02173

(617) 861-6600

February 14, 1979

Mr. Pat Sullivan
Cambridge Health Department
16 Camelia Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

During the early morning hours of Monday, February 12, an unfortunate failure of a piece of equipment in our Cambridge facility caused a temporary reduction in the effectiveness of our stack scrubber system. This event is apparently connected to deposits of powder on the ground in the athletic field and adjacent neighborhood.

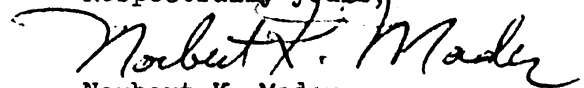
The material being processed in our equipment at the time is known as DAXAD 17 and is chemically identifiable as the sodium salt of polymerized alkyl naphthalene sulfonate. This material is used by our customers in industry as a dispersant in a great variety of applications, such as paint and adhesive formulations, rubber production, paper production and in the tanning industry.

DAXAD is a water soluble material which is easily washed out of clothing or off of objects with simple rinsing. Since it is not acid, it has no tendency to be corrosive. Feeding tests have shown that DAXAD 17 is less toxic on ingestion than common table salt. This material is approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration as a component of glue used for food packaging.

Mr. Richard F. Slein, Department of Environmental Quality Engineering, Commonwealth of Massachusetts has recommended that an alarm be installed on this particular piece of equipment in order to minimize a potential reoccurrence. This recommendation will most certainly be honored.

As you probably know, this facility operates under the restrictions and guidance of the DEQE as do other industries in the state. Although this facility has been operating well within the pollution standards of the EPA, our management, as responsible members of the community, unilaterally initiated the purchase and installation of a baghouse filter as a substitute for and improvement over the current scrubber system. This baghouse was mounted on the building several weeks ago and is scheduled for final hook-up by March 1, 1979.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Norbert K. Mader". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Norbert K. Mader
Production Superintendent



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 498-9011

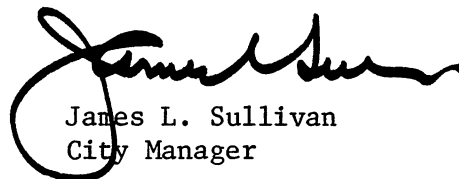
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
JAMES L. SULLIVAN
City Manager

March 12, 1979

To the Honorable, the City Council:

With respect to Awaiting Report Item No. 14 relative to pollution in the vicinity of the Dewey & Almy Plant, enclosed please find copy of a report from Richard F. Conway, Assistant Commissioner of Health and Hospitals.

Very truly yours,



James L. Sullivan
City Manager

JLS/mbf
Encs.

S-122

Response to Awaiting Report No. 14 re: pollution
in the vicinity of the Dewey & Almy Plant.

In City Council,

March 12, 1979

3/12/79

Placed on File -