

JUN 28 1987

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## St. Joe County list: Good, bad and ugly

These St. Joseph County sites are on the Indiana's Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act list:

**Ashland Chemical Co., 1817 W. Indiana Ave.:** Allegedly disposed of liquid solvents that contributed to the 1980 contamination of the Olive Street well field. Company paid penalty of \$640,000.

**Bendix Corp., 401 N. Bendix Drive:** Ground-water contamination at the plant site that likely stems to dumping practices of the 1940 and 1950s. Fuel oil-like solvent and naphtha sitting on ground-water table. Recovery wells have been installed; plume is moving from the Bendix premises to Kennedy Park.

**Landfill behind 1711 Clover Road:** Once a regulated dump site and land reclamation site that received demolition debris. Site has been closed many years.

**Douglas Road Landfill, Douglas and Grape roads:** The site used solely by the Uniroyal Corp. to dispose of hazardous and non-hazardous waste. Received roughly 302,000 gallons of waste classified as hazardous waste until its closing in 1979.

**Gartrude Avenue Disposal Facility:** A site listed by the Bendix Corp. as one of 16 dump sites used by the company since 1923. Material unknown.

**Kordell Industries, 1413 Clover:** Improper disposal of phenols (carbolic acid) and formaldehyde that eventually leaked into the St. Joseph River. Fine of \$1,500 imposed. Recovery system installed.

**Marycrest Building, 2015 Western Ave.:** Site listed by Koontz Wagner Electric Co. as a holding place for drums containing PCBs. No spills listed.

**Mayfield Machine Shop, 55643 Fairview Ave.:** No known hazardous waste disposal. No further investigation ordered.

**LTV Aerospace and Defense Co., McKinley Highway, Mishawaka:** Sludge disposal into waste-pit lagoons contained chromium that leached into the ground water in the 1950s and 1960s when the plant was owned by Rockwell Standard Co. and American Motors Corp. Seven wells were subsequently contaminated. Remedial cleanup has been completed.

**Wheelhorse Products Inc.:** Company notified state regarding unlined lagoon that was used as an absorption pit. City well field is located within three-mile radius. Low levels of metals were found at the site. Site inspection is planned by the EPA.

**St. Joseph County Landfill, Jackson and Locust roads:** Status unknown. No investigation made. General landfill used by industry. Also listed by the Bendix Corp. as a dump site for organic and inorganic compounds, solvents, heavy metals, acids, bases and asbestos from 1940 to 1970.

**St. Joseph County Landfill, 54107 Butternut Road:** Status unknown, also listed as a Bendix Corp. dump site for six months from 1955 to 1960.

**St. Joseph County Landfill, U.S. 31 and Ireland:** The oldest of the landfills listed. Also listed by the Bendix Corp. as a dump site for organic and inorganic compounds, solvents, heavy metals, acids, bases and asbestos for four or five years until the site was closed in the early 1960s.

**Syscon International Inc., 1239 South Bend Ave.:** No evidence of improper disposal. Company filed with the state. No further action necessary.

**Univar Corp., Van Waters & Rogers, 59865 Market St.:** A chemical warehousing firm. Low priority given. No major problems discovered during state inspection. Inspected and approved for storage of hazardous waste.

**South Bend Olive Street well field, Olive and Sample streets:** Contaminated city well field, soon to be put back into service.

**Amoco Tank Farm, Indiana 23, Granger:** Spillage of 80,000 gallons of gasoline in July 1979, recovery wells installed, remedial action followed state guidelines.

**Area west of Bendix Oil Tank, Linden Avenue:** Listed by Bendix Corp. as a dump site. Received organic and inorganic compounds, solvents, heavy metals, acids, bases and asbestos intermittently from 1940 to 1970.

**Beck's Lake site, Colfax Avenue and Kaley Street:** Listed by Bendix Corp. as a dump for organic and inorganic compounds, solvents, heavy metals, acids, bases and asbestos until the mid-1950s. Continued as an unauthorized general dump site. No remedial action taken.

**Chet's Cabinet Shop, 12707 Industrial Park Drive:** One of five sites that are victimized by benzene contamination discovered in 1978. Source of the pollution is unknown. Quantity unknown. Date of spillage unknown. No recent action taken by the EPA.

**Dollar Lake Site, Indiana 23 and Mayflower Road:** Listed by the Bendix Corp. as a dump site in the early to mid-1960s. Received organic and inorganic wastes, solvents, acids, bases and asbestos.

**Fillmore Road North site, Fillmore Road west of Mayflower Road:** Listed by the Bendix Corp. as a dump site in the mid-1950s, later used as an illegal dump. The site of numerous muck fires.

**Former city/county landfill, Bendix Drive and Lathrop Avenue:** Former dump site long closed. Once an old gravel pit. Listed by the Bendix Corp. as a dump site for organic and inorganic compounds, solvents, heavy metals, acids, bases and asbestos until the site was closed in the early 1960s.

**Sample Street Lagoon site:** Former Bendix Corp. plant site, waste lagoons were used to hold oils, organic and inorganic compounds, solvents, heavy metals, acids, bases and asbestos. Inactive. No investigation made.

**Pine Road Site, Pine Road and Fillmore:** Land reclamation permits given to a construction firm to dispose of demolition debris. Also used intermittently during the mid-1960s as a Bendix Corp. dump site. Inactive.

**Schuman dump site, Mayflower and Ireland roads:** Listed by the Bendix Corp. as a dumping site from 1960 to 1970. Later used for the disposal of tires.

**South Bend Avenue site, South Bend Avenue west of Twickenham:** Former city dump site and unauthorized dump site. Also a Bendix dump site that received organic and inorganic compounds, solvents, heavy metals, acids, bases and asbestos. No investigation made. The proposed location of the city Frederickson Park.

**Speaks Site, Bendix Drive and Douglas Road:** Small dump site listed by the Bendix Corp. File inactive.

**Steel Warehouse Co. Inc., 2722 Tucker Drive:** Formerly cited by the state for improper record-keeping regarding an evaporation pond on the site. Site given medium priority considering location of city well within a three-mile radius.

**Western Avenue site, Elmer and Huron streets:** A site listed by the Bendix Corp. File inactive.

**Galen Myer's property, 11303 Edison Road:** Rinsate from empty and near-empty barrels were cleaned out and resold, materials were dumped on the ground, site of 1985 Superfund cleanup by the EPA, which removed 275 barrels that had contained toxic wastes. This year, two residential wells on Birch Road were determined to be contaminated from TCE with contamination levels ranging from 1,500 to 2,500 parts per billion. Contaminated plume is moving south toward Birch Road.

**AM General Corp., 701 W. Chippewa Ave.:** Firm disposed of paint sludges and scrapings at dumping site near plant. Monitoring wells installed and site closed.

**Whiteford Sales and Service, 2020 W. Sample:** Firm used dry wells at Olive and Sample to collect surface and floor drains; solvents from truck cleaning collected in the dry wells; contamination discovered in 1983, but pollutants have dissipated in the environment. No state approval yet of soil cleanup method.

**Prairie View Landfill, 15595 Shively Road:** A disposal site operated according to state standards. Does not accept hazardous waste.

**Donnell Inc., 27411 Kline Trail, New Carlisle:** Site of land reclamation operation. Ceramic fiber refuse, tires and demolition debris only. State permit to be issued.

**Former site of electroplating firm, at 1139 Beyer Ave.:** Investigation made after the building was damaged by a fire. An anonymous tip to Crime Stoppers revealed the electroplating firm disposed of cyanide waste in a pit. Remedial action undertaken.

# St. Joseph County landfills vary in potential threat

## Foundation, nearby sites key factors

By WAYNE FALDA  
Tribune Staff Writer

Consider this:  
■ Indiana generates nearly 4 million tons of hazardous waste each year.

■ Twelve million tons of waste are treated or stored in the state, much of it from out of state.

■ Landfills were once a convenient place to dispose of this waste.

■ Indiana's laws regulating landfills were "only published" and passed in 1974.

So what happened to hazardous waste before 1974?

"Prior to any regulation, they were handled maybe using the best available technology at that time. They may have been drummed up at a waste disposal facility, or in some cases they were totally mismanaged and dumped," said Reggie Baker, chief of the site management section of the Indiana Department of Environmental Response.

The worst landfills sites — usually those predating governmental regulation — are oozing sores slowly releasing noxious chemicals into the upper layers of the ground water.

Cleanup is expensive. Baker estimates cleanup at a landfill site in Zionsville, north of Indianapolis, could cost \$3 million.

Prior to 1974, state and local inspectors with the Indiana Board of Health would tour landfills. But Baker noted that the inspection process was weighted toward checking the site for rats, vermin, vectors and blowing trash.

Ground water was virtually ignored.

Too often a landfill would be in the worst possible site: a gravel pit, a sandy depression or any hollow in the terrain.

Purdue University's John Cushman puts it this way: "People sought out sandy soils to dump waste because the stuff quickly in-

creases some questions in the St. Joseph County Health officer Paul Trost stands at one landfill that works — the Prairie View landfill.



Tribune Photo/BOB BAKER GADAGZ

now it has been carried into the river," he said.

"The Indiana side of the basin has said Paul Trost, pollution control officer at the St. Joseph County Board of Health. "In the 1960s, the city of Mishawaka used it to dispose of everything from household waste to industrial waste."

The site is adjacent to the St. Joseph River.

What of the ground water? "I wouldn't drink it," Trost said.

Since Baugo Bay is just a couple of hundred yards away, polluted ground water may no longer be there, Trost observed. "Maybe by

areas, known as the CERCLA list (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act). There are more than 870 such sites in Indiana.

Only the Douglas Road landfill has scored highly enough to be considered for federal Superfund cleanup.

Few landfill sites have been investigated beyond a preliminary assessment, said Larry Alkinson, project manager with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Many times, requests are made for a site inspection. None have been completed by the EPA's contractor at Butler Road, Indiana Road west of U.S. 31, South Bend Avenue, Bendix Drive, or other sites on Linden and Fillmore roads, Alkinson said.

In some cases, when an inspection is made and nothing is found, no further action is warranted.

"Just because a site is on the CERCLA list, it does not necessarily mean it is a hazardous waste dump," he said.

Nor does it mean that an immediate health hazard is present, Trost said.

A lot depends on the manner in which the landfill was operated and whether there is a layer of impervious clay underneath the landfill that would separate polluted ground water in the upper part of the aquifer from lower parts.

That is a critical point, Trost said. It is almost always the case that people drop wells into that lower aquifer to obtain their drinking water, thereby avoiding the pollution.

"There is a very strong potential for ground-water contamination in the upper aquifer," he said. "In a firm believer that lower aquifers are generally protected as long as there is a confining layer of clay."

But, he added, "history may prove me wrong."

Trost says the Jackson Road landfill has an underlying clay base. So does the Butler Road site. "They were two different types of designs. They were reasonable for the time," he said, adding "they would not be approved today."

The issue of what to do with former landfills raises a question of strategy.

The strategy in Indiana is to remove the source of contamination, put people on bottled water and maintain monitor wells.

In the case of the Butler Road site, the land is now owned by the St. Joseph County Airport Authority, and there are no monitor wells or homeowner wells that could be impacted, Trost said.

He explained that the movement of ground water is toward the river to the north. The Airport Industrial Park, located on that northward path, is on city water and sewer lines.