

THE PEOPLE'S HEARING

February 12, 2004

BOYS AND GIRLS HOME  
LAKE WACCAMAW, NORTH CAROLINA  
7:00 P.M.

RE: INTERNATIONAL PAPER RIEGELWOOD MILL AIR QUALITY

**GEAN M. SEAY, COURT REPORTER**

223 Benson Road NE  
Leland, North Carolina 28451  
(910) 253-8690 Pager/Voice Mail (910) 313-9030

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Opening Comments by Lou Zeller	3
Comments:	
Gean Seay	12
Janet Zeller	15
David Mickey	19
Mary Moore	22
Mason Malpass	27
Sheila Moore	25
Bonnie Ward	28
Rosie Ward	29
Hope Taylor-Guevara	29
Claude Ward	35
Closing Comments by Lou Zeller	38

**LOU ZELLER:** Welcome everybody. This is the People's Hearing on International Paper permitting and pollution. It's good to see you all here tonight. We've got about so far ten speakers signed up on the sign-up list to make comments tonight. The comments that will be made tonight will be transcribed as well as videotaped, and we plan to take this record of testimony from you to deliver to the Division of Air Quality in Raleigh, which is the permitting agency for the air permits for International Paper. We will also take this record to the Environmental Protection Agency in Atlanta, who has oversight over the state permitting process.

Now, my name is Lou Zeller; and I'm with the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. This is a part of the Be Safe Campaign. It's not just the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League; there are other organizations which are a part of the Be Safe Campaign, which you can see the logo behind me; it's an environmental health alliance, which is based on the precautionary principle. Other members in North Carolina -- some of them are here tonight -- participating in the statewide Be Safe Campaign include the Swamp Watch Action Team -- Gean right there, everybody knows Gean; the Clean Water Fund of North Carolina is also a charter member of the Be Safe Campaign in North Carolina.

And at this point we have about half a dozen other members in addition to them.

The precautionary principle is fairly straight forward. It means better safe than sorry. It's a scientific principle, which is based on known harm from pollutants to the air, to the water, to the soil, and to the food we eat. The Be Safe Campaign is based on the precautionary principle, which says that if there is an activity which causes human harm or can be expected human harm, that you should either limit that activity insofar humanly possible or prohibit it altogether if it is not possible. So, the precautionary principle is a new basis for allowing industrial development, commercial development and even household handling of materials. It is a goal, and it is an instruction into how we can make our communities safer rather than the permit to pollute, rather than the maximum legal amount of pollution determined by the environmental agency either in Washington, or in the state capital, or closer to home. We can talk a little bit more about that at some time. There are some fact sheets out front if you want to learn more about the Precautionary Principle. It is a principle accepted worldwide and more and more.

The hearing tonight is a true hearing, having people here that may have attended other hearings in the past. We will not have a clock on you. At this point we have about

ten speakers signed up to speak; and so, we will just ask you to be consider of the other speakers who are here tonight and a five-minute statement is normally as much as needs to be said; but like I said, we will not limit you in your time. Just be considerate of other people here tonight. And we will move to that sign-up list right after this presentation here.

International Paper is seeking new air permits to operate its kraft paper mill. Some of you may have worked in the paper mill in the past and may know something about this; but the basic outline of what a paper mill does, is it cooks wood chips in chemicals -- hydrogen sulfide -- not hydrogen sulfide, sodium sulfide and sodium hydroxide -- to remove the materials which hold the wood fibers together. This digestion process breaks down the wood and chlorine pulp. Turpentine is formed as a by-product in this typically when pine is used. And chlorine dioxide is added to this pulp mixture to whiten the mixture, to brighten it, to make the paper that we use in our everyday lives. And the whiten pulp is, of course, made into paper.

This is a diagram of a typical pulp mill. This is taken from the United States Environmental Protection Agency overview of a kraft pulp paper making system. Here it shows the wood chips, the wood chips entering the system up here, and the pulp washing system, an evaporator system, a

chemical recovery system -- some of the chemicals used in the wood process are returned to the boilers and burned off; this is an oxygen and delignification system. This is similar to the one used, for example, at International Paper here at Riegelwood. This is the bleaching system right down here. There are the refiners and cleaners, the de-knotters which removes some of the clumps of wood at the end of the process, and then last but not least is the paper making system right here.

The bleached kraft paper making process, like I said, combines sodium sulfide and sodium hydroxide to remove the material that holds the wood together. The processing of the raw pulp is the way to remove impurities in the wood and spent chemicals by de-knotting or taking out quantities of wood fiber that are not broken down by the process.

In the chemical recovery process, which concentrates used liquor for combustion in a recovery boiler, there's a gas collection system which gathers emissions from the pulping operations for burning in the lime kilns, recovery boilers, or sometimes the power boilers as is done at International Paper.

There is a condensate stripping, which removes organic compounds and reduces sulfur compounds which are produced in the paper process. That is the hydrogen sulfide gas, just

for example, one of those compounds that smell like rotten eggs.

The bleaching process ÄÄ and IP uses a chlorine dioxide to brighten the mixture, as I said before, to make the pulp mixture go from brown to white for paper making. The chlorine dioxide in itself is problematic. There are other methods which may be used. In fact, there are other methods, which are used by other industrial paper makers around the world and even in the United States that eliminate the use of chlorine dioxide, which is one of the most problematic chemicals in the paper making process. It results in some of the most toxic chemicals known to humans on the planet; that is dioxins and furans, which are persistent chemicals which cause birth defects. They're some known carcinogens in extremely small amounts. So, that is one of the most serious effects from the paper making process.

Paper mills are known for their water pollution but since we're here talking about an air permit, I wanted to bring from their Title V permit a list of some of the pollutants which are emitted into the atmosphere. Particulate Matter in a year could be as much as 2,192 tons. Sulfur Dioxide, 2,830 tons annually. Volatile Organic Compounds, 1,400 tons. Hydrogen Oxide is 5,408 tons; Carbon Monoxide, which is a gas which is very harmful, 6,214 tons

per year; and the total hazardous air pollutants in an aggregate, including hydrogen sulfide and many other compounds amounts to over 1,000 tons of hazardous air pollutants.

These are some of the pollutants, which are listed in the Title V permit for the Riegelwood mill. Some of these compounds are quite high. Methylene Chloride is a toxic compound, 18 million pounds per year; sulfuric acid is admitted into the atmosphere, over a million pounds per year.

Acetaldehyde, over 7 1/2 million pounds per year may be emitted by this plant under the proposed permit. 137,000 pounds of mercury compounds may be emitted into the atmosphere; 72,000 pounds of formaldehyde.

Hydrogen chloride, which is emitted from this type of facility, typically comes from their carbon boiler; hydrogen sulfide, for example, is harmful to the gastrointestinal system, to your stomach and to your digestive system -- also toxic to the liver and it's also toxic to many other organs.

Methanol is also emitted here. I know some of those speakers may talk about methanol tonight. Nitrogen oxide is also emitted in large amounts here. Nitrogen oxide is an acute respiratory irritant and a harmful air pollutant. It also is a precursor to smog.



Phenols are emitted from the power boilers, the brown stock washers and effluent treatment systems. It is also a smog precursor. It's deadly to fish; it's toxic to your own kidneys.

Sulfur oxide, sulfur dioxide, sulfur trioxide and other sulfur compounds come from many sources, including the recovery boilers, the lime kiln, power blowers and the washers and what not. But it is an irritant to the eyes. It is a precursor to fine particulate matter in the atmosphere, which is harmful, for example, in causing emphysema, asthma, and bronchitis.

I mentioned the hydrogen sulfide; the sulfur compounds come from a variety of sources -- again, the recovery boiler and the gas collecting system. Hydrogen sulfide is really a toxic compound heavier than air, which means it tends to concentrate at the ground; so, there can be higher levels at ground level than there are in the upper atmosphere, causing major health effects, particularly if it drifts closer to home. Hydrogen sulfide is also known to cause changes in the way we think, psychological disturbances. In fact, in some communities where hydrogen sulfide levels are high, including asphalt plants as well as paper mills, there have been detected an increased number of suicides in those communities. So, it is a very harmful compound, and the more we find out about it, the scarier it is. Hydrogen

sulfide is now being considered for reduction in the legal amount of pollution that may be emitted every year, by the State of North Carolina, but not in this permit.

The International Paper permit also ÅÅ the company also seeks to have new technology for a pollution-trading scheme, which is outlined here in this application. This shows the pluses and minuses, what they expect to increase and decrease, in the air pollutants in a particular year, in tons per year. This shows an increase under the system of 9.67 tons per year in hydrogen sulfide and 3.6 tons per year increase in sulfuric acid,  $H_2SO_4$ .

Fluorides would also increase, 5.2 tons per year. Carbon monoxide, a toxic gas, 117 tons per year increase under the new scheme. Nitrogen oxide would increase by 384 tons per year.

Now, there are some compounds here which would be lowered. The total suspended particulates emitted from the plant would go down by 60.5 tons; but the problematic part of this is that by the increase in some of these compounds, for example, the sulfur compounds ÅÅ sulfuric acid,  $H_2SO_4$ , could eventually increase the amount of particulate matter, particularly fine particles which are harmful to you as well as the larger particles which are emitted and blown into the atmosphere.

How far do these gases travel? Of course, some of them travel around the world. Some atomic-sized particles, such as hydrogen sulfide and other gases and nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide can travel literally around the world and can be detected around the world. This is a map showing the Riegelwood mill, the star in the middle, and five 5-mile radius circles going out. So, about 5 miles ÅÅ within the 5 mile area is New Berlin, Gooseneck, Sandy Hill, and most of Byrdville there.

Within a 10-mile area you can see Hedden Bluff and Hooper Hill to the east, and going out to Goose Hollow on the left and Buckhead. Within the 15-mile range, you're getting into a very large area, almost to the outskirts of Wilmington and reaching part of Bladen County. Then within the 20-mile radius you take in all of Wilmington. Many of the compounds, including particulate matter and all the compounds, virtually all the compounds listed here can travel easily 20 miles, depending on which way the wind blows. So, I put this map up here just to give you an idea that this mill, although you may not smell it in Wilmington, is polluting the air certainly in Wilmington as well as most of Columbus County.

Now, the format, the rest of the format for tonight's hearing will be as I said, individual speakers coming up to give their statements; and we plan to have at the end of the

evening a question and answer session; and you may direct your questions to anybody that you have a question for; and so, I will ask you to hold your questions until the end.

So, I think we can probably AA unless there's anything else that needs to be recognized at this point AA any of my co-workers here AA Bonnie Ward, Claude is back there, and Janet, and David AA alright. Okay, so let's move then to the next AA really, the first speaker for tonight, which would be Gean Seay.

**GEAN SEAY:** Thank you. I was prepared for a 3-minute. We usually get knocked down to 3 minutes in these. I 'm not a chemist, I'm not going to hand out any of these chemical names that I don't understand either; Lou knows all of those.

I do know that people have never been sick as they are today. I've kind of taken up a new past time in looking at the obituaries every day in the paper; and if you look, most days you've got as many people that have left this world between the ages of 1 and 60 as you have between 61 and a hundred. That's not right. That's not right at all.

The majority of these health problems are not caused by disease. They're caused by a broken-down immune system that allows our body to malfunction or that has left it unable to defend itself against cancer. Cancer is not a bacteria. Sometimes our immune system even attacks us, as in

rheumatoid arthritis, that's a good example of an auto-immune disease. Cancer is at an all-time high in North Carolina. 25 years ago, we had one of the lowest rates in the country; today it's one of the highest rates -- 1 out of 2 men will have cancer in this state and 1 out of 3 women. Pediatric cancer in children is increasing at almost 2 percent a year. Asthma and diabetes are considered epidemic in this area.

One out of every six couples in our country are now unable to bear children. 60 percent of the problem is attributed to the males. More than half of all pregnancies result in a miscarriage, a stillbirth, or a less than perfect baby. And one out of every 8 births is now premature -- not just a week early but two or three months early.

One out of every 5 children is learning disabled and birth defects are so common that every school now has a class for "special" children. I never saw a special child when I was growing up in the 40s and in school in the 50s. I don't know that I ever saw a child in a wheelchair; now, they're everywhere, they have entire classes for children that can't function in the real world.

One out of every 100 births -- and this is the ones we know about -- results in a child that is both male and female -- did you know that? You can look that up on PBS.

Those are the ones that we know about. Now, this is a condition that's often seen in fish downstream of paper mills. Another problem that hits close to this Riegelwood mill is the incidence of Guillain Barre Syndrome. I don't know if any of y'all have ever heard of that, but it is more than 1100 percent higher in this area than it is anywhere else and than expected by the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta. GBS attacked three IP employees in one month last year. It paralyzes you; it starts at the feet, both legs, works up and paralyzes you completely, including the respiratory system. And if you cannot get to a emergency room in time, you'll literally die because you're going to be on life support until this thing starts reversing itself.

There are no antibiotics to cure these diseases because they're not diseases and they're not caused by bacteria. I think looking for a cure is much like looking for a better band-aid for a gunshot wound instead of looking for the sniper. They're caused by a boiling toxic brew of chemicals, chemicals that are shot into our air, injected into the ground, and discharged into the rivers that we all depend on.

Now, the N.C. Division of Air Quality currently allow a total of more than 28 and a half million pounds of toxic emissions from the Riegelwood mill; you saw them up there on the screen. They are poison to us, they are more poison to

our children because they're smaller. They're developing. It affects developing children; it affects children in the womb.

There is safe place left; there is nowhere to escape to. This is not the time to rubber stamp an approval for an air quality permit; but it's the time to start reducing this poison and it is time to make this industry start cleaning up their act. Thank you.

**LOU ZELLER:** Our next speaker is Janet Marsh Zeller.

**JANET ZELLER:** Thank you very much. I'm so very pleased to be here. My name is Janet Zeller; I'm Executive Director of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. It sounds like a mountain organization, but we are statewide and also work in South Carolina, Georgia -- a little bit in Georgia, a little bit in east Tennessee and through most of Virginia.

I want to explain before I get into my comments on the IP proposal that several of the people in this room and the organizations in this room had asked the NC Division of Air Quality for a public hearing on a revision to the Title V permit. The Title V permit draft, which is of course the Clean Air Act Permit, which is issued by the state under the federal rule, under the Federal Clean Air Act was improperly noticed. DAQ had for a short time the notice of the IP Draft Title V on its website where all of the notices are kept and left it on there for approximately a week or ten

days and then pulled it. And then it did not show up again, even though the clock continued to tick for an opportunity for people in the neighborhoods around IP or concerned citizens from any part of the region to comment. So, there was a real violation, I think, of our rights for a real public participation program. So, that's one of the reasons that we're holding this hearing tonight.

And many of the members of the Environmental Management Commission have asked for a transcript of these comments; and so, we'll be pleased to provide them, the Environmental Management Commission members; and they are over the Division of Air Quality. They are a citizens commission in North Carolina.

Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) is required under the Clean Air Act; and Maximum Achievable Control Technology is defined by an EPA rule making process for every type of large air pollution source. The pulp and paper MACT as it's called is not even out yet. We're expecting it to come out the 28th of February; and so, prior to even the MACT being promulgated, IP has made a request to EPA and to the NC Division of Air Quality to have a completely alternate permit, equivalency by permit is what it's called.

So, that means that one whole promise of the federal Clean Air Act, that all these pollution sources would have



the Maximum Available Control Technology for every part of the plant, is not going to be met if these proposals move forward.

One of the proposals is called an Innovative Technology Approach; and International Paper here at Riegelwood and also at Roanoke Rapids has applied for an in-house or on-site pollution trading scheme; and they're wanting to tell the Division of Air Quality and EPA what they will reduce and what they will not reduce. And so, this is a complete throwing out of the whole concept of Maximum Achievable Control Technology. And one of the efforts in this most recent application by IP for an innovative technology equivalent AA by equivalency by permit, focuses squarely on methanol; and methanol comes out in huge amounts from paper mills. It comes out of the recovery boiler, it comes out of the delignification, oxygen delignification system; it comes out of the effluent treatment system; so, it comes out of many, many parts of the plant.

And so, what IP is proposing to do is to reduce methanol by putting in new equipment and doing a new energy program; actually, they would be saving energy, but then not do the upgrade for the washing and not do upgrades for the tanks, all of which do emit methanol. And see, that's a complete violation of the promise of Maximum Achievable Control Technology. We are supposed to have the absolute

best type pollution control system in place. Once this federal program, the MACT rule goes into effect for pulp and paper, we're supposed to have the best control for pollutants for the washer system and for every different part of the plant.

And so, what this would do besides not decrease the methanol as could be done and should be done from off the shelf technology, this would also mean that IP is essentially writing its own permit. They're deciding what they're willing to do and what they're not willing to do; and if this so-called innovative technology approach gets approved, we are going to have a real problem in determining whether this plant is in compliance or not. Monitoring will be a real problem under this approach because it's a system wide approach, not a contaminant by contaminant approach. And it's not Maximum Achievable Pollution Control, and it certainly is not a precautionary approach.

Methanol is a really bad polluter. It's a neurotoxin. That means it attacks your brain and it attacks your nervous system. Methanol is especially dangerous for children and it is suspected as a developmental toxin, causing learning disabilities and other developmental problems for babies in utero and for growing children. Methanol also attacks the liver and is toxic to the gastrointestinal system. And so, I applaud International Paper, I applaud them for wanting to

reduce methanol from their boiler system; that's good. But they cannot do it at the expense of completely rolling over the Maximum Achievable Control Technology upgrades that are off the shelf, that are available right now for their washers and their tanks and the rest of their system. Thank you.

**LOU ZELLER:** Okay, and our next speaker would be David Mickey.

**DAVID MICKEY:** Thank you, Lou. I'm David Mickey. I'm also a staff person with the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. I work out of my home in Winston Salem. I was asked to say a few words if I could about risk assessment and part of the whole permitting process here for International Paper involves something called risk assessment.

I thought I'd take my computer and do a little research on Google and see what might pop up about risk; and one of the things that popped up is a page from something called News & Numbers and it says -- it's titled, Uncertainty, Risk, Probability, Odds; and it lists a few things. It says dying from nuclear power; that's a risk, so I recognized that one right off the bat.

Deadly radiation, there's a risk there; dying in an auto accident, deadly vehicle; and it lists a bunch of lottery numbers. Miss Cleo is an example, I guess, of this.

ESP, guessing, tarot cards, all those things -- well, the lottery example -- North Carolina doesn't have a lottery; we don't have gambling in North Carolina, so why we have risk assessments in a permit for paper mills I'm not sure.

The Title V Risk Assessment part is in a big document here; International Paper has got an air permit draft that they sent around, and they referenced -- they referenced this piece called MACT Hammer Part 2 Application Case by Case MACT Analysis Based on Risk Per Subsections 112 (j) and (f) of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. Well, what they have basically is a model, a computer model based on assumptions that were developed by one of their consultants, which essentially is used to demonstrate the fact that there is no risk, that they basically are not emitting enough toxic pollutants to testify to additional controls. And that's essentially the basis of their permit application. That -- we'll see how that turns out, I'm sure. The Be Safe Campaign takes, of course, a different approach; and I think we've got here -- on the table out there we've got fact sheets about the risk assessment, what's the difference between that approach and the approach in using the precautionary approach; and Lou has mentioned that a little bit in the Be Safe -- when we first started out here -- in the Be Safe Campaign.

Just a look now at the back -- the first page on the back side of that, and this is from Clean Production Action; and it talks about risks and what's wrong with risk assessment. And we can -- y'all please read this when you get a minute. But the thing that particularly struck me about this particular situation is where it says "Risk assessment is fundamentally undemocratic. The risk assessment process is most often confined to agency and industry scientists, consultants and sometimes a high-tech environmental group." I'm not sure we're a high tech environmental group yet. "It traditionally does not include public perceptions, priorities or needs and does not use widespread public participation." I think we've got a good example of that in what I'd call, I guess a Dear John letter from the Director of the Division of Air Quality where essentially we were denied a public hearing that we asked for, which is why we're here tonight. And I understand we're looking forward to another hearing opportunity on March 1st. Hopefully we'll see everyone there. Thanks.

**LOU ZELLER:** Our next speaker is Mary Moore -- Ms. Moore.

**MARY MOORE:** I really hadn't planned to say a whole lot, but I do think that we should put more emphasis on the health of people. Now, I don't know how many of you are aware that the health department in North Carolina does not list us by clusters when we have cancer. We see in the paper that

somebody is dead; I don't know what they do, but they will  
ÄÄ I don't know who they report to. We can't find out; we  
only know that they don't know about clusters; and I feel  
satisfied that we have clusters of cancer in this area and  
lots of other things.

And I was talking yesterday to a lady who has been  
teaching school, toddlers and young children, for thirty-one  
years. She has retired. And she said that she finds it  
hard to believe that so many of these children and the  
teachers and the teachers' husbands are on that Ritalin,  
which is a drug basically to control the children. And she  
said it didn't use to be like that. Well, I know that  
because I remember when my children were coming up. We've  
got to remember that our bodies ÄÄ we are really what we  
eat, what we drink, and what we breathe. And if we can't  
keep the air pure and if we can't keep the water pure and if  
we can't keep our food from being changed all around with ÄÄ  
put together, that's bad. We need to be eating organic food  
as much as we can. And you even ÄÄ you have to pay  
more for the organic seeds, and we have to be careful what  
we're eating and what it's been sprayed with.

And this spraying that they do in the air is awful for  
the people ÄÄ for them to have to breathe it. And we heard  
tonight how many tons it is, and my daughter says when she  
goes to work in the morning she can see the smoke stack just

belching smoke from the paper company over here; and we live in Brunswick County. Then she goes across the river into Wilmington and works and says she can turn around and still see the smoke belching from the paper company; and we heard tonight what they have in there.

Our bodies are not able to take all these impurities out. When our bodies were made ÄÄ when God made them, he made them so that he could take care of a lot of things; but when we put things in there that are not ÄÄ they're synthetic. Many of these chemicals are synthetic and our bodies are compromised by these synthetic chemicals and all the stuff that we breathe and drink. And when the synthetic chemicals get into our system, our body has no way to do it but to store it until they can find out what to do with it. Most of our bodies ÄÄ many of our people are getting sick before their bodies find out what to do with them. When we look at them, we don't know what's wrong with them. And a lot of times they've got things that have never ÄÄ people just don't know what they're looking for because they've got symptoms that they haven't had before. And Gean stole my thunder, I think, when she got up and told about so many of the things that we have had.

But I lost a good friend from Roanoke Rapids that had suffered from asthma and she suffered terribly, and she was a good friend, but she was much, much younger than I am; and

she died in her sleep. And I thought ÅÅ I had not even connected the fact that she lived in Roanoke Rapids and they had a paper mill there, and I hadn't connected IP with the paper mill in Roanoke Rapids. I don't know what I thought it was another paper company; but she's dead and she was a lovely person. And I find so many people who have asthma and they're suffering with it because of the air that they're breathing.

So, I feel like that what we need to do is to try to keep our air as pure as it is and we need to eat organic foods and we need to do something about these synthetic chemicals that the chemical companies are putting out. And you were talking about ÅÅ what was the term you used about the assessments?

**DAVID MICKEY:** Risk assessments.

**MARY MOORE:** The risk assessments. I think it's very likely that the chemical companies are going to get us before the Iraqis can do it or anybody else; and I hate to say that, but I think it's bad. Thank you, sir.

**LOU ZELLER:** Our next speaker is Allie Moore.

**ALLIE MOORE:** I'm Allie Moore. Mary Jean stole my thunder.

**LOU ZELLER:** Okay. Well, thank you for coming. Our next speaker on the list here is, um, I can't read the first name so well. It's Malpass.

**MASON MALPASS:** Mason.



**LOU ZELLER:** Mason Malpass.

**MASON MALPASS:** Thank you. I'm Mason Malpass. I don't have any big title. I'm just a concerned citizen in Columbus County. I was raised within probably 7 or 8 miles of Riegelwood. For the first twenty some years of my life I knew of one person that had cancer. Today I don't know a family who it hasn't touched. My first wife died with cancer. My second wife has had cancer and is in remission. She lost a daughter to cancer. What's happened between the time that I was growing up and today? Of course, there was no paper mill there when I was growing up. That was not the only thing -- the paper mill is not the only thing that's polluting our air and our water. The modern things that we enjoy, the way they are made, all contribute. So, we want to find somebody to blame. Eve blamed the snake; Adam blamed Eve and God.

I read a comic strip years ago, Pogo, that said we have met the enemy and he is us. So, we all have some responsibility. We demand the things that we have. And most of the time we don't consider the cost. The air pollution -- it's not just air pollution. What happens to it after it gets spilled into the air -- a lot of it just floats around forever, some of it very small; but most of it comes back to the earth. We breathe it, we eat it in the things that we eat, we drink it in our water -- it's not

just air pollution. It's worldly pollution; and if we don't do something about it, we're ÄÄ there's not going to be anyone left to do anything about it. We can't do ÄÄ if we don't speak up for the people around us, there won't be anyone to speak up for us.

It's somewhat hazardous to breathe but we don't have much choice. It's rather hazardous not to breathe; so, we need to do everything that is possible to do to keep our air and our water as clean as we possibly can.

I don't know what the answers are, but I know that more could be done than is being done; and yes, to clean things up will cost more; and yes, our jobs are going to other countries. We've got to pay some kind of a price to breathe clean air and to have clean water to drink. What are we willing to pay? Thank you.

**LOU ZELLER:** Our next speaker is Sheila Moore.

**SHEILA MOORE:** I'm Sheila Moore, and I would like to thank everyone at BREDL for sponsoring this hearing and everyone for coming.

In times past I have canoed up the Cape Fear back of IP and I've been up Livingston Creek along side IP, and I've seen the fishermen every now and then pull a fish in, and I've seen children swimming at that landing behind the plant. But these days when I ÄÄ I would be the one to see the plant on my way to work in the morning ÄÄ as I do about

60 over that bridge into Wilmington, I just gaze off to the west and it's like a big mushroom cloud, and I know it's IP in Riegelwood. It's big and I smell it a lot of mornings, everybody does. They don't all know what it is. These days when I see that thing, and I read the paper and I read the obituaries and I see all the people that are my age or younger that live in Columbus County or Bladen County or all around, I know it's wrong. I know a lot of people from the plant that have cancer and have neurological problems. Some of them have died. There are people now that still have cancer from it. That plant is a hodgepodge of formaldehyde, mercury, dioxin, chlorine -- chlorine gas coming out of it. It's dangerous. It belches out of those stacks and it oozes into the creek. Samples taken out of that leaking lagoon were identified by the state as -- the contents were almost identical to what's in the creek -- it's the same thing as in the lagoon. We know it, IP knows it, NC DENR knows it and they continue to turn a blind eye. But I think the time has come to clean it up; it's long since gone by. It would be a great disservice to the citizens of southeastern North Carolina for the state to pass another cookie cutter program and to not clean IP up. That's all I've got. Thank you.

**LOU ZELLER:** Our next speaker is Jim Caulder.

**JIM CAULDER:** I didn't sign up to speak.

**LOU ZELLER:** Okay, my next on the list would be Bonnie Ward.

**BONNIE WARD:** Hello everyone, I'm Bonnie Ward with the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. This has been an on-going project for me for a long time; but I want to know one thing -- we have asked for a hearing by the state and WHY IN THE WORLD WAS IT DENIED! I WANT TO ASK THE STATE THAT, AND I WANT A DEFINITE ANSWER -- NOW! Thank you very much.

**LOU ZELLER:** Claude, do we have some more speakers signed up?

**CLAUDE WARD:** Yes sir (coming forward with the list).

**LOU ZELLER:** Okay, our next speaker is Rosie Ward.

**ROSIE WARD:** Hello, everyone. My name is Rosie Ward, and I work at Handy Hugo's in Riegelwood; and I see the smoke and all the stuff coming up and smell it, too. And for six years I've worked there and for four years I've had emphysema. So, it's not a good thing to breathe that air; and I work at the Handy Hugo's and I go over to the drug store and I give them my money for inhalers. So, this is my job; and so, no, I don't like the smell of it and I don't like what it's doing to me. I can't walk from here to the car without being tired. So, it's -- it's bad -- so, I've had this for four years and it's just not good. So, the sooner the better. Thank you.

**LOU ZELLER:** The next speaker is Hope Taylor-Guevara.

**HOPE TAYLOR-GUEVARA:** Hi, I'm Hope Taylor-Guevara of Clean Water for North Carolina and we're an environmental justice group that is based in Asheville and in Durham; and while in Durham we don't have any paper mills, we do have one that is up-wind from Asheville and also upstream from Tennessee on the Pigeon River. And it's because of that mill, the Blue Ridge Paper Products, which was formerly a Champion International mill, which is the same company that owned that Roanoke Rapids mill until recently when International Paper bought them, in 1999 it was bought out. Actually it was at a sort of fire sale price because Champion couldn't wait to get rid of it, by the workers at Blue Ridge Paper Products, they bought a little less than 50 percent of it; and because those workers and the union leadership at that time were concerned about the number of cancers they were seeing in and around their community and because they had some new power in governing the organization, we agreed to work with them. We negotiated a joint study to focus on reducing chlorine usage at that plant, substituting it with oxygen-based chemicals -- pure oxygen at high concentration, ozone, or hydrogen peroxide -- in order to reduce the amount of dioxin that facility was producing, and also to look at the water quality benefits. It was predominantly focused on water quality benefits at that time because what that company had been doing to the Pigeon River had become a huge

interstate political issue for a number of years and there was a lot of pressure there. That was negotiated in the fall of 2000. As you know, the federal administration changed in early 2001; we began seeing a difference even before the actual study took place. But, in fact, the study went ahead. We actually brought in a coalition of environmental groups, jointly paid for that study with Blue Ridge Paper Products workers and we brought in an International Canadian Pulp & Paper expert who did a wonderful study -- the results of that are available to anyone who's interested -- that showed not only substantial water quality benefits, substantial reduction in chlorinated organics. We didn't specifically study dioxin, but it would necessarily have decreased as well -- and reduced costs. And unfortunately, it happened close enough to the permitting time and EPA was feeling enough under the gun that they didn't take time to look at all aspects of the study; but they strongly supported some of the main technology approaches that were recommended by the study.

This report was completely ignored by the Division of Water Quality in the permitting effort and it has resulted in a loss of opportunity for air quality benefits as well; because we know, even though that wasn't the focus of the study, we know that there would have been substantial air quality benefits.

We've also been hearing about the Riegelwood mill, which is the only paper mill in North Carolina which has higher toxic emissions than Blue Ridge Paper Products; and higher production as well. And it's gotten away with a lot of what it's done for a number of years because instead of being upwind of a beautiful mountain city and upstream of a, you know, a river, a smaller river, it's near the mouth of the Cape Fear River and it's near the coast where there are fewer people. They know they're going to smell it but these coastal breezes are not going to make it as obvious; but in fact, its toxic emissions are definitely greater than those of Blue Ridge Paper Products.

And its permit is horrific because it has a larger property boundary line and the state toxin limits ÅÅ and I'm sure, I'm sorry I wasn't here for the first few minutes ÅÅ are hundreds to thousands of times greater than they are for Blue Ridge Paper Products which is already a huge threat to its community. And the Division of Air Quality and the way that it handles the state air toxic permitting is horrific. So, we're deeply concerned about that.

There is ÅÅ the way that the pulp and paper industry is allowed to use our air and water in North Carolina is an unabashed corporate subsidy that we have allowed to happen. And it's time for a real uprising against this industry. There needs to be a whole lot more done about the coal-fired

power generators as well. That's an industry has already faced some accountability; it's time for the same level of attention to be leveled onto this industry which has many of the same air issues, because they largely do burn coal as a power source that the utility boilers have; but haven't come under anything like the same level of scrutiny; so, it is long past time for that to happen.

We know, we've also been hearing for a number of years from a member of ours who actually knows the industry well -- so, I can't say this person's name -- has been sending us photographs of the visible stack emissions from Riegelwood for a number of years. And I don't know how many of y'all have taken a look at this permit and seen the way that visible emissions, opacity, how dark the emissions are, is supposed to be regulated; but there is this sort of joke of a procedure that involves looking at it for six minutes and deciding it's normal and, you know, doing this once a day; and so, it's totally self-regulated, pretty -- pretty subjective.

And this person has said that he's gone back and forth past and near that plant and, you know, has monitored it informally for hours at a time, and he said the stack emissions are well above 40 percent opacity. And, you know, he knows the pulp and paper industry; he has visited plants all over the southeast and he knows what can be done; and



he's been outraged by this plant. He said these people just don't care -- they just don't care. They know they can do better; and even by the normal standards of a filthy industry, they just don't care. So, I wanted to point that out.

We are very concerned about hydrogen sulfide emissions. As you all have heard already, the pulp and paper industry is trying to escape accountability for hydrogen sulfide emissions, particularly from its waste water systems; another thing that this industry has been allowed to do is to have huge wide open ponds that emit a tremendous amount of air toxins, not even monitored for. People just sort of throw up their hands and say, oh, we don't know how to monitor for these toxins. And, you know, they don't look, they don't see; and they're trying to claim that the hog industry, which is also a filthy industry to air and water, is emitting so many more times than the pulp and paper industry is. This industry has plenty of money, plenty of resources, and we have been subsidizing it far too long. If they were having to pay for moderately treated water, 60 to 70 million gallons a day, at the price that we pay -- a fraction of the price that we pay for drinking water, they'd be out of business in a heart beat. So, the subsidy needs to stop. We need to realize that what our bodies have been telling us or reacted to is absolutely on target. There's a

lot to be concerned about; and when workers are put in a position where they have a little bit of power and don't threatened, they'll talk about that. They'll talk about it even to environmentalists and let you know they're very concerned about their health, too.

So, thank you all very much for being here tonight. Thank you very much, Lou, for organizing the hearing and thank you very much for all the good work you're doing.

**LOU ZELLER:** Our next speaker is Claude Ward.

**CLAUDE WARD:** Thank you, Lou. I wish to thank everyone for being here tonight that did come. I had quite a few people promise me that they were going to be here. A lot of them were workers at the plant who complained about health problems, and they were worried about coming and speaking, worried about their jobs. I see the jobs overcame their fears.

I work out of the eastern office of Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League in Burgaw. I first became acquainted with this plant in 1952. We played a football game right across from the plant. We were rated No. 2 in the state at that time. It was a key game because Acme-Delco at that time was undefeated. When we got off the bus, we had a tremendous incentive to get that ball game over with in a hurry. The officials stopped it with three minutes to go in the first half, 56 to nothing. We did not

lose AA except most of the team was sick and could not go to school the following Monday. Some of us were out through Wednesday. That was my first introduction to that plant. I since have traveled back and forth by it many times. I have yet to pass it but what I didn't get a burning sensation in my lungs.

I live in Burgaw, which is quite a ways from the plant; and at times I could sit on my front porch and take an air sample and told exactly what they were putting out and in what amount. That's a long ways from the plant.

Now, most of you have covered the technical part of it. I want to hit the two places that really need to be hit. The Division of Air Quality permitting office. This office was formed to protect the citizens of this state. They have become so misinformed until they protect industry; they rubber stamp the permits; when we ask for a hearing, we don't get it. Who do you think pays your salaries? Is it the mills or is it the citizens of this state? It's time for you to wake up and smell the roses, not the plant.

No. 2, as many people as I have talked with that are sick and the chemicals that are being put into the air from this plant, the EPA has proposed a study and the studies are incomplete. How can you permit something that you do not know what you're permitting? If it's that incomplete, why has it not been completed? Some of them are even scheduled

to be -- the completion date is 2006, 2005 -- well, here are the permits there now. Either make them comply, complete your studies and stick to it, or resign and leave your offices because you're not doing the will of the people. I should not be up here belittling agencies; but when they do it to themselves, I'll just echo what they're doing. They are not doing their jobs, they're rubber stamping permits, and not protecting the citizens of this state.

This plant is just one example in this area. I can see the smoke from this plant 25 miles away. Most of the time when they're really emitting most of the emissions from this plant, where are your officials who monitor the plant? They're home in bed asleep. I come from meetings and travel by these plants; and when I get home, it's two or three hours before my lungs quit hurting from smelling the mess. It's time for you to do something besides sit at your desk and rubber stamp every permit that comes across it. And I'll hush with that statement; it's time to get your act together. Thank you.

**LOU ZELLER:** That's all; thank you, Mr. Ward. That's the last speaker we have signed up to speak here tonight. Is there anybody that wanted to speak or wanted to sign up that hasn't had a chance to say anything yet? This is your opportunity.

*(There was no response)*

**LOU ZELLER:** Okay.

*(No further comments were made)*

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA :

CERTIFICATE

COUNTY OF NEW HANOVER :

I, GEAN M. SEAY, a Notary Public and Court Reporter in and for the State of North Carolina, County of Brunswick, do hereby certify that the foregoing 38 pages constitute a true and accurate transcript of The People's Hearing on the the Title V permit of International Paper, held at 7 p.m., on February 12th, 2004, in the Conference Room of the Boys and Girls Home, Lake Waccamaw, North Carolina, which was taken down and transcribed by me on the date set forth in the record and before the persons named therein. I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, or a relative or employee of such attorney or counsel, nor am I financially interested in this action.

WITNESS my hand and notarial seal this 13th day of February, 2004.

---

Gean M. Seay

My commission expires:

September 10, 2007