

Clean-up crews work at chemical dump site

United Press International
CROSBY — Crews were on standby Saturday to clean up newly discovered black globs of contaminated materials which may have escaped from a hazardous dump site during last weekend's flooding, an official aid.

Harris County Pollution Control Director Allison Peirce said the sticky balls of waste material did not pose a threat to the general public, but he cautioned residents living near the French Limited waste site along U.S. 90 and the San Jacinto River north of Houston against touching any wastes that might have drained from a hold-

ing pit during heavy rains. "Any citizens who find any of the black globs should call us, and we will send someone to pick them up," Peirce said. "This is kind of tarry material, and it is not material you'd want to get on someone."

Peirce said tests of three samples of tar-like material from the site were found to contain high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs.

The tests showed the black balls of waste contained concentrations of PCBs at 500 parts-per-million, well above the Environmental Protection Agency's maximum safety threshold of 50 ppm, Peirce said.

U.S. Rep. Jack Fields, R-Texas, Friday said he would oversee the Environmental Protection Agency's role in any cleanup at the site.

"It's my understanding that the EPA will provide means to make any cleanup that is external to the French pit," Peirce said.

The EPA banned the manufacture and use of PCBs in 1979. The chemical, once used to insulate industrial electrical equipment, is suspected of causing cancer.

Peirce said he found hundreds of the black globs, ranging in size from several inches to less than an inch in diameter, atop an earthen dike surrounding a pit at the site. He said EPA officials estimated 5 percent of the total waste in the pit escaped elsewhere on the site because of flooding caused by stormy weather last weekend.

However Peirce said he doubted if any of the contaminated material left the 18 acre dump site.

"I don't think there's a big threat out there," Peirce said.

Initial tests of floodwaters downstream from the French Limited and the nearby Sikes Disposal pit — labeled by the EPA as among 418 of the nation's worst hazardous waste sites — showed no signs of pollutants.

Under an EPA-sponsored partial cleanup of the French site two years ago, the PCB laced material was siphoned from an adjoining ditch, where it had seeped over a period of years. It was then pumped into a holding pit, which is protected by a wide earthen dam. Peirce said the material was due to be disposed of elsewhere, but never was.



staff photos by Peter B...

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Now you know: a fully loaded 18-wheeler can glance off a highway barrier at 15 degrees at 60 mph and not flip over. Or at least that was the result of a crash test conducted Thursday

afternoon by The Texas Transportation Institute. The remote-controlled semi struck the barrier right on target and finally plowed to a stop in the condition shown.

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Texas private investigator sued by parents of convicted murderer

United Press International
COLORADO SPRINGS — A Texas private investigator is seeking dismissal of a lawsuit filed by a couple who hired him to prove their son innocent in the stabbing death of a University of Colorado student.

Jay J. Armes of El Paso denied he promised Richard and Jeanne Anderson of Colorado Springs that he would find evidence showing the couple's son, William Eugene Jones, was innocent.

Instead, the detective said recently filed court documents he agreed only to do his best to uncover the truth about what happened the night of El Gordon's murder, and he said he reached the same conclusion as the jury that heard the case against Jones.

Jones was convicted of first degree murder and sentenced to 18-25 years in prison for the death of Gordon, 21, who was stabbed with a steak knife at a Boulder apartment. He recently was paroled.

His parents claimed they paid Armes \$25,000 to prove their son innocent, but the private investigator failed to pursue an investigation. Jones has maintained he did not kill Gordon.

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Weigh same at age 50, but still fatter

United Press International
SACRAMENTO, Calif. — It's possible to weigh the same at age 50 as you did at 25 but be fatter, the half-century mark.

Dietitian Gloria Johnson said this can happen because metabolism decreases and body fat increases during the aging process, and older people tend to be less physically active.

Johnson, who teaches nutrition at California State University, offers these tips for getting the basic nutrients you need while staying within your calorie limit:

— If you dislike the taste of milk, add nonfat milk in preparing other foods or try cooking cereal in milk instead of water.

— Eat dark green leafy vegetables and deep yellow vegetables at least three times a week for vitamins A and C.

— Have a good source of vitamin C daily — either citrus fruits or green peppers, cabbage, strawberries or melon.

— For B vitamins and protein have four servings a day from the breads and cereals group. One slice of bread, one cup ready-to-eat cereal, half a cup rice or pasta or five crackers are examples of single servings.