Kalamazoo River Cleanup Coalition

FOR RELEASE ON:
Monday, April 1, 2013

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PRESS RELEASE

Kalamazoo city officials and residents vow to fight EPA decision.

Poison pile to remain in "perpetuity" - EPA

Kalamazoo, MI 3/31/13 – The EPA decision to leave a pile containing 1.5 million cubic yards of PCB-contaminated waste at a former paper mill site in the Edison neighborhood, has city officials and residents angry – again. After a successful campaign in 2007, which blocked an EPA-approved plan to truck in 123,00 cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediments, local folks assumed the cleanup would proceed, and the problem would be solved.

As far back as 1999, EPA said the pile was "temporary ". Now they want to make it permanent. "We are depending on city leaders to take the lead on the PCB cleanup" said Homecrest Circle president Dick DeVisser, at a special city commission meeting on March 26. The commission renewed commitment to the total removal option, which they formally adopted as a resolution in July, 2011.

When asked by vice-mayor McKinney if it was up to him, would he accept this design for a toxic waste storage facility, Dept. of Public Services director, Bruce Merchant said " definitely not, the EPA would not allow it".

"The EPA is mandated to select a remedy that protects the public health, not to take the cheapest option. Our drinking water could be at risk". Said KRCC president Michael Seals. A municipal well field downstream taps an aquifer that the City says might become contaminated by PCBs and other pollutants at the Allied site.

A 2008 Chapter 11 reorganization for Allied property-owner, Lyondell-Basell, resulted in a court-ordered settlement of a total of about $103M. A trust fund was established with $50M for the Allied site specifically, and another $50M for PCB superfund cleanup in general, and roughly $2.5M for natural resource restoration. Estimates for the total removal option range from $120M, to $366M.

KRCC will co-host a community meeting at Goodwill Industries, 420 E. Alcott St. on Tuesday, April 2, at 7:00 pm

The Kalamazoo River Cleanup coalition is a grassroots advocacy group that promotes the best possible PCB cleanup of the entire Allied Paper Inc. / Portage Creek / Kalamazoo River superfund site. KRCC is a tax-exempt charitable organization under IRS section 501 c 3.

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