

TOXIC MATERIALS ALERT & HANDLING FOR: PARKWAY USERS

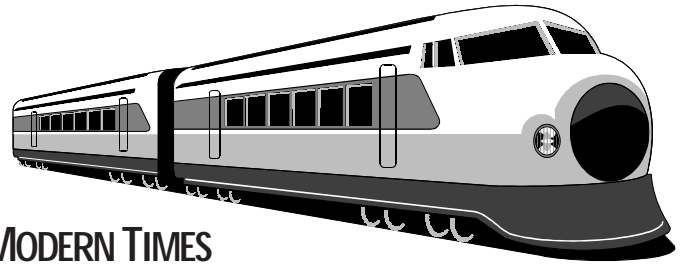
Residents—Construction Workers—Neighbors

By: Dr. David F. Juncker

From time to time, there will be necessary repairs on the parkways and along the major highways inside and outside our Metro area. Some care needs to be taken to insure that toxic materials are not delivered to nearby workers and individuals during these times. Just as importantly, care must be taken at all other times to minimize the spreading of toxins currently trapped in topsoils throughout the metro area and along all major and mid-sized highways. Finally, additional care must be taken in the repair, updating, or new construction of any highway to address and reduce the transfer of old and new toxins to the surrounding communities.

Published estimates of poisonous lead (up to 1981) emitted and/or deposited in Minneapolis topsoils (MnDOT data) are **3700 to 7400 metric tons**. (For St. Paul 2800 to 5600; Duluth 1000 to 2000; and Rochester 440 to 880 metric tons)¹. This lead is stabile, remaining in the top inch or so of our yards, parkways, etc. until it is uncovered or dispersed. Bare ground areas are the most threatening, as lead and other auto-toxins stored in the soil are released as dust which can coat feet, strollers, bikes, rollerblades, etc. and be transported into homes—to rugs and floors, for hand/mouth pick up by the most sensitive toxin targets, young children. If you are playing, working, or frequently traversing areas mentioned above, care should be taken to store running shoes, boots, wheeled sports equipment, etc., separately from areas involving young children. For yourself, hand and face washing as though you were returning to the house following gardening should suffice.

Your neighbors, City Council and Park Board are attempting to ensure that further contamination by auto-toxins will be



DESIGNING IN MODERN TIMES

The Experts Rule

From "Fast Wheels, Slow Traffic" by Charles L. Wright, 1992.

"In modern times, knowledge is divided into separate subjects and professions, and the large picture often gets lost as interrelationships, however obvious, are ignored. Nowhere is this more evident than in urban transportation. A typical situation finds a group of engineers developing a project, an economist doing cost/benefit analysis, a financial analyst trying to find a way to pay for it, some physical scientist and an architect doing an environmental impact statement, city council members debating a subject they know little about, and the mayor trying to sell the results to the voters. Few if any of those

involved understand how all this fits together or what it has to do with the city's overall transportation picture.

It would be a rare coincidence if such confusion added up to good transport planning and a satisfactory urban environment. Common sense suggests that interactions are important, that professionals, politicians, and the populace need to know about what the others are up to and about the characteristics of urban transport modes, everyone needs to see the big picture."

"I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves"

Thomas Jefferson

considerably reduced or eliminated. Current auto-toxins most likely being dispersed **at this time and site** include: Manganese (fuel additive); Cadmium (tires and old highway paint); Zinc (worn tires); and a wide range of complex organic compounds (exhaust emissions)². This effort involves walls (antitoxin and sound), replacement of topsoils, and great care in the normal construction displacement of the most contaminated soils adjacent to our highways.

MnDOT is not a leader in addressing these health problems.

It is definitely not too late to effect the repair/design of this bridge. Minneapolis individuals, neighborhoods and businesses are fighting hard to protect the health of Minneapolis.

Each Concerned Minnesotan Counts, no matter where you live.

Please contact:

The Governor's office

(296-3391— it really counts)

The Concerned Minnesotan's List

(824-2317— so that your feelings and opinions can be heard or for questions, info, or further references)

¹ Howard W. Mielke, et.al, Urban Lead in Minnesota: Soil Transect Results of Four Cities, *MN Acad. of Sci.* 50(1), 1984/85, p. 21

² Mielke, *The Automobile as a Toxic Substance Delivery System, The Environment: Global Problems, Local Solutions*, e. Hickey & Longmire, Greenwood Press (Westport, CT & London, 1994), pp. 97-103

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL DECIDES TO PASS ON 35W, LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT

Met Council as the area's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will withdraw major transportation projects. In addition to removing financial support for 35W, the Council has also withdrawn all consideration of Light Rail Transit, not just in the 35W corridor but on the I-94 between the downtowns of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Funding and noncompliance with the Federal Highway Administration is the reason for removing several "mega transportation projects," but will the new fiscal reality be good for the region?

On the positive side, the Met Council has assumed its authority for transportation/transit planning in for the region as the recognized MPO. Now communities and neighborhood groups have to insist that a regional plan be developed that enhances every community and truly provides access throughout the region. Philosophically, we need to recognize we are all transit dependent and that all transporta-

tion is subsidized—it's just that some use cars and some use other transit modes. Therefore, subsidies are not the issue. The issue is financing the most cost effective and accessible modes of transportation.

On the positive side, 35W cannot be expanded because of the current fiscal constraints. However, communities must insist that MnDOT not be allowed to build the highway piecemeal by adding a lane here or expanding a bridge there.

Alternatively, threatening to leave 35W as it is might spur the State into adding to the gasoline tax. A tax that, according to MnDOT, can only be used for roads, not transit. Or even worse, the current plan for upgrading 35W does include a Light Rail component. The need for capacity through the 35W corridor will not disappear. Withdrawing the 35W plan now, clears the way for another round of planning. That round might generate the plan without LRT that the Met Council wants.

Now is not the time to rejoice. Vigilance, perseverance, doggedness: we will not evaporate because the funds for 35W have dried up.

COULD CHEAP FARES CUT COSTS?

"There is general agreement that the country's urban mass-transit systems are in deep trouble. Fares increase, passengers turn to the automobile, deficits rise and the service deteriorates. This pattern is recognizable in almost every sizable city in the United States. In an effort to break this cycle of cause and effect—and to relieve resulting traffic congestion and pollution—there are civic officials who suggest free transit. Riders could board buses or subways without paying a cent."¹

"The department of Transportation, in a 1968 study titled "An Evaluation of Free Transit Service," estimated that the annual nationwide cost of providing such service would be about \$2 billion.... The study,.... was far from enthusiastic about the concept."²

"The cost of free service, coupled with the necessary transit improvements which authorities feel are essential if commuters are to be enticed out of their cars, could run as high as \$10 billion a year. However, the National Academy of Engineering, in a study on urban transportation issued in April, 1972, contends that the direct costs of automobile-dominated urban transportation system are \$80 billion a year. This figure does not include 'the social costs such as the impact of transportation on urban aesthetics and on the quality of urban life [which] are difficult to measure.'"³

From "The Future of the City" published by Congressional Quarterly, January, 1974.

¹ pg. 131 ² pg. 143 ³ pg. 144



COMMUNITY BUILDING RATHER THAN HIGHWAY EXPANSION

NTN has received a grant from the Pro-Neighborhoods Program of the Minneapolis Foundation to help area residents and neighborhood organizations develop a community oriented transit design in the Northwest corner of the Phillips Neighborhood (24th Street North to the I-94/35W Commons and Park Avenue West to 35W). This area was going to be severely impacted by the proposed I-35W expansion. Now that highway funding has been restricted (see **STORY**) the community can work together to fulfill its Neighborhood Revitalization Program Plan and include this area.

NTN will be working with neighborhood organizations and area residents to facilitate a planning process and design that will incorporate transportation, transit and traffic patterns into a housing and community/economic development planning. There will be a particular focus on "traffic calming" along Park and Portland Avenues as well as how to enhance transportation services for the area residents. Efforts to reorient the existing traffic patterns along Park and Portland Avenues could also have a marked effect on the other neighborhoods (in the rest of Phillips, Central,

Bryant, Field-Regina-Northrup, and Hale-Page-Diamond Lake).

NTN encourages neighborhood participation in the community oriented transit planning process and hopes individuals and organizations interested will become involved. A formal notification of the first meeting will be sent directly to all neighborhood organizations and the area will also be flyer. This is a chance to show how transportation can be integrated into a community building process rather having another neighborhood removed by highway expansion.

WHAT WOULD 5 CENTS DO?
NOT MUCH, EXCEPT PERPETUATE
THE PROBLEM

Michael O'Neal
Five cents is not much but add it to the cost of every gallon of gas that all Minnesotans buy during the year and we are talking big bucks. However, when it is still restricted to roads and highways that five cents still does not get you very far. In fact, the additional five cent a gallon gas tax currently under discussion in the MN Legislature will only perpetuate MnDOT's paradigm of cars and concrete.

By law, gasoline taxes and motor vehicle registration monies are restricted to highway purposes and MnDOT interpret's these purposes to be roads. Adding another five cents would just perpetuate the problem. I would echo a statement made by Charlie Ferrell of the Minneapolis Downtown Council in a Star/Tribune editorial, "These archaic constitutional limitations need to be repealed." I agree, but would go further, insisting that until these constitutional limitations are repealed and flexible funding of transit is promoted, especially in the Twin Cities Metro Area, the MN Legislature should not increase the gas tax. This might be seen as encouraging "gridlock," however, I would view it as encouraging innovation and using our existing resources more wisely.

There is a paradigm shift occurring, actually it changed long ago, but we are still living under the MnDOT paradigm of concrete and cars which is preserved in the state constitution. With Metro Council's recent decision to remove all major metro area highway construction projects from its Transportation Development Guide/Policy Plan, only transit can provide the carrying capacity for Twin Cities commuters will need in the future. Transit can fulfill the area's needs for goods, services and mobility while still meeting environmental standards and quality of life issues we have defined as important to our community's well-being.

I would encourage you to tell your Representative (House Information 296-2146, Senator (Senate Information 296-4196) and the Governor (296-3391) that another five cents is too much to pay when all we will get is more cars and concrete. There are better alternatives but we need the financial flexibility to develop them. Repealing the constitutional restrictions of the gas tax and redesignating these funds for transit in the Twin Cities is the solution, not simply increasing the gas tax by a nickel!

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?
NTN NEEDS YOU!
CALL MICHAEL O'NEAL
AT 872-4079

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

To comment on this or previous newsletters, or to submit articles for future publication, contact us at the office (872-4079). To join our newsletter committee call Laurie Frevert at 823-4504.

Peter Berglund
Kim Dewey
John DeWitt
Deb Dornfeld
John Ellsworth
Doug Frevert
Laurie Frevert
Ron Mead
Michael O'Neal

NTN Board of Directors

KIM DEWEY
Vice President / Resident
Tangletown Neighborhood
H:824-2852 W:340-6739

SCOTT DIBBLE
Secretary / Resident
King Field Neighborhood
H:824-3823

LAURIE FREVERT
President / Representative
Hale, Page, and Diamond Lake Community Association
H:823-4504

JOHN R. MCINTIRE
Representative
St. Stephen's Church
H:927-7672

RON MEAD
Vice President / Representative
Tangletown Neighbors Together
H&W:825-9111

JOHN NYLEN, CPA
Treasurer / Resident, downtown
H:333-2886

MICHAEL O'NEAL
Projects Coordinator / Representative
People of Phillips
H:870-1013 W:872-4079

BRUCE A. RASMUSSEN
Legal Counsel / Representative
Whittier Alliance
W:874-7071

GERRY SELL
Representative
Field-Regina-Northrop Neighborhood Group
H:823-3248

NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSPORTATION NETWORK
2116 2nd Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404
(612) 872-4079

The mission of the Neighborhood Transportation Network is to promote social justice and environmental responsibility in the provision of transportation facilities, with emphasis on the neighborhoods adjacent to Interstate 35W in Minneapolis, Richfield, Bloomington and Burnsville.

Cut along this line and mail to NTN, 2116 2nd Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55404

Dear NTN: I want to help NTN influence what happens to 35W and other transportation corridors.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

I'd like to be involved, I'd like to contribute
My time ☐ (just give me a call ☐
and even some money ☐ (Like 10 Dollars to aide the Newsletter ☐)

Please make your tax deductible check out to:
The Neighborhood Transportation Network

FHWA/FTA INTERIM POLICY ON PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Reprinted from STPP Progress, December 1994-January 1995

Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña's Strategic Plan establishes the objective of putting people first in all of the Department's endeavors. Consistent with this objective, it is the policy of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to aggressively support proactive public involvement at all stages of planning and project development. State departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, and transportation providers are required to develop, with the public, effective involvement processes which are custom-tailored to local conditions. The performance standards for these proactive public involvement processes include early and continuous involvement; reasonable public availability of technical and other information; collaborative input on alternatives, evaluation criteria and mitigation needs; open public meetings where matters related to Federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered; and open access to the decision making process prior to closure.

To achieve these objectives, the FHWA and FTA commit to:

- Promoting an active role for the public in the development of transportation plans, programs and projects from the early stages of the planning process through detailed project development.
- Promoting the shared obligation of the public and decision makers to define goals and objectives for the State and/or metropolitan transportation system, to identify transportation and related problems, to

develop alternatives to address the problems, and to evaluate the alternatives on the basis of collaboratively identified criteria.

- Ensuring that the public is actively involved in the development of public involvement procedures themselves in ways that go beyond commenting on drafts.
- Strongly encouraging the State departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, and transportation providers to aggressively seek to identify and involve the affected and interested public, including those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems and facilities.
- Strongly encouraging planning and implementing agencies to use combinations of different public involvement techniques designed to meet the diverse needs of the general public.
- Sponsoring outreach, training, and technical assistance and providing information for Federal, State, regional, and local transportation agencies on effective public involvement procedures.
- Ensuring that statewide and metropolitan planning work programs provide for effective public involvement.
- Carefully evaluating public involvement processes and procedures to assess their success at meeting the performance requirements specified in the appropriate regulations during our joint certification reviews, metropolitan planning and conformity findings, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) approvals and project oversight.

*Rodney E. Slater, Administrator, FHA
Gordon J. Linton, Administrator, FTA*



NTN COMMUNITY CALENDAR

May 4 & 5 . . . Cinco de Mayo in the Central Neighborhood

May 7 Heart of the Beast, May Festival at Powderhorn Park

June 3 & 4 . . . Peavey Park Pow-Wow in the Phillips Neighborhood

June 10 Neighborhood Environment Conference at First Unitarian on Mount Curve. Contact Jeff Roy (721-1681)

June 23 & 24 . PRIDE Weekend at Loring Park

June 24 4th Avenue Days in the Central Neighborhood

NTN wants to participate at your neighborhood events. Please contact our office (872-4079) so we can keep your community informed. NTN volunteers are also needed to help at our information booth during these events, please call to volunteer (872-4079).

From "The Death and Life of Great American Cities" by Jane Jacobs, 1961.

"We went awry by replacing, in effect, each horse on the crowded city streets with a half a dozen or so mechanized vehicles, instead of using each mechanized vehicle to replace a half a dozen or so horses."



2116 Second Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Minneapolis, MN
Permit No. 235