MIT waste disposal site closed in Wash.

By Leigh J. Passman

A recent order by Washington Governor Dixie Lee Ray has halted disposal of radioactive waste at a site in Hanford, WA, the only site where MIT and Harvard University dispose of their waste.

Unlike Harvard, which announced plans to restrict use of radioactive material, MIT's Radiation Protection Office has released no such plans. Murray Bolton, Associate Radiation Protection Officer, while acknowledging the long-term problems, said, "MIT is in a better position than Harvard; we have a three-month storage capacity."

The Hanford site was the only site that accepted the kinds of radioactive waste MIT generates. After contacting the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Bolton said he expected the order to be rescinded; "the NRC has no answer right now, but [the site] probably will reopen in the next three, four, or maybe five weeks."

MIT generates 100-200 drums of radioactive waste every three months. MIT's waste includes predominantly liquid scintillation fluid waste as opposed to solid or paper waste. According to Bolton, the waste is untreated and simply buried in the sealed drums. Burial of liquid radioactive waste poses health hazards that are economically and politically volatile.

Many local governments and some disposal firms are reluctant to permit its disposal, fearing leakage and contamination. Until last year, waste was trucked to a South Carolina site at a total cost of about $30,000. The South Carolina firm stopped accepting principally liquid waste, and now Governor Ray (a former commissioner of the Atomic Energy Commission) has raised similar concerns in Washington State.

MIT contracts with Interox Corp. of Natick, the only New England-based shipper of radioactive waste, to transport it to Hanford. The Boston Globe reported (10/11/79) that Ray halted disposal at the Hanford site after tests showed that transportation and packaging of the wastes violated NRC standards; however, Interox was not involved in the violations.

"It's costly for us all to be doing this; it's probably of no real benefit. Essentially, I do whatever I can to help people. About one percent of the people hassle me, but I can usually handle them."

His reasons for entering his first UMC contest four years ago were straightforward. "My mother died from cancer," he said soberly, "and my senior year the UMOC charity was the American Cancer Society. So I was looking for a chance to do something really beneficial. That first contest was a fluke, a complete surprise." He went on to explain: "The American Cancer Society got over $1,000 in contributions through his efforts, and Leo got permanently booked on UMOC. "It takes a lot of work, but it's always worth it. For seven or eight days I'll spend all day on campus, just walking through the buildings or standing in the lobbies. I go to where the people are: Lobby 7, Lobby 10, all over. At lunchtime I'll go to the cafeterias and during classes I'll go from door to door trying to get contributions from secretaries and other personnel. Most people are pretty generous."

He notes that people are. He has run for each of the past three years, doing all his soliciting by himself. He passed second his first year and third the next before finally winning it all in last year's contest. He has brought in over $3000 for the three years, and this year he looks forward to collecting over $1000 for the fourth year in a row. "I brought in $1249 last year," he said, "and APO told me that my three year total is the most ever brought in by an individual. Some people enter the contest as teams, and they get more money, but I've always run predominately on my personal effort."

vote, every little bit not only benefits the candidate of your choice, but also benefits this year's charity, Easter Seals. What is it that motivates Leo to do so much work? For one week he is ubiquitous with the other "aglii" in the halls and lobbies of the school. He will greet people on their way to class, regale secretaries during lunch hour, and trade insults with various hecklers, all the while keeping up his steady rhythm. "Vote for Leo for UMOC," and, regardless of accepting contributions.

Faculty's coercion a conflict of interest

By Gordon Hunter

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles on student-seniority relationships.

Misunderstandings are frequently involved in romantic and sexual relationships between students and teachers, according to Mary Rowe, Special Assistant to the President and Chancellor for Student Affairs.

In complaints that she has investigated, Rowe said she often discovered that the student and teacher often have a very different perception of the relationship's nature. She gave the example of a student who feels pressure put on him to become a relationship because of the student's perception of coercion by a teacher, even though the teacher had no such intention. She added that the situation is potentially more serious if the student is trying to coerce the student and the teacher does not know it.

If coercion is actually possible, then the relationship represents a conflict of interest, which is against Institute policy anyway, explained Rowe. "We expect that the senior members of such power relationships will try to get involved in the relationships in the first place, but if they do, it is their responsibility to find an alternative supervisory situation, in an orderly way, for the junior person."

Rowe said that all of the complaints she handled last year and over the summer, not one of the senior professors, TA's, and employers involved denied the existence of the situation, but they did have a different view of what that situation was, she related another typical example of a student who complained of being harassed by a teacher.

Leo Harten, last year's UMC champion on Campus (Photo by Linda Curtain)

By J.A. Moore

Leo Harten plans to attempt to retain his "coveted position as Ugliest Man on Campus." Since 1881 MasIII continuous efforts, regale secretaries during lunchtime I'll go to the cafeterias and during classes I'll go from door to door trying to get contributions from secretaries and other personnel. Most people are pretty generous."

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