



How to Write a Public Notice: A Collection of Examples



How to Write a Public Notice: A Collection of Examples.

Prepared by

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Office of Water Program Operations

Public Notices

One of the most common complaints voiced by agency staff and citizens is that public notices of hearings and meetings rarely generate public interest or attendance. Even when considerable agency resources are devoted to the task, hearings and meetings often may not be well attended. This booklet has been developed to provide a few principles regarding public notices, a public notice checklist, examples which have been used in environmental programs, and commentary on these examples which highlights their strong and weak points. This brief guide is for agency and grantee staff in the wastewater treatment construction

grants program who have little or no experience in writing information for the public or working with the media. It is hoped, that the information and suggestions in the booklet will enable EPA, state agencies and local grantees to get the most out of the money spent on public notification.

The assistance received from the following people is gratefully appreciated: EPA regional staff for useful comments and several notice examples; staff of Headquarters Office of Water and Waste Management and Office of Water Program Operations for overall support and guidance; and Headquarters Office of Public Awareness staff for helpful ideas and graphics support.

Public Notification and "Public Notices"

Issuing "public notices" is one important aspect of public notification. It is certainly not the only thing an agency can do to stimulate interest in an upcoming event. Indeed, informal notification which uses the many existing communication "networks" in the public and private sectors is often the most effective way to spread the word. The fact remains, however, that agencies generally rely most heavily on the "public notice."

Why Do People Stay Away?

At the outset it should be noted that poor public notice is only one reason why people seem to avoid public meetings and hearings. Public apathy and widespread citizen suspicion of government programs is certainly a factor. There are at least six more specific reasons:

- The meeting or hearing is not preceded by a strong public information program; therefore the public is unaware of significant issues, decisions and impacts to be discussed.
- The meeting or hearing is not really important: there are no significant issues; no decisions to be made; and the agency program has little or no effect on anyone.
- The meeting or hearing is held at a time which conflicts with other equally important activities.

- The meeting or hearing is held at a time and place which is not convenient for the public.

- Widespread cynicism regarding government and public agencies causes many citizens to feel their participation in the meeting or hearing will accomplish very little.

- Based on past experience, citizens expect that, although the sponsoring agency is well-intended, the agency will not take adequate steps to explain complex issues or define difficult technical words and phrases.

If none of the above conditions exist, lack of attendance is often due to a poor job of public notification.

Ineffective Public Notices

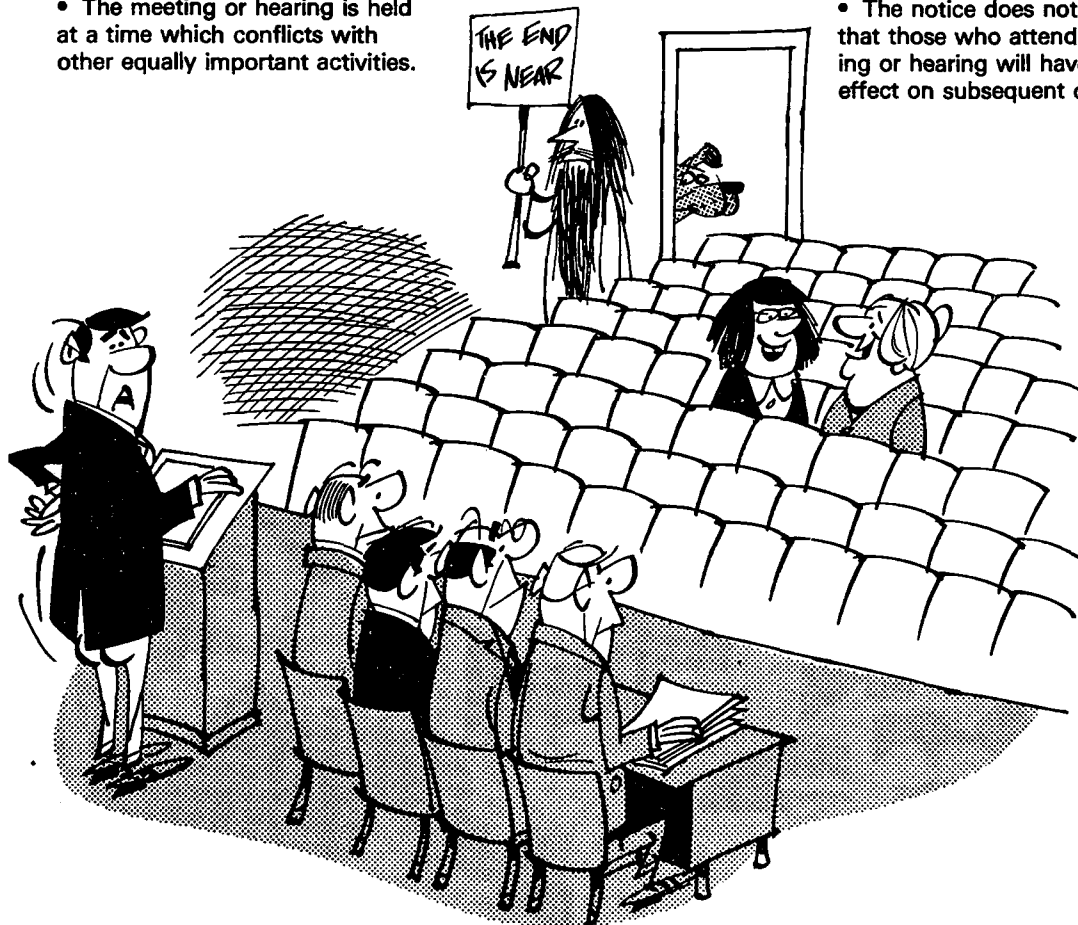
It is a relatively simple job to determine whether an agency's public notices are contributing to empty meeting rooms. This is because ineffective public notices exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:

- The notice is issued in such a way that few people see it, let alone read it.
- The notice does not give any reasons to attend the meeting or hearing: it does not highlight the issues to be covered at the meeting or hearing, particularly economic and environmental impacts; does not indicate what decisions will be made as a result of the meeting or hearing; and does not state the potential effects of these decisions.
- The notice does not indicate that those who attend the meeting or hearing will have any effect on subsequent decisions.

- The notice is written by someone with little or no experience in writing information for the public; i.e., the notice is merely a limp collection of confusing jargon which no one understands.

- The sponsoring agency relies primarily on the narrow "legal notice" use of the print media for public notification.

If one or more of the above are true, the sponsoring agency has an ironclad guarantee that the janitors will not be working overtime as a result of the meeting or hearing. The only exception to this is when the meeting or hearing will deal with an extremely controversial program or issue which has already enraged or polarized a significant number of people. In this case, the room will be filled no matter how bad the notice. In such a situation, where the "event" turns out to be a violent shouting match or perhaps even an old fashioned lynching, the sponsoring agency has more serious public participation problems than putting together a good public notice.



"I TOLD YOU A LEGAL NOTICE MIGHT NOT BE ENOUGH."

Five Principles of a Good Public Notice

Turning the above negative characteristics around into a positive framework results in the five basic principles of effective public notice:

- The notice must be issued so that it is highly visible to the potential "audience" well in advance of the meeting or hearing.
- The notice must be brief and to the point: it must highlight economic and environmental issues and decisions of concern

to the public, as well as the implications of these issues and decisions.

- The notice must indicate how participation at the meeting or hearing will relate to subsequent decisions and the resolution of issues.
- The notice should be developed, or at least reviewed, by someone with experience in writing public information.
- The notice must be distributed through direct mailing to organi-

zations and individuals, in addition to prominent media coverage. Direct contact such as phone call "networking," personal letters, or other "word of mouth" measures are often the most effective means of public notification. The phone call "network," using paid or volunteer staff has usually proven to be the best way to spread the word about a project or upcoming event. This is especially true in small community or neighborhood projects.

The Goal

Public Notice Checklist

Finally, the sponsoring agency should remember that the goal of public notification is not merely to fill the meeting room. It is, rather, to reach the people who are likely to be affected by agency actions and decisions with the kind of information that will convince and enable a good cross-section of "interests" and individuals to participate constructively in the agency program.

The following checklist is included as a brief reminder of the basic principles of a good public notice.

The examples and commentary in the final section are provided to illustrate all of the above points.

After assuring yourself that the event you are sponsoring is fulfilling a specific requirement or has some significance, and after scheduling the event for a convenient time and place, measure the public notice you are about to release against the following checklist:

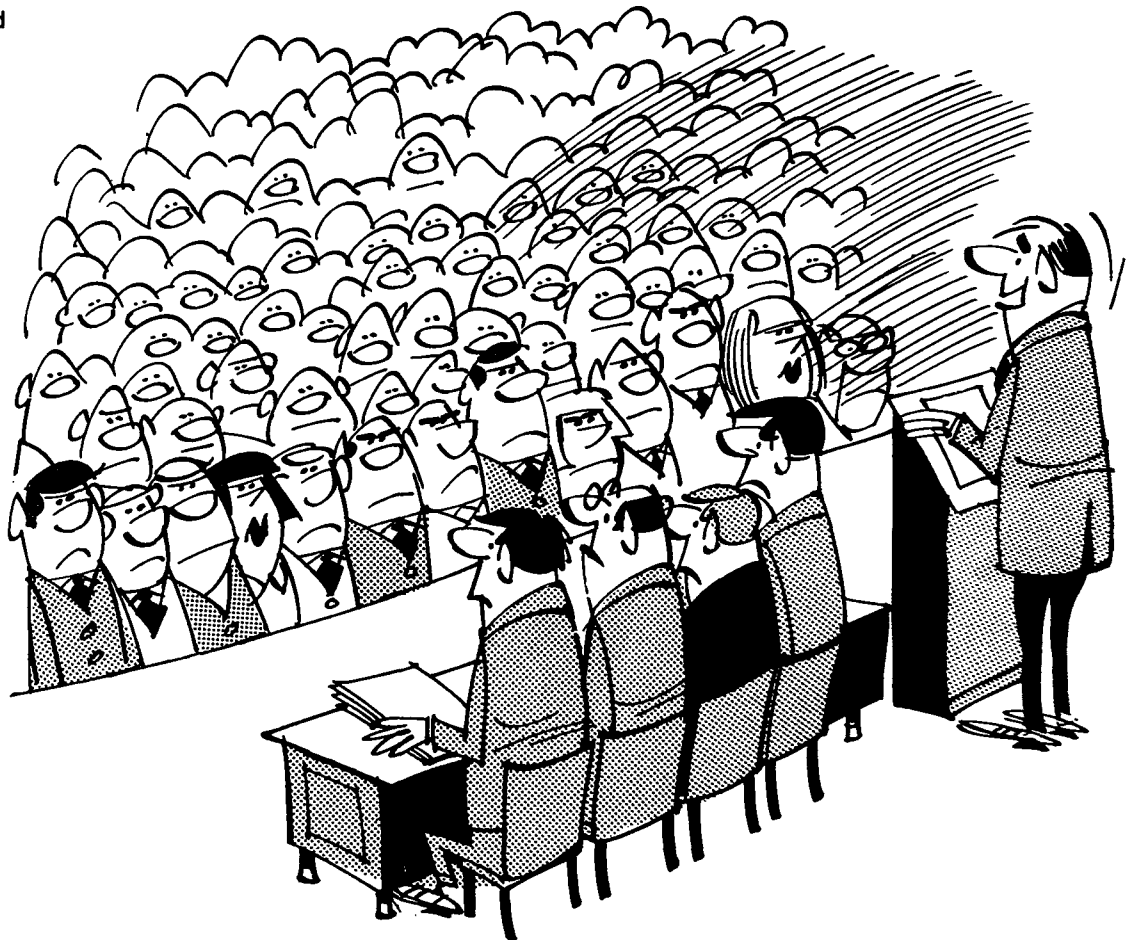
- Will the notice be displayed prominently in the media and posted so as to be highly visible sufficiently in advance of the event? Will a press release accompany the notice? Are other

media contacts planned (press conference, reporters' briefing, feature article)?

- Does the notice emphasize why the event is being held? i.e., issues, decisions, effects?
- Does the notice also stress the importance of citizen attendance by stating how participation will affect decisions?
- Has someone with public information skills prepared or reviewed the notice so that irrelevancies and jargon are avoided

and so that the notice is brief, easy to read, informative, and appealing? If meeting posters are used in addition to written notices, do these posters contain wording and graphics which will grab the viewers' attention?

- Will the notice be mailed directly to appropriate individuals and organizations? Is any other direct contact to be used to notify the public? Does the notice give a staff contact who can provide more detailed information on request?



"CONTRARY TO WHAT YOU MAY HAVE HEARD, WE WILL NOT BE GIVING AWAY FREE TICKETS TO HAWAII TONIGHT. NOW, THE BOARD WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE SEWER PROJECT."

Type

Good Features

Areas Needing Improvement

This is an example of a notice which is mailed to interested citizens on an agency mailing list.

Legal references are relegated to the end of the notice.

Capitalization and underlining are used to highlight important points and to break up gray paragraphs of type.

The language of the notice is closer to plain English than most "official" notices.

The notice could be improved by using a better title (such as "A Chance to be Heard About Air Pollution Limits of Open Burning of Cropland"; "Upper Limits on Experimental Field Burning" could serve as a sub-title) and by using a word such as "persons" instead of "parties."



Department of Environmental Quality

522 S.W. 5th AVENUE, P.O. BOX 1760, PORTLAND, OREGON 97207 PHONE (503) 229- 5353

Prepared: April 18, 1979
Hearing Date: May 25, 1979

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A CHANCE TO BE HEARD ABOUT:

RULE REVISIONS AFFECTING EXPERIMENTAL AGRICULTURAL OPEN FIELD BURNING DURING THE 1979 FIELD BURNING SEASON

The Department of Environmental Quality is proposing to amend existing field burning rules to identify the acreage to be burned under the experimental field burning program during the 1979 field burning season. This revision is necessary due to an administrative error which did not establish an upper acreage limit for 1979 when the field burning rules were adopted on December 15, 1978. The proposed revision may be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency as part of the State Clean Air Act Implementation Plan. A hearing on this matter will be held before the Environmental Quality Commission in Portland on May 25, 1979. The Commission may also consider adoption of the rule at the meeting.

WHAT IS THE DEQ PROPOSING?

Interested parties should request a copy of the complete proposed rule package. The highlight is:

- ** The proposed upper limit for experimental field burning acreage to be burned during the 1979 field burning season is 7,500 acres.

WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS PROPOSAL:

Grass seed farmers and the citizens of the eight Willamette Valley counties where field burning occurs.

HOW TO PROVIDE YOUR INFORMATION:

Written comments should be sent to the Department of Environmental Quality, Air Quality Division, P.O. Box 1760, Portland, Oregon 97207, and should be received by May 23, 1979.

Oral and written comments may be offered at the following public hearing:

<u>City</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Portland	9:30	May 25, 1979	City Hall City Council Chambers 1220 S.W. Fifth

WHERE TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Copies of the proposed rules may be obtained from:

Marianne Fitzgerald
DEQ Air Quality Division
P.O. Box 1760
Portland, Oregon 97207
(503) 229-5353

Scott Freeburn
DEQ Field Burning Office
16 Oakway Mall
Eugene, Oregon 97401
(503) 686-7601

DEQ Willamette Valley Regional Office
1095 25th Street S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97310
(503) 378-8240

LEGAL REFERENCES FOR THIS PROPOSAL:

This proposal amends OAR 340-26-013(6). This revision is proposed under authority of ORS 468.490.

This proposal does not affect land use.

FURTHER PROCEEDINGS:

After public hearing the Commission may adopt rule amendments identical to the proposed amendments, adopt modified rule amendments on the same subject matter, or decline to act. The adopted regulations may be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency as part of the State Clean Air Act Implementation Plan. The Commission's deliberation should come on May 25, 1979 as part of the agenda of a regularly scheduled Commission meeting.

Type

Good Features

Areas Needing Improvement

This is an excellent example of a meeting notice/mailer.

The cover calls immediate attention to the hearings.

The notice would be improved by a better title ("208 Public Participation Bulletin" is not very exciting) and with a better section on plan contents which highlights major issues of public concern.

The information is clearly presented.

A phone contact is given.

Many depositories are listed, and the availability of a plan summary is noted.

Information on how and when to make comments is given.

The public has three options for commenting: hearing testimony (evening and weekend sessions included), telephone comments, or written statements.

The notice informs the public of informational meetings being held prior to the formal comment period.

public participation bulletin
areawide
clean water
planning

PUBLIC HEARINGS ON DRAFT CLEAN WATER PLAN ANNOUNCED

The Metropolitan Water Planning Commission has announced public hearings on its proposed Metropolitan Water Quality Improvement Plan for the Chicago area. The plan is designed to improve water quality in the Chicago River and Lake Michigan, and to protect the health of the community. The plan includes a variety of measures, such as increasing the amount of land treated by sewage treatment plants, and increasing the amount of land treated by stormwater treatment plants. The plan also includes measures to protect the health of the community, such as increasing the amount of land treated by sewage treatment plants, and increasing the amount of land treated by stormwater treatment plants.

Public Hearings on Draft Clean Water Plan

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PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS ALSO SCHEDULED

To help you interpret the clean water proposal prior to the hearings, NIPC will hold a series of public information meetings.

In Chicago, at the NIPC offices (400 W. Madison St.), beginning at 1:30 p.m. on the following dates, these parts of the clean water proposal will be discussed:

Tuesday, May 30 — Agricultural and septic system pollution control.

Tuesday, June 6 — Urban stormwater run-off and combined sewer pollution control.

Tuesday, June 13 — Wastewater treatment plant and other point source pollution control.

Tuesday, June 20 — Management systems, costs, and financing of water pollution control.

In the suburbs, beginning at 7:30 p.m., on the following dates, there will be a general presentation of the clean water plan followed by discussion of topics of interest to those in attendance.

Wednesday, May 31 — Lake Forest Village Hall; 220 E. Deerpath Rd.

Wednesday, June 7 — Naperville Municipal Center; 175 W. Jackson St.

Wednesday, June 14 — Barrington Public Safety Bldg., 121 W. Station St.

Wednesday, June 21 — Frankfort Township Office; Rt. 30 east of Wolf Rd.

LIBRARIES AT WHICH COPIES OF THE DRAFT CLEAN WATER PLAN ARE ON RESERVE

Chicago

Main Library—425 N. Michigan
Social Science & History Div.
Science Division
Business & Industry Division
Cultural Center—78 E. Washington
Brighton Pk.—4314 S. Archer
Jefferson Pk.—5363 W. Lawrence
Woodson—9525 S. Halsted
Woodlawn—6247 S. Kimbark
Hild—4536 N. Lincoln
Legler—115 S. Pulaski

Suburban Cook County—South

Chicago Heights
Harvey
Palos Hills
Park Forest
Tinley Park

DuPage County

Addison
Bensenville
Glen Ellyn
Lombard
Oak Brook
Naperville
Roselle
Villa Park
Westmont
Wheaton
Winfield
Wood Dale

Kane County

Dundee
Elgin
Geneva
Hampshire
St. Charles
Sugar Grove

Will County

Bolingbrook
Joliet
Lockport
New Lenox
Peotone
Romeoville
Wilmington

Suburban Cook County—North

Arlington Heights
Evanston
Glenview
Mt. Prospect
Northbrook
Palatine
Park Ridge
Schaumburg
Skokie
Streamwood
Wheeling
Winnetka

Suburban Cook County—West

Bellwood
LaGrange Park
Oak Park
Schiller Park

McHenry County

Algonquin
Cary
Crystal Lake
Fox River Grove
Harvard
Marengo
McHenry
McHenry-Nunda
Richmond
Woodstock



public participation bulletin areawide clean water planning

PUBLIC HEARINGS ON DRAFT CLEAN WATER PLAN ANNOUNCED

The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission has scheduled eight public hearings on its proposed Areawide Water Quality Management Plan for the six-county metropolitan area. This draft plan suggests strategies for solving the region's water pollution problems and a management system for getting the job done. The proposal also describes the ways in which this multi-billion dollar program can be financed. A clean water plan must be adopted in order to qualify this region for state and federal grants for many wastewater treatment system improvements and water pollution control projects already planned. This plan will be a blueprint for public and private action in water pollution control for years to come.

Hearing dates and locations are as follows:

- Saturday, June 24** — Chicago; NIPC office,
400 W. Madison St.
- Monday, June 26** — DesPlaines Civic Center
1420 Miner St.
Geneva; Kane Co. Gov't Center
719 Batavia Ave.
- Tuesday, June 27** — Crystal Lake
North Union High School
170 N. Oak St.
Hinsdale Village Hall,
19 E. Chicago Ave.
Joliet; Will Co. Courthouse,
14 W. Jefferson St.
- Wednesday, June 28** — Libertyville Village Hall,
200 E. Cook Ave.
Hazel Crest Village Hall,
1818 W. 170th St.

All hearings will remain in session for a minimum of one hour after they are convened. The Saturday hearing in Chicago will begin at 10 a.m. The seven hearings in suburban communities will have an afternoon session beginning at 3 p.m., and an evening session at 7:30 p.m. Procedures for registering for the hearing, and for the conduct of the hearing are available, and they should be requested from NIPC if you plan to make a statement. Call Larry Aggens, Mike Chapin, or Marty Moser (312) 454-0400, for a copy of the procedures or for any additional information.

CLEAN WATER PROPOSAL AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT 350 LOCATIONS

The complete draft clean water plan is more than 1,000 pages long. Copies are being placed on reserve for public review in each municipal building, and in each county planning office. Copies are also available for inspection in the NIPC office, the offices of four intercommunity councils, and in 75 libraries listed in this bulletin. Officials of agencies designated for plan implementation, and members of the Local Steering Committees and Areawide Advisory Committee will also have copies of the complete draft plan.

A 45-page summary of the draft plan will be sent to all clean water planning advisors and to persons who have been active in the basin planning process. Summaries will be sent to others who request a copy at no charge.

HOW YOU CAN GIVE US YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

NIPC has tried to make it as easy as possible for you to tell us what you think about the draft plan. You may make a statement at one of the eight public hearings. As an alternative, you may submit a statement by mail, until July 8; or you may telephone a statement to NIPC between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., during the week of June 26th. Telephone statements will be transcribed in the hearing record, or summarized there if they are longer than five minutes. Written statements will be reproduced in the hearing record in the form in which they are received.

northeastern illinois planning commission

400 West Madison Street, Chicago, Illinois 60606

(312) 454-0400

Type

Good Features

Areas Needing Improvement

This is an example of an alternative "legal" or "official" newspaper notice.

This format is an improvement over the usual obituary column associated with most hearings, and a fact sheet is offered to the public.

The notice would be improved by a more definitive or descriptive title, at least a listing of potential issues, and a telephone contact for more information.



Notice of Public Hearings on Proposed Areawide Waste Treatment Management Plan

These hearings are being conducted for the purpose of obtaining public advice on the Proposed Areawide Waste Treatment Management Plan, prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 208 of P.L. 92-500, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972. The presentation will include the designation of management agencies for waste treatment and the determination of priorities for construction of treatment facilities in Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties.

Official public hearings will be held

Thursday, July 28, 1977	7:30 p.m.	Barry County Courthouse, Courtroom	Hastings
Thursday, Aug. 4, 1977	7:30 p.m.	Kalamazoo Center, Room A	Kalamazoo
Thursday, Aug. 11, 1977	7:30 p.m.	Kellogg Comm. College, Davidson Auditorium	Battle Creek
Thursday, Aug. 18, 1977	7:30 p.m.	Branch County Courthouse, Commissioners' Room	Coldwater
Thursday, Aug. 25, 1977	7:30 p.m.	Glen Oaks Community College, Nora Hagen Theatre	South of M-86, East of Centreville

Interested persons and representatives of local governments and organizations are invited to present their views and comments in writing, or in person, at these hearings. Oral comments should be limited to five (5) minutes. Written statements of any length also may be mailed to Richard Simms, P.E., Water Quality Director, Southcentral Michigan Planning Council, Connors Hall, Nazareth College at Kalamazoo, Nazareth, Michigan 49074, until August 26, 1977.

Copies of Volume I, which includes the Proposed Areawide Waste Treatment Management Plan, have been provided for public inspection at each unit of local government in the S.M.P.C. five-county area. Copies of both Volume I and Volume II (the technical appendices) may be examined at the S.M.P.C. office, at the address given above, and at the following libraries:

Barry County: Hastings Public Library.

Branch County: Branch County Public Library, Coldwater Public Library

Calhoun County: Albion College Library, Kellogg Community College Learning Resource Center, Marshall Public Library, Willard Library (Battle Creek)

Kalamazoo County: Kalamazoo College Library, Kalamazoo Valley Community College Learning Resource Center, Western Michigan University Libraries (Archives, Waldo Library), Nazareth College Library, Portage Public Library.

St. Joseph County: Sturgis Public Library, Three Rivers Public Library.

A fact sheet discussing the development of the plan and the philosophy behind it is available on request from the S.M.P.C. office. Some additional copies of Volume I, which includes the Proposed Areawide Waste Treatment Management Plan, are also available.

Please bring this notice to the attention of any persons you feel would be interested in this matter.

SOUTHCENTRAL MICHIGAN PLANNING COUNCIL Water Quality Commission

Merle Wood (Mayor, City of Parchment), Chairperson

Jerry R. Hubbard (Supervisor, Union Township, Branch County), Vice Chairperson

Richard G. Simms, P.E., Water Quality Director

Type**Good
Features****Areas Needing
Improvement**

This is an example of a poster/
mailer notice.

The notice emphasizes the alter-
natives for specific locations in
the community.

There is no mention of major
issues of public concern.

There is also too much technical
jargon; e.g., lateral sewer pro-
gram, extended aeration, rotating
biological contactors, two-stage
trickling filters, etc.

In short, the writer is assuming
too much knowledge about the
project in the community. Even
in a well-publicized and/or con-
troversial project, this is a
dangerous assumption.

The notice should include a con-
tact for more information.

PUBLIC HEARING **on the** **Wastewater Management Plan** **for the** **Town of New Field**

... to discuss the alternative solutions and the recom-
mended plan for the Boomis Heights, Plain Meadow,
West End Pond areas, and the Sewage Treatment Plant.

Boomis Heights

- Community septic system, alternatives 1 & 2
- Subsurface sand filter • Land application
- Conventional sewerage, alternatives 1 & 2
- Abandonment of dwellings

Plain Meadow

- No build • Lateral sewer program

West End Pond

- No build • Sewer to New Hartfield STP
- Sewer to Windsted STP

Sewage Treatment Plant

- Land application • Extended aeration
- Rotating biological contactors
- Two-stage trickling filters

The Date: Monday, April 5, 1978 **Time:** 7:30 P.M.
The Place: The New Field Town Hall

Type

This invitation/hearing notice was prepared by a consultant for an EPA training session. Even though it is for a hypothetical situation, the notice exhibits several important features.

Good Features

The notice could stand by itself, as a newspaper ad, poster or mailer.

The format is not particularly distinguished, but the notice contains essential information which must be included in any effective notice:

- Outline of issues in prominent location;
- A list of technical alternatives;
- Information on where and when to review documents;
- Information on how and when to make formal comments;
- Name and phone number of project contact person;
- The date, time and location of the hearing, a central, easily reached location at a time when most people can attend.

In this example a letter, co-signed by a local official, is sent to an extensive mailing list, in addition to publication of the notice in the local newspaper and posting in prominent locations in the community. This extra step is taken because those responsible for the project are aware of a very important fact regarding meeting or hearing notification: most people who attend meetings or hearings do so because they have been contacted directly, either by phone, through the mail or in person, not because of a formal notice, newspaper article or paid ad; This fact has been verified in surveys and is borne out by actual experience every day. This fact must be taken into account by those conducting the hearing or meeting. Existing communications networks such as newsletters should be used, as well as some form of direct contact. In most cases, reliance solely on the "media" will be insufficient.

The elected official also indicates in the letter that views expressed at the hearing will be used in decision-making.

Areas Needing Improvement

The notice does not mention the availability of a technical summary or fact sheet. While not directly related to notice content and form, such a summary is an essential part of any project. If one is available, it certainly should be mentioned in the notice.

For the most part, the notice avoids jargon; however, "collection system," "mgd," and "secondary treatment" are not everyday terms.

Board of Selectmen
PUBLIC HEARING
on Water Pollution Control

PUBLIC OPINION WILL BE SOUGHT ON ALTERNATIVE WASTE TREATMENT PROPOSALS

FOR THE TOWN OF MYTHICAL

DATE: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1977, BEGINNING AT 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: MYTHICAL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

ISSUES: Should the sewer service district be expanded?
Should the capacity of the treatment plant be expanded?
Should Mythical and Maatleewe join in building a regional treatment facility?
What would be the land use impacts of an expanded or regional facility?

ALTERNATIVES TO BE DISCUSSED: 1) secondary treatment at existing plant with no expansion of present capacity (1.7 mgd).
2) secondary treatment with expansion of capacity (3.9 mgd) and collection system (see map).
3) new regional treatment facility with Maatleewe, with 1.6 mgd capacity and expanded collection system (map).
4) new regional plant with Maatleewe with 1.2 mgd capacity and expanded collection system (map).

DETAILED PLANS AND ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FOR EACH ALTERNATIVE may be examined at the Mythical Town Hall (9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Monday through Friday except legal holidays), the Mythical Public Library (9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday and 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. on Saturday), or in the Auditorium prior to the hearing (starting at 6:30 P.M.).

A SINGULAR PUBLIC HEARING will also be held in the MAATLEEVE TOWN HALL on Thursday, March 10, 1977, beginning at 7:30 P.M. Plans and analyses are available at Town Hall (9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Monday through Friday except legal holidays). A separate announcement for this hearing will also be published.

If you are unable to attend the hearing or would prefer to submit your comments in writing, signed written comments will be accepted up to midnight of the seventh calendar day after the hearing and will be entered as part of the hearing record. Signed statements received prior to the close of the hearing will be read at the hearing. Comments should be addressed to the Board of Selectmen.

The hearing is being held in response to the National Environmental Policy Act, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, and Regulations promulgated thereunder. On the basis of expressed public opinion and the environmental effects, monetary costs, feasibility, resource and energy use, and reliability of the various proposals, a "selected alternative" will be chosen and 75% Federal CEA loan funding will be sought.

For more information, call Sue Ertel, Community Liaison Officer for Deane and Sparks Inc., Engineering Consultants, at 867-1234.

Dear Mythical Citizen,

We would like to extend an invitation to you to participate in a public hearing to help select among alternative waste treatment proposals for Town of Mythical. The hearing will take place on Wednesday, February 16, 1977 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mythical Senior High School Auditorium.

The different proposals for handling the current and expected wastewater flows have highlighted a number of significant issues, including:

- . should the sewer service district be expanded?
- . should the capacity of the treatment plant be expanded?
- . should Mythical join with adjacent Makebleeve and construct a regional treatment facility, phasing out Mythical's current plant?
- . what would be the land use impacts of an expanded facility?

Each of the proposals entails different environmental and monetary costs and benefits, and we are seeking the advice and ideas of you and other citizens to help in making the choice between them. We hope you will join us on February 16. Please refer to the enclosed hearing notices for further details.

Sincerely,

Ima C. Leckman
Chairman,
Mythical Board of Selectmen

Board of Selectmen **PUBLIC HEARING** on Water Pollution Control

PUBLIC OPINION WILL BE SOUGHT ON ALTERNATIVE WASTE TREATMENT PROPOSALS
FOR THE TOWN OF MYTHICAL

TIME: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1977, BEGINNING AT 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: MYTHICAL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

ISSUES Should the sewer service district be expanded?
Should the capacity of the treatment plant be expanded?
Should Mythical and Makebleeve join in building a regional treatment facility?
What would be the land use impacts of an expanded or regional facility?

ALTERNATIVES TO BE DISCUSSED: 1.) secondary treatment at existing plant with no expansion of present capacity (.7 mgd);
2.) secondary treatment with expansion of capacity (.9 mgd) and collection system (see map);
3.) new regional treatment facility with Makebleeve, with 1.0 mgd capacity and expanded collection system (map);
4.) new regional plant with Makebleeve with 1.2 mgd capacity and expanded collection system (map).

DETAILED PLANS AND ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FOR EACH ALTERNATIVE may be examined at the Mythical Town Hall (9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Monday through Friday except legal holidays), the Mythical Public Library (9:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. Monday through Friday and 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. on Saturday), or in the Auditorium prior to the hearing (starting at 6:30 P.M.).

.
A SIMILAR PUBLIC HEARING will also be held in the MAKEBLEEVE TOWN HALL on Thursday, March 10, 1977, beginning at 7:30 P.M. Plans and analyses are available at Town Hall (9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Monday through Friday except legal holidays). A separate announcement for this hearing will also be published.

If you are unable to attend the hearing or would prefer to submit your comments in writing, signed written comments will be accepted up to midnight of the seventh calendar day after the hearing and will be entered as part of the hearing record. Signed statements received prior to the close of the hearing will be read at the hearing. Comments should be addressed to the Board of Selectmen.

This hearing is being held in response to the National Environmental Policy Act, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, and Regulations promulgated thereunder. On the basis of expressed public opinion and the environmental effects, monetary costs, feasibility, resource and energy use, and reliability of the various proposals, a "selected alternative" will be chosen and 75% federal/15% state funding will be sought.

For more information, call Sue Erline, Community Liaison Officer for DeZine and Specs Inc., Engineering Consultants, at 987-1234.

Type

Good Features

Points to Consider

This is an example of a simple newspaper ad used to attract public attention prior to a public hearing.

The ad generated several phone calls for more information for two reasons: the ad was placed in a prominent location in a widely circulated newspaper, and the ad highlights a few dramatic issues related to the hearing.

The use of such an ad should be carefully considered.

There is no question that a well done, well-placed ad will attract attention; however, caution must be used to avoid overstatement.

The cost of such an ad is usually much higher than the cost of a legal notice, particularly in large metropolitan newspapers.

It is not possible to tell a newspaper where to put a legal notice. Certain locations can be requested for display ads.

BOSTON HARBOR

- "NO SWIMMING" in Charles & Mystic Rivers
- "SHELLFISHING BANNED" in Inner Harbor
- 400,000 pounds of partially treated sewage & toxic waste flow into Boston Harbor daily

Does it have to be this way? Are you responsible?
What do you want done for a clean Boston Harbor?

Let the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency know
at a public hearing on:

Monday, November 20, 1978
Faneuil Hall, Boston
1:30-5:30 P.M. and 7:00-10:00 P.M.

At the hearing EPA will hear your comments on its recommendations for cleaning up the Harbor and its tributaries. The EPA recommendations include:

- a \$770 million water pollution control project with waste water treatment at Deer Island
- environmentally sound sludge disposal

For more information contact EPA's Office of Public Awareness at 223-7223.

Type

Things to Consider

This is an example of a public notice designed to reach a specific audience.

In many instances writing a notice that can be read and understood by the affected public means taking the extra step of writing the notice in a language other than plain English.

When this extra step is taken, it is advisable not to give a literal translation of an English language notice. The notice should be actually *written* by someone with a good knowledge of the idiom and nuances of the other language. It may be advisable to seek assistance and advice from a member of the community.

Of course, the principles regarding content and distribution also apply to these types of notices.

美國農業部人類營養學研究中心 公眾聆聽會簡介

集會地點：昆市社區學校

日期：一九七九年五月廿日 時間：下午二時半

美國人類營養學研究中心是個什麼的組織？
美國人類營養學研究中心是專為研究成人及老年人營養問題而設。該中心隸屬聯邦農業部，並由其直接管理。

該中心將在何處設立？

該中心將設立於波士頓市中心，史提域街與華威頓街交界處之西南角，即達夫牙醫學院對面之音樂戲劇院為毗鄰。地盤面積為二萬平方呎。所設計之建築物高十五層。現時該地盤暫作停車場用。

該中心有何種設備及有何種職員在該中心工作？

該中心所有設備及器材均為其工作之特別目的而設計；其中已包括一個由廿八個志願工作者管理之研究單位；另一個能容納十至五十個門診病人的部門以供給本地營養研究之資料；職員辦公室；化驗室；專供實驗用之小動物飼養室等。該中心將僱用職員二百廿八名。

該中心建設費用若干？

該研究中心估計約需費二千萬元。該資金百分之百由聯邦政府負責支付。

建築工程何時開始？

計劃由一九七九年七月開始動工，預計於一九八一年十月，全部工程完成。

該中心之設立，如何符合南灣區之更新重建計劃？

根據南灣區之更新重建計劃，該地盤原指定作醫院建設之用。故用於設立本研究中心，則甚符合原定之目標。

該中心動工期間及至工程完竣之正式地用期內，其聲響程度會否影響附近之學堂？

當該中心正式地用後，所發聲響，應不至對鄰近之學堂，因

(1)

(2)

其設計將符合波士頓城市響聲管制之條例。至於在動工期間，因要用打磚機，在短期內很難避免有較大之響聲。所發聲響雖較大之建築物已括音樂戲劇院，達夫牙醫學院及達夫紐英倫醫院之舊址等。其次則為康諾斯高學校，達夫牙醫學院及多子樓。有關方面將盡量減輕響聲之程度，但在此動工三週期內響聲難免是難避免的。

泊車及交通問題，將受何影響？

預計在該中心完成後，每日將有車輛進出約一百五十次。鑑於該地區現時交通之擠迫程度，此增加數字，實屬重大之影響。而在該中心建成後，該區將失去現有之一百個車位之停車場，而該中心亦不會供給職員現場之泊車位。雖然這樣會增加該區泊車之需求，但是照現時附近之停車場之容量，亦能應付所增加之需要。

波士頓之公共設備系統能否供給該研究中心之需要？

該地盤設有食水之接駁，廢物排水系統，風雨排水系統及煤氣喉，足夠供該研究中心之應用。

在該中心內，會否使用化學藥品及含放射性的物質？

在該中心內，溶解劑及酸類將被用於食物分解及抽取脂肪樣本份之用。中心之實驗室內將有適當之設備來使用此種化學劑，例如加裝罩及中和酸性液體之特別容器。研究中心亦將會因低度之放射性的物質，在實驗室探測響聲而在動物中之存在。一經專門之職員將負責控制放射性的物質之應用及廢物之處理。

該研究中心之暖氣及排洩廢水系統會否對該區之空氣有不良之影響？

該研究中心將用煤油暖爐供暖，該系統發散暖氣之功效一定符合麻省空氣質量控制之標準及由麻省居住環境質量工程師之設計核准。在實驗室或動物飼養室之暖氣，則由暖氣喉由廢物之屋頂排出。在一般正常情況下，則不必特別之處理。若遇異常時，該中心亦有適當之設備及措施處理。廢物公共衛生署將帶同該區動物飼養室及實驗室內排氣之標準。

—完—

Type

Things to Consider

This is an example of an all-too-typical government hearing notice which is usually posted in public buildings and mailed to persons on special agency mailing lists. This example is taken almost word for word from an actual EPA notice.

When stacked up against the five basic principles of a good notice and the checklist provided in this guidance, it can be easily seen that this type of notice because it is so "governmental" in tone and appearance cannot be relied upon to stimulate public interest.

Even though three issues are hinted at in the notice, the layout of the notice, as well as a fair amount of governmentese deaden its effect.

This type of notice should be avoided if at all possible.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Region XI
14 Main Street
Anytown, Anystate 20002

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM, SOME TOWN, Anystate

TO: All Interested Government Agencies, Public Groups and Individuals

In accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, this notice is to inform you that the Region XI Office of the Environmental Protection Agency intends to hold a public hearing for the proposed agency action described below:

Approval of a Wastewater Treatment Facility Plan for a new sewer interceptor, lagoons and rapid infiltration basins for Some town, Anystate.

EPA approval of this plan and EIS will mean 75 percent and up to 85 percent of all eligible costs will be made available to Some Town under provisions of Public Law 92-500. EPA recognizes that the approval of the sewage interceptor line in East End could have significant effects upon the environmental quality of this area. In particular, the following areas are likely to be affected: water quality in Carp Creek, ground water quality near the infiltration basins, and land use patterns in East End.

The final EIS is now available in limited quantities either from Some Town or the EPA Regional Office. The forty-five day comment period ends June 28, 1979.

If you wish to express your views regarding the proposed project please attend the public hearing or address your written comments to the Regional Administrator.

COME TO THE PUBLIC HEARING -- BRING A CONCERNED FRIEND

PUBLIC HEARING

SOME TOWN'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM

THURSDAY JUNE 21, 1979 7:30 P.M.

County Courthouse Basement
44 Lamont Street
Some Town, Anystate

Type

Good Features

Areas Needing Improvement

This is an example of a simple, yet effective, public notice/poster.*

**This notice was used as a poster and it was also mailed to a carefully selected "public" living near the lake. County tax rolls and a computer list were used to identify this "public."*

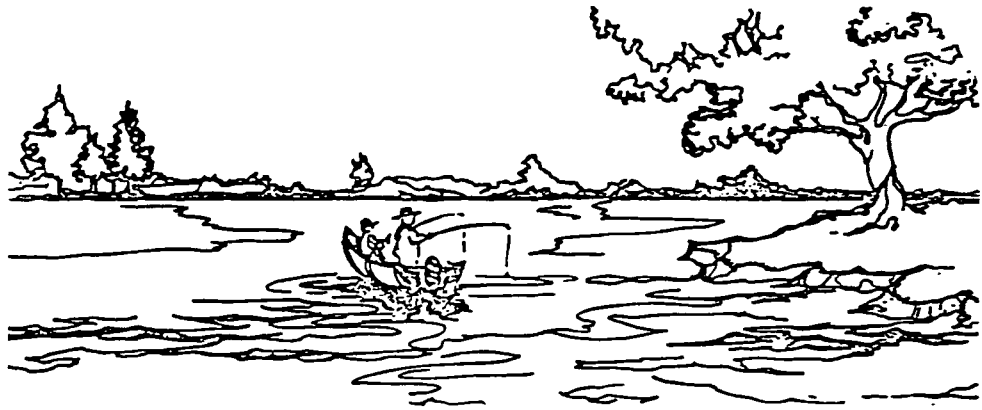
This notice goes right to the heart of a very specific issue: the quality of a local lake.

A telephone contact for more information should be given.

The issue is presented in very simple terms and stresses environmental and economic concerns.

The notice is direct, visually appealing and easy to read.

Are You Concerned?



Lake Hollingsworth is Dying . . .

As a close neighbor, you will want to learn how to save your lake.

While it isn't dead yet, it is heading toward this end.

So, pay your respects to this beautiful body of water while it is still alive.

Some dedicated people are working to save it now. They are having a special meeting to tell you about it.

Come learn what is being done and how you can help. This affects your property value.

Who wants to live near a dead lake?

Sponsored by: Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Location — The Sump, Park Opposite Florida Southern College
(in case of rain: Branscomb Room 202)

Date — Saturday, February 25, 1978

Time — 10:00 A.M.

central florida regional planning council

polk, hardee, desoto, highlands & okeechobee counties

Type


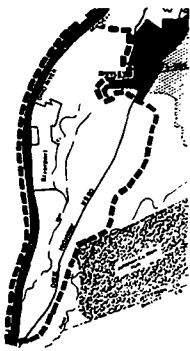
Good Features

This is an example of a mailer/notice, including a response form. This notice is used to announce the beginning of a planning process, not a specific event.

The notice is appealing and easy to read with a simple map outlining the study area.

A response form is included as well as the name of a person to contact for more information.

The notice basically takes into account all of the essential ingredients of an effective notice. If the notice is properly distributed, it should generate public interest and response.

**MILL CREEK BASIN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**DO YOU LIVE OR WORK IN THIS PART
OF JEFFERSON COUNTY? IF SO,
THIS NOTICE MAY BE OF VITAL CONCERN
TO YOU.**

You Can Help

The Mill Creek Basin EIS is a process that will help you and your community make decisions about the future of the basin. The EIS will describe the proposed project and its potential impacts on the environment. You will have the opportunity to provide input to the EIS process.

The Mill Creek Basin EIS

The EIS is a process that will help you and your community make decisions about the future of the basin. The EIS will describe the proposed project and its potential impacts on the environment. You will have the opportunity to provide input to the EIS process.

Can You Think Of Any Other Questions Which Should Be Answered?

The EIS will describe the proposed project and its potential impacts on the environment. You will have the opportunity to provide input to the EIS process.

Now That You Have Decided To Help, What Happens Next?

The EIS will describe the proposed project and its potential impacts on the environment. You will have the opportunity to provide input to the EIS process.

EPA's Role

The EIS will describe the proposed project and its potential impacts on the environment. You will have the opportunity to provide input to the EIS process.

Name of Individual: _____

Group Representing or Affiliated with: _____

Position with Group: _____

Address and Telephone Number: _____

Level of Interest in the EIS

(1) (My Group) would like to become involved in the EIS process by (check one or more)

1 ☐ Receiving a monthly newsletter outlining the progress of the EIS.

2 ☐ Attending one or more workshops which would help develop and evaluate wastewater management alternatives.

3 ☐ Being informed of public hearings, committee meetings, or workshops.

4 ☐ Becoming a member of the citizens' review committee for this project.

5 ☐ I have no desire to become involved in this EIS project.

EPA

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Water


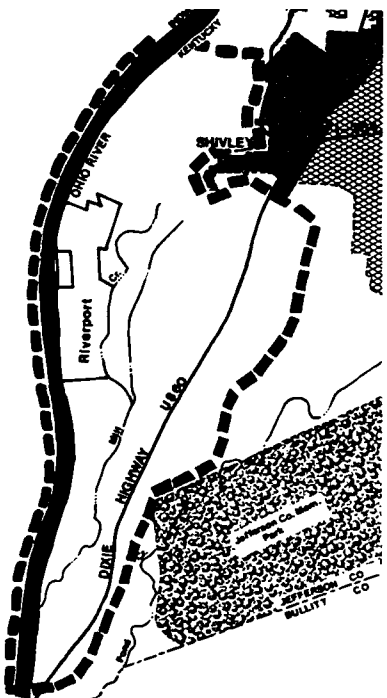
400 Michigan Avenue, N.E.

Washington, D.C. 20460

Phone: (202) 866-1199

Telex: 203 540 EPA

Mail Stop 100

**MILL CREEK BASIN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**DO YOU LIVE OR WORK IN THIS PART
OF JEFFERSON COUNTY? IF SO,
THIS NOTICE MAY BE OF VITAL CONCERN
TO YOU.**

You Can Help

Environmental Impact Statements are popularly known as EIS's. The purpose of an EIS is to make the appropriate Federal, state and local government agencies and the public aware of the beneficial and adverse impacts of a proposed action and to disclose all reasonable alternative actions that have been considered. The EIS process affords the public an opportunity to participate in Federal decisions that may affect the human environment.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) needs your help to make the best decisions on important issues concerning wastewater treatment and disposal which may affect you and your community.

The Mill Creek Basin EIS

The Louisville Wastewater Facilities Plan was prepared in 1974 to address the wastewater treatment needs for a 20 year period in the Louisville and Jefferson County area. The plan proposed a comprehensive sewer system. EPA performed a review of the plan to determine if significant environmental effects would result. Based upon this review and concerns raised by local citizens, EPA determined that the Mill Creek Basin portion of the plan would cause significant impacts and that an EIS should be prepared as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The Mill Creek Basin EIS will involve an investigation of existing and future groundwater quality and existing/potential uses of groundwater resource in order to determine the need for Federal funding for sewers in this Basin. Alternatives to and the impacts of providing sewer service to the Riverport Industrial Park, which is located in southwest Jefferson County, will also be evaluated.

Let Your Voice Be Heard

You, as an individual or as a member of a group having an interest in the area where the EIS will be conducted (see map), can take part in the citizen participation portion of the EIS process. An extensive citizen participation effort is planned. It will be an important part of the Mill Creek Environmental Impact Statement's development. Specific items include the development of a citizen review committee, workshops, news briefs and public hearings. Enclosed with this brochure is a form which you may fill out and return to EPA. By filling out this form, you will indicate to us the degree to which you or your organization would like to participate in the Mill Creek EIS.

EPA's Role

Controversy over the Wastewater Facilities Plan for the Louisville area has existed ever since it was announced that a wastewater treatment study was going to be developed. The Plan has been investigated by state legislative committees, protested by neighborhood groups and used as a basis for legal action.

The Region IV office of the EPA has the authority to grant the Metropolitan Sewer District 75% of the funds necessary to construct the elements of the Plan. In order to resolve the

issues that have been identified, EPA will conduct a detailed, impartial analysis. The specific questions the EIS will answer include:

1. What is the best alternative available to meet the communities' wastewater needs, both now and in the future?
2. What environmental and social impacts will result from the selected project?
3. What economic impacts will the selected project have on area residents, including those on fixed incomes?
4. What is the suitability of septic tanks, seepage pits or other individual on-lot disposal systems and how great a threat do they present for polluting groundwater supplies?
5. Is on lot-disposal of waste a permanent or short term solution to waste disposal in the Mill Creek Basin?
6. What is the current quality of the groundwater?
7. How can industrial wastes be handled? Who pays for treating or pretreating these industrial wastes?

Can You Think Of Any Other Questions Which Should Be Answered?

The EPA feels that these are important questions that require the joint efforts of government agencies and concerned citizens in order to be adequately addressed. The EPA hopes that you, as a citizen, will provide your input to enable EPA to make better decisions concerning wastewater treatment and disposal.

Now That You Have Decided To Help, What Happens Next?

Citizen workshops and a formal public hearing will be held to keep you informed of EPA's progress, to answer your questions, and to give you an opportunity to raise issues which you would like to see addressed.

Look for announcements of project landmarks in your local newspaper or fill out the enclosed form and indicate your desire to receive a monthly newsletter outlining the progress of the EIS and announcing future meetings. The first citizen workshop will be held during the first part of November, 1978. Please look for the announcement in your local newspapers indicating where and when this workshop will be held.

EPA welcomes your comments and inquiries. Please feel free to contact the following EPA representative for more information:

Ronald J. Mikulak, Project Officer
EIS Branch
EPA, Region IV
345 Courtland Street, N.E.
Atlanta, Ga. 30308
(404) 881-7458

Name of Individual: _____

Group Representing or Affiliated with: _____

Position with Group: _____

Address and Telephone Number: _____

Level of Interest in the EIS:

(I) (My Group) would like to become involved in the EIS process by (check one or more):

1. ☐ Receiving a monthly newsletter outlining the progress of the EIS;
2. ☐ Attending one or more workshops which would help develop and evaluate wastewater management alternatives;
3. ☐ Being informed of public hearings, committee meetings, or workshops;
4. ☐ Becoming a member of the citizens' review committee for this project;
5. ☐ I have no desire to become involved in this EIS project.

Type

Good Feature

Areas Needing Improvement

This is an example of a mailer/poster.

The notice is brief, direct and easy to read.

The notice would have more effect if specific economic and environmental impacts were listed.

Simple graphics and layout, as well as the title catch the reader's attention.

A contact for more information should be given.



The Clean Water People are having a meeting

If you are from the Vandalia area, and if you are aware that cleaning up our rivers and streams involves your homes, your jobs, your money. . .

You want to be there!
Thursday, July 13, 1978
7:00 P.M.

Troy High School Auditorium
151 West Staunton Road
Troy, Ohio

sponsored by the Miami Valley
Regional Planning Commission

7-12-78 Vandalia Chronicle



"AND NOW FOR THE NEXT AGENDA
ITEM. THE MOVE BETWEEN EDA
AND DOI ON THE 2012 AND
INTERAGENCY REVIEW OF AWT/AST
PROJECTS. "