

SENATOR CAESAR TRUNZO  
CO-CHAIRMAN

STATE OFFICE BUILDING  
HAUPTPAUGE, NEW YORK 11787  
(516) 979-5336

EDWARD N. CANTOR  
CO-DIRECTOR



NEW YORK STATE  
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION  
ON WATER RESOURCE NEEDS  
OF LONG ISLAND

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MAY W. NEWBURGER  
CO-CHAIRWOMAN

43 S MIDDLE NECK ROAD  
GREAT NECK, NEW YORK 11021  
(516) 462-7722

SARAH J. MEYLAND  
CO-DIRECTOR

ALDICARB UPDATE

A major sampling and monitoring program was conducted from April through June 1980, which included the collection of water samples from 7,809 wells. Of the wells sampled, 5,745 (73.6%) were found to have non-detectable concentrations; 1,025 (13.1%) had Aldicarb concentrations over the recommended standard of 7ppb. The balance of wells, 1,032 (13.3%), was found to contain traces of the pesticide. The frequency distribution for concentrations of Aldicarb was between 1 ppb and 600 ppb. For those homeowners whose wells exceeded the 7 ppb standard for Aldicarb, a recommendation was made that the water supply not be used for cooking or drinking purposes. The N.Y.S. Department of Health provided laboratory quality control and indicated that the overall performance of the Union Carbide laboratory was good.

In July, 1980 the Union Carbide Corporation made an offer to provide activated carbon treatment units to homeowners whose wells contained a concentration of more than 7 ppb of Aldicarb. The cost of the more than 1,000 filters installed under the program was paid for the Union Carbide Corporation, however, the cost of rebedding the filter is to be borne by the homeowner. Union Carbide also agreed to provide filters for any additional wells over the guidelines for the period up to June 1983.

In August, 1979, the Environmental Protection Agency retained Intra Environmental Consultants Inc. to mathematically model the movement of Aldicarb in the soil and Groundwater and predict its future movement.

The results were that Aldicarb would remain in the water supply for over 20 years and will move with the groundwater flow affecting additional areas in the future.

As a result of the Aldicarb situation, the Suffolk County Department of Health Services recieved a two-year grant from the New York State legislature (to be administered by the New York State Department of Health) to investigate "hot spots" and Aldicarb movement in groundwater. This study will be used to determine monitoring systems and potential locations of Aldicarb-free water.

Suffolk County has also embarked on the North Fork Study to determine a plan for alternate water supplies for the residents of Riverhead and Southold Towns. The study, to be conducted by ERM Northeast, and which will begin in January, 1982, is expected to take about nine months to complete. The work will cover several water supply alternatives including: brackish water treatment; treatment at the well head; creation of small water districts; and creation of private well treatment districts.

Aldicarb is a highly toxic pesticide that cannot be used as an effective pesticide without contaminating groundwater. Fortunately, this product is no longer in use in Suffolk County, however it will persist and spread, continuing to contaminate our precious groundwater supply.

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