

David Jennings  
172C Ackerly Rd.  
Clarks Summit PA. 18411  
05-07-2002

Mr. Andrew Wallace  
Northwest PA Executive Director  
For Senator Arlen Specter  
310 Spruce Street, Suite 201  
Scranton, PA. 18503

Dear Senator Specter and Mr. Wallace:

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to be examined by Dr. Emmett at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.

Over the past 24 months many of the people in my neighborhood have been experiencing anxiety over the controversy surrounding state and government analysis of past contamination from the Precision National facility located in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania. I would like to take this opportunity to explain where much of my frustration comes from.

Members of my family have lived in Glenburn Township since the 1930s. My grandmother raised my father in the home that is currently occupied by my sister and her family. I live in a home on a piece of property next to her and my parents live in a home on a piece of property next to my wife and myself. As you can see we are a close family in many ways logistically and in family values. About 5 years ago I began reading information on Precision and found many inaccuracies and coincidences, which I feel, should be explained.

In many of the documents, which describe the site history of the plant, they claim the contamination came from an unlined lagoon. I agree. My opinion is this was the beginning of the contamination.

The problem I have with this claim is from the knowledge and recollections I have from playing on the 46-acre property when I was a child.

After 1970, Precision was instructed to have their chemical wastewater sent to Mt. Vernon Illinois.

For about the next 5 years many long term and current residents remember seeing green liquid running down the side of Ackerly Road and into the Ackerly Creek.

In about 1975 I was 10 years old and playing on precision's property. I found a pipe sticking out of the ground close to their factory with green liquid discharging from it. The D.E.P. was notified and the discharge ceased. In or around the time of 1977 I remember my mother commenting on a green tint on the frost of the car windows. It was then that I told her about a blower vent on the side of the Precision building. D.E.P. was once again called and it was some time later the blower vents ceased operating.

In about 1978 I was walking on a trail about 1\10 of a mile downgrade of the Precision facility when I saw a stream of green liquid running through a ditch in the woods. I followed the stream of green liquid to find two pipes encased in cement The diameter of the pipes was about 4 inches. The one pipe was discharging a yellowish green liquid from it. The D.E.P. was notified.

I walked with Leonard Insolaco from the D.E.P. up the hill and showed him the pipes. He took pictures and sent me home. (Coincidentally those pictures and many other documents are missing from the D.E.P. files) With all the witnessed discharges from Precision I wonder what went Un-noticed.

I have reviewed several thousand pages of information on Precision, unfortunately the documentation from 1970-1979 is missing. (Coincidentally these were critical years in my opinion, as the discharges were quite frequent.) I have heard many excuses from both state and federal employees as to the destruction of the documents. "My favorite, is "...they were lost in the flood" told by one state employee. The flood occurred in 1972. What happened to the records from 1973 to 1979? That employee's story soon changed. As you can see the missing records would certainly raise many concerns. It is just one more Precision coincidence that the records from the 1970s, the years where there were many witnessed discharges, are missing.

My personal involvement in researching this site was propelled when my mother had a cerebral aneurysm in 1993 at the age of 63, which was followed by a massive stroke. At that point, we felt we had been very fortunate up to then and were thankful for the good health we had enjoyed. At that point we had accepted our mothers illness as our turn for catastrophe.

As we had gone through the admission process at a hospital in Scranton we ran into a past neighbor who had lived two houses down from us, from 1969 to 1971. This lady had proceeded to tell us her daughter had a cerebral aneurysm at the age of 26. ("Wow! What a coincidence", we thought)

As the years passed, I met another former resident who lived three houses to the left of us, whose mother died of a massive stroke. (Another coincidence?)

In approximately 1999 the lady who lived to the right of my family homestead fell and broke her hip. While she was in the hospital she had a mini stroke.

Out of nine homes, 4 people had cerebral hemorrhages \ strokes coincidentally they all lived here in the 1960-1970 time frame (approximately.) Coincidentally they were all women. The only thing they had in common was their exposure to the water, air and soil.

Over the past few years many questions have come up and have gone unanswered. I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to get these questions answered.

To begin with, the description of the site history of Precision leads the public to believe that after 1971 Precision had stopped discharging their chemical waste on to their 46-acre property. Is this you're understanding or did Precision continue to discharge their chemical waste on various areas of their property?

The site history leads people to believe the Ackerly creek became contaminated due to a rupture in the lagoon system.

Speaking with long-term residents, the green wastewater was running openly down Ackerly Road for a period of many years beyond 1971. Are there any records to indicate the waste was sent out to a processing plant? And if so are they available for public review?

What steps are necessary to have the truth put in all the documents regarding the site history of Precision?

Why would the DEP allow Precision to bury its contaminated structures and soil from the lagoon in an unlined encapsulation vault, knowing that, that was the contamination that polluted our wells and that it came from the unlined lagoon system?

Was any contaminated soil brought off the Precision site when the lagoons were excavated and where did it go?

Why isn't the administrative record being kept up to date in the public library? Who is responsible for this and when was the last time it was maintained?

The Ombudsman, Kenneth Kryszczun, reviewed records from the Precision site; however, the records dealing with past history don't seem to coincide with what the past long-term and current residents remember. There is a simple way to remedy this dilemma. I don't believe the site history gives a full account of what truly went on all these years. Perhaps a fair way to analyze the situation would be for Precision to allow the residents of Arch Ave. to procure split samples of select monitoring wells on Precision's property. The residents of Arch Ave. have allowed Gerrity Miller and Thermo-Retec who were outsourced by Precision and the EPA to take samples of our wells for many years, as we have nothing to hide. One of the biggest frustrations I have is the fact that the company, who is responsible for testing the monitoring wells, works directly for Precision. If they allow us to take samples of their wells it will show they have nothing to hide also. Could this be arranged? Do we the taxpayers have any rights, which would allow citizens to have a private agency take split samples from superfund sites?

In the ombudsman report under findings 3-a the order requires quarterly sampling of all residence drinking water within two miles of the facility. I know people who live two miles from the plant and this has not occurred.

I wonder how many people who lived along the Ackerly creek from 1956 through 1972 have had the same medical coincidences as our neighborhood?

Another question that often comes to mind is did Precision or their parent companies ever do work for our government? If so; can a list of the contracts be put in the public records for review?

Is precision a division of E.ON. AG?

In what year did the health department realize Hexavalent Chromium caused cancer?

What did Norman Smith, the past plant manager of Precision, die from and what years did he work there?

The records, which are missing from the DEP files from 1970 through 1978, the most critical years in my opinion, are still missing. I was told several stories as to what happened to them. After several years of false statements from government and state agencies I was told they were purged. Could you please give me the name of the person who authorized those documents to be destroyed and explain why documents of an ongoing investigation or analysis would be purged? The Health consultations refer to those records as being a source of information used in their analysis; did those records come from Precision's private database?

All the reports indicate safe health conditions exist for people living in this area. If that is so, could the EPA give each resident a letter stating their property is safe and no harm will come to them by living in the vicinity of the Precision property? This will also help if people try to sell their homes, as the responsibility will be removed from the seller.

There is a piece of property for sale that is between Ackerly road and Waterford road in Glenburn Township. If a person were to purchase this property, could the EPA assure them that the water would not be contaminated with Hexavalent chromium if they were to drill a well?

In the ESI report, Precision's attorney at that time, Thomas Vanaskie, claimed Precision never took the practice of dumping spent plating bath down the floor drains (document number AR001498.) In another part of the administrative record there were claims this practice did exist document number AR000864. This seems to be a stumbling block for me, did this practice exist or didn't it?

The next document, AR001507 (May 1993) claims the hand dug well in the home currently occupied by the Cosner family is no longer in existence. A filtration system was put in the basement of that home to

filter out the contaminated water in the summer of 2000. What was meant by the statement "the well is no longer in existence"?

Today Thomas Vanaskie is no longer a lawyer for Precision, he is a federal judge.

The analysis of our wells indicates the water is within safe drinking levels. If a family wished to go back to well water can they safely do so and if not, why not?

Bob Stroman from the Department of Health claims the water we were exposed to in the past was no threat to our health. When I asked him if he would take a drink of the contaminated spring water he sharply stated "That's a loaded question." I've always believed in the saying "Put your money where your mouth is." If the water is good enough for me to drink then show me, drink some yourself. Keep in mind this is 32 years after Precision claimed they stopped discharging their waste.

As we are relying on the Department of Health, the ATSDR and the EPA to offer us reliable health and environmental information I find myself having trouble believing their findings and these are some of the reasons why.

Bob Stroman from the department of health told us the documents from 1970 to 1978 were tied up in a law suit and that is why we could not get to them. That was NOT the truth. The truth is those records were destroyed. However I thought to myself, people do make mistakes. At the same meeting I expressed concern that a soil sample was done on my property (at least the department of health claimed there was a soil sample done.) I had found out that a surface sample was done and they were claiming it was a soil sample. The difference is when you take a soil sample you are supposed to dig 2 to 4 feet to test for Hexavalent chromium. The sample that was taken on my property was only 1 to 3 inches. This is called a surface sample. As a private lab explained it to me the contamination would have been pushed down by any rain we might have had. If I had not gone to a lab to have a private water test done I never would have known this. When I confronted Bob Stroman about my findings and feelings of being misled he assured me a proper soil sample would be done. That was over two years ago and still a proper soil sample has NOT been taken. At this point I would not trust having one done, unless a private company did it.

The next concern I have is with health consultation NO.8. There was a reference to a scenario of a girl and a boy who drank from the seeps several times a day 7 days a week. The girl was Debra Roth however the evaluation did not say who the boy was. As this was and is a small neighborhood I e-mailed Bob Stroman to find out if he would tell me who the boy was, after several elusive e-mails from Bob Stroman, which I had copied Lora Werner From the ATSDR with. Lora told me the boy in the scenario was me. Lora also said she didn't know why Bob was being so evasive about telling me who the boy was. She said the information came from a phone conversation with Debra Roth. Let me assure you I did not drink from the seeps several times a day 7 days a week. The problem with this situation is Bob Stroman had used inaccurate information and wasn't straight forward enough to tell me the truth.

Today Bob Stroman is still an employee of the PA. Department of Health.

I had also come across another document, which the environmental health technician George Banks had spoke with Norman Smith the plant manager of precision. Norman informed George that roto rooter had been contracted to pump the industrial waste from the lagoon and transport it to the Scranton sewer authority for disposal. The date on this letter was 12-67. If that was the case how could there have been a breach in the lagoon in 1970, which lead to the contamination in the Ackerly creek and the Glenburn Pond? The name George Banks sounded familiar and well it should as he is serving time in prison for the murder of 13 people. Bill McDonnell the chief of the Wilkes Barre DEP confirmed that. As the environmental health technician I hope Mr. Banks had more scruples in his professional life.

On February 8, 2001 I had gone to Philadelphia to be examined by Dr. Emmett at the Hospital of the University of Philadelphia. I was the only one of a small group of current and past residents who had accepted this offer. The others felt as though the missing records and the elusive investigative practices

surrounding this case was good cause not to go. To plainly put it, many felt their trust and faith in the system had been diminished to a point of pure exasperation. I on the other hand was happy to go.

I met Dr. Emmett and went over the information I brought with me. I had asked Lora Werner from the ATSDR to send me a copy of the information, which was sent to Dr. Emmett, she gladly did so and I was quite amused by the contradiction of a few pieces of each other's data. Lora sent Dr. Emmett air quality control monitoring analysis from when the plant was no longer in operation and the building was being ripped down. I had pictures of a large blower vent that was attached to the side of the Precision building in or about the time of 1977. This blower vent was in operation for several years and was the suspected reason our car windows had a green tint to the frost on them in the winter. This picture showed an orange staining on the wall of Precision and the ground beneath the vent was covered with an orange dust.

The next item of contradiction was the claim that discharging chemical waste had ceased in 1970 or 1971. Remember, site histories claim the discharges had stopped in about 1970. I had shown Dr. Emmett pictures of a pipe encased in cement, which was discharging a green, liquid. The pictures do not have dates on them however they were taken in or about the time of 1978. I believe this is what was referred to as the footer drain. I also have a document with a sample number of 0220244. The sample taken was from a footer drain by the DEP. The verification date on the document was 12-18-79 the item sampled was total chromium the result was 93690.0000 UG/L. The other test was performed for hexavalent chromium the result was 90000.0000 UG/L with a verification date of 12-12-79. It is interesting that the few pieces of information left in the DEP files for the time frame of 1979 never get mentioned in the public information. Please keep in mind the health standard for drinking water is 180 UG/L for hexavalent chromium and 100 UG/L for total chromium. Barret Burry from the DEP took this sample.

I also found another sample document. Sample number 0225016 the complaint was called in on 12-11-1979. The investigator checked the complaint out on 1-16-1980. Note this was one month after the complaint was called in. The sample was taken on the green water running down the Ackerly Road gutter, which leads directly to the Ackerly Creek and in turn to the Glenburn Pond. The reading was total chromium 9190.0000 UG/L and the hexavalent chromium was 8200.0000 UG/L. Leonard Insalaco took these samples. He is still an employee of the DEP and can be reached at 570-826-2511.

Another item of interest to me was a copy of the ground water sample, which listed the different wells that were tested. The copy that went to Dr. Emmett showed 8 wells with the well owners names blacked out except ours. When I looked at it I remember thinking to myself this is the first time I don't have to squint to see the information. My next thought was maybe Dr. Emmett is older and they enlarged the print for him. My following thought was I keep most well information and I will see if I have a copy of this. The copy I had, had the same numeric value for all the wells however it had different letters next to the numeric values. The interesting part was the copy I had, showed 2 additional columns to the right. The one column had a value of 3700 UG/L for Hexavalent chromium. The PA health standard for drinking water is 180 UG/L. This very well could be a coincidence, however there seems to be to many coincidences involved with this case.

I would like to add Lora seems to be the most reliable in getting back to people. Lora Werner is presently an employee of the ATSDR.

I am sorry you missed the water quality of the Ackerly Creek meeting on 2-26-2002 at Keystone College. You would have been interested to know elevated levels of Chromium VI were found in the Ackerly Creek next to the ball field. Coincidentally, extensive excavating at the ball field was going on at that time. If you wish, I can get you a copy of the report. My personal, uneducated opinion is the ball field is safe. However, there seems to be a reason for Chromium VI getting into the Ackerly Creek. I have a suspicion as to the source. There may be a need for a couple more monitoring wells to be installed and some soil samples to be taken. The proper types; 2 to 4 feet deep. Seeing as though children will be playing on those fields and all kids are fascinated with creeks and water I would implore you to make every effort to follow through on my suggestions.

I was very happy to see the fence go up around the contaminated springs on the ball field a few years ago. *And even happier* to see the treatment facility filtering the contaminated springwater before it goes into the Ackerly Creek. Why didn't the DEP put a fence around them 20 years ago when they discovered the springs were contaminated? We weren't even aware those springs were contaminated. Why weren't the children in my neighborhood protected?

I have extended my investigation to the Sister Company of Precision in Waco Texas. You would be amazed at the coincidences. That company was upgradient of a blue-collar neighborhood just like ours. They were upgradient of the Waco Creek; we have the Ackerly creek. They have a soccer field; we have a baseball field. Both companies were located next to a railroad track.

I wonder if that neighborhood has had the same medical coincidences such as ours? How many companies does the owner of Precision have operating in the United States? Are those companies by streams and waterways? Have those companies been in violation of environmental laws? Are they in blue-collar neighborhoods?

Speaking with former neighbors and asking questions as to the pre-mortem health of deceased residents, there seems to be a few cancer coincidences with former residents that had higher levels of contamination in their wells. That is why the epidemiological study from 1956 through 2000 must be done as Dr. Emmett and the ATSDR committed to. I have given Lora Werner from the ATSDR a list of past residents. We are relying on the ATSDR and the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center to find these people. There are five families who I could not locate. To me it seemed as though the clinical study from the years of 1956 through 1971 was being avoided. I am sure, if every effort to find these people is made, the truth will be known as to the health outcome of drinking the well water prior to the early, to mid 1970s versus the people who came after bottled water was provided for drinking purposes. And the bottom line is, that is what we are looking for. **The truth!**

I have read a progress report on Precision dated August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2001. On page 2 under ground water sampling it states, (USEPA well MW-01 54,000-ppb chromium unvalidated and 48,000-ppb chromium validated) later in the report, dated November-5-2001 it states the USEPA agrees the EPA well 01 was poorly constructed and, therefore should be abandoned. The report leads to the construction of a new well approximately 10 feet away from well B01.

Please help me to understand, if a well is showing high contamination how can they blame that on it being poorly constructed. I was under the impression these wells were constructed to show the contamination.

My next question is about a document I found where precision did not want to discontinue the use of a production well they had. Their claim was the plant production well did not pose an imminent and substantial endangerment to the health of persons because it was not used for drinking water purposes.

The EPA explained in the case of *United States v. Midway Heights County Water District*, 695F.Supp.1072(E.D.CAL.1988) that the court had construed the term human consumption to include "...bathing, showering, cooking, dishwashing, and maintaining oral hygiene." If this information was known in 1988, why did the agencies allow us to continue to use our wells until about 1997, when the public water was installed?

Could the EPA furnish Glenburn Township or me a map, which indicates where the soil samples have been taken on the Precision property and what, the results were?


When our wells first became contaminated we put our faith in the state and government agencies, with the belief the problem will be handled. Unfortunately, I feel the system has failed. As you can see by the information I have, there seems to be a lot of discrepancies regarding levels of contamination and how it got there.

I can't understand why I can come up with this information by taking an hour here and an hour there on my *lunch break*, yet the state and government employees whom, my hard earned tax dollars pay their salaries, seem to keep missing this information.

My wife and myself are strong believers in buying American made products. We are always looking at the labels to purchase what is made in the USA. I truly appreciate the need for industry in this country and support American business. I feel better tax breaks should be given to those who support positive production and employment growth in the USA while stiffer fines and penalties should be given to those who willfully destroy the environment and put people in harm's way.

I truly wish to thank you for offering to get these questions answered. The different agencies have a way of passing the buck, so to speak. I never asked to have my well contaminated, although I can accept unfortunate things do happen. However, I can not, nor will I ever, tolerate being knowingly misled.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Jennings". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

David Jennings