

Questions & Answers from the View-Master Public Meeting Held on January 28, 2003



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This document contains responses to questions that were gathered at the public meeting that Oregon DHS held with former View-Master workers and concerned citizens on January 28, 2003, at the Elmonica School in Beaverton.

To develop answers, these questions were referred to several different agencies, including the Office of Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology of Oregon DHS, the Office of Environmental Services and Consultation of Oregon DHS, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Drinking Water Program, the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the Ombudsman's Office for Injured Workers in the Department of Consumer and Business Services, as well as the Mattel Corporation.

The responses were developed to the best of our knowledge at the present time. This document may be updated in the future if we receive new information.

Section XV. The Role of Factory Operators

Q: Has anyone checked financial records (mergers) for info on testing regulations? Banks require water testing before providing loans for home purchases, why wasn't this required of the Hall Street plant? Are we sure that the wells were not tested and that these companies didn't know about the level of contamination?

DHS referred this question to Mattel Corporation. According to Mattel, financial and other historical records at multiple U.S. locations have been audited, and it appears that lending institutions were satisfied with the loan information sought although we do not know the specifics of such requests. Mattel stated, "There is no reason to believe that the factory operators had any knowledge of TCE within the well water prior to the March 1998 well tests. The state has been informed about existing records and has also been assured that they will be notified in the unlikely event that additional records are discovered."

Q: Can you contact former supervisors for information?

At this time we don't know who all the former plant supervisors are. DHS plans to contact as many people who worked at the plant as possible, including supervisors. We recognize that former workers have information about plant processes and exposures, as well as the names of other former workers that we don't know about. We encourage former workers to share information with DHS directly by calling (503) 731-4025. We hope to gain additional information through the Citizens Advisory Group that is being formed.

Q: How cooperative have past owners been?

GAF Corporation is in bankruptcy proceedings, and has been unable and/or unwilling to assist DHS with the health investigation and has not released any information regarding their former employees. Mattel has assisted DHS by providing a list of 13,700 former employees, and has included information from DHS in mailings to former workers.