

News Digest

By the Associated Press

IUD lawsuits cut options in birth control

LINCOLN — Planned Parenthood and medical officials say they are concerned that women are running out of options because lawsuits are depriving them of a popular, effective means of birth control.

Resulting liability costs from women harmed by use of the Dalkon Shield — an intrauterine contraceptive device sold by A.H. Robins & Co. in the early 1970s — have forced many manufacturers to stop making IUDs. Most public and many private clinics have stopped prescribing IUDs.

"It's a bit of a tragedy," said Tim Moran, community relations coordinator for Planned Parenthood in Lincoln. "Many women who use, or who did use IUDs, did so because they couldn't tolerate the pill. Now they are left with nothing."

"We're afraid that might result in more unwanted pregnancies, perhaps even more abortions."

An IUD is a small device of plastic — sometimes copper-coated — that is inserted into a woman's uterus and acts to change the lining and hinder pregnancy. An estimated 2.3 million American women are now using them, according to the National Center for Health Statistics.

She said women can opt for less effective and less convenient forms of birth control — diaphragms, foams, condoms — or permanent sterilization.

"I'm afraid some women are going to be forced into choosing permanent sterility, when they really aren't ready," said Dr. Deanna Hutchins, a Lincoln obstetrician and gynecologist.

State Health Department clinics across Nebraska have stopped prescribing IUDs, along with Planned Parenthood of Lincoln, the Medical Clinic at the University of Nebraska-Omaha and many private physicians.

One reactor said to be damaged Soviets report nuclear plant accident

MOSCOW — The Soviet government Monday reported a nuclear accident at the Chernobyl power plant. It said one nuclear reactor was damaged and those "affected" were being given aid.

Official Tass news agency reported on the accident did not disclose whether there were any deaths. It was not immediately known if the reference to those "affected" implied that some people were injured.

The Tass reports were issued after Swedish officials said increased radiation levels were detected north of Stockholm, apparently because of a radiation leak in the Soviet Union. Similar increases in radiation levels were reported in Finland.

It was believed to be the first time the Soviets had reported on a nuclear accident. The initial accident report came in a brief dispatch from the

Soviet Council of Ministers that was carried by Tass.

The government said an investigatory commission has been set up, adding, "measures are being undertaken to eliminate the consequences of the accident."

One nuclear reactor was damaged in the accident, Tass said. The Tass report gave no other details.

The city of Chernobyl is located 750 miles from the area in Sweden where officials reported increased radiation.

An editor answering the telephone at Tass said the nuclear plant was located in the Ukraine, but he was unsure whether it was actually in the city of Chernobyl. Tass did not report when the accident occurred, and the editor said he did not know.

Tass reported the accident was the first in the Soviet Union.

However, Western analysts and exiled

Soviet scientists have said there was a nuclear accident in the Chelyabinsk area of the Ural Mountains in 1958 that killed hundreds of people and contaminated a wide area. The region is still off limits.

A Swedish official reported earlier Monday that increased radiation levels detected on Sweden's eastern coast apparently were caused by a radiation leak in the Soviet Union.

Bo Holmquist, a senior official in the regional government in Uppsala, north of Stockholm, which supervises Sweden's Forsmark nuclear power plant, said increased radiation was discovered around the plant this morning.

Holmquist said radiation from a leak in the Soviet Union had probably been carried by the wind to large parts of the Swedish coast.

"The radiation level was very weak, but it showed on Forsmark's sensitive equipment," Holmquist said. He added that the levels presented no danger in Sweden.

He said authorities began to suspect another source of radiation when similar radioactive recordings were made at a monitoring station in Nykoping, south of Stockholm.

Holmquist said Swedish officials have been in contact with authorities in Finland, and that increased radiation levels also have been found there.

'I don't have feed for my cows' Distraught farmer arrested after chase

PRINCETON, Mass. — Residents rallied around a computer engineer-turned-farmer whose apparent depression over hard times triggered what police say was a suicide attempt and a three-town chase that ended when he rammed a cruiser and threatened officers.

Authorities said James A. Eden-Kilgour became distraught over the weekend because he had no feed left for his cows.

"I don't have feed for my cows, and I don't have money to buy any," Lawson quoted Eden-Kilgour as saying after his arrest.

Eden-Kilgour, 44, appeared briefly in Clinton District Court on Monday, where a judge entered an innocent plea for him and ordered a psychiatrist to determine if he was fit to face the variety of assault charges.

Eden-Kilgour became distraught Saturday morning after he apparently argued with his wife in the barn and then threatened her with a hoe, Lawson said. Mrs. Eden-Kilgour fled to neighbor Joyce Szerejko's house.

When another neighbor approached Eden-Kilgour's house a few minutes later, he saw the farmer sitting in a car with the engine running and a hose attached to the exhaust pipe through a window into the car. Eden-Kilgour drove off, with the hose will through the window, when he saw the neighbor.

Princeton Officer Maryanne Frost found Eden-Kilgour in his car in the Leominster State Forest with the hose still through the window and motor running, Lawson said. When she walked toward him, Eden-Kilgour "slammed his car into reverse," nearly hitting her, and drove off.

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1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board Monday through Friday in the fall and spring semesters and Tuesdays and Fridays in the summer sessions, except during vacations. Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-1763 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, contact John Hilgert, 475-4612. Subscription price is \$35 for one year. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448. Second-class postage paid at Lincoln, NE 68510. ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT 1986 DAILY NEBRASKAN