

# Group asks companies to decrease emissions

By Jannette Bush  
Staff Reporter

A local environmental group expects seven Nebraska companies to sign a "Good Neighbor Agreement" acknowledging that they are environmental polluters, but will work to cut down on toxic emissions.

Richard Johnson, pollution prevention coordinator for Ecology Now, said the companies have been notified, but only Kawasaki Motor Manufacturing Corp., has signed the agreement.

The other six Nebraska companies that were sent the agreement are Goodyear Corp., Arcadian Corp., the American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO), Lozier Corp., OMC Cushman and Nashua.

Johnson said Ecology Now chose those companies because they are polluters and because they are located near or in Lincoln or Omaha.

Johnson said the companies understand the seriousness of toxic emissions. But more needs to be done, he said.

Stan Patzel, plant manager of Goodyear in Lincoln, said it's possible that Goodyear will sign the agreement. Currently, the corporations won't sign agreements with interest groups because they could misinform the public, Patzel said.

Patzel said Goodyear releases zinc, but the corporation does report to the EPA. Goodyear also has a full-time research and development staff that has reduced toxic emissions over the past 20 years, he said.

Johnson said that although the seven companies are following toxic emissions regulations set by the Environmental Protection Agency, he wants them to work harder.

"We are in an environmental crisis, and this project will make an impact," Johnson said.

Johnson, senior civil engineering major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said conflict arises between

## Top 5 largest releases of toxins in Nebraska, 1987 (reported in pounds)

Arcadian Corp.	2,980,000
CEPEX, Inc.	2,485,135
Nashua Corp.	1,814,850
Norden Labs, Inc.	1,669,700
Control Data, Corp.	1,059,200

Source: Nebraska Federation & National Wildlife Federation.

SOME OF THE TOXINS IN THE TOP 5 COMPANIES:  
Ammonia  
Methanol  
Nitric Acid  
Chlorine  
Sulfuric Acid  
Asbestos (Fibrous)  
Acetone  
Freon 113

companies and interest groups when information is inaccurately reported about a company. He said inaccurate information can make the company look bad.

Johnson said he does not want conflict with the companies, but wants companies to look at ways of cutting toxic emission...

"We're just trying to work with them and put this issue to the forefront," he said.

According to the Nebraska Wildlife Federation, Arcadian's liquid fertilizer plant in La Platte is the worst polluter in Nebraska, emitting 2.89 million pounds of ammonia, methanol, zinc compounds and ammonium nitrate in 1987. Arcadian is the 499th worst polluter in the nation, according to the federation.

"I think by more public pressure, it will be dealt with," Johnson said.

If the companies do not sign the agreement and refuse to work with Ecology Now, Johnson said, he will get other concerned people together and protest.

Ecology Now is participating in the National Pollution Prevention Project in conjunction with groups such as the National Toxics Campaign.

# Professor: Turnouts not comparable

By Jennifer O'Clarka  
Staff Reporter

Although voter turnout at ASUN elections is significantly lower than for the NU Board of Regents, those figures can't accurately be compared, according to a University of Nebraska-Lincoln professor.

Some regents have complained about low voter turnout in ASUN elections, citing it as a reason for not giving student regents a vote on the board.

Robert Sittig, professor of political science, said regents enjoy high voter turnouts because they are placed on the ballot with candidates for president, the Nebraska Legislature and the U.S. Congress.

Association of Students of the University of Nebraska elections, which decide the student regent from UNL, stand on their own on the ballot.

"Regents' races don't drive the elections," Sittig said. "If we just had a regents' race, we'd probably

be disappointed with the low turnout."

About 10 to 15 percent of those who vote in general elections don't even vote for regents, Sittig said. Only registered voters can vote in regent races.

Voter turnout in ASUN races is figured to include the entire student population at UNL because students don't have to register.

Last year, 11.7 percent of students, voted. That figure increased this year to 16.3 percent.

In the 1984 3rd District regent race, about 68 percent of registered voters participated, but about 73 percent voted for president on the same ballot, according to figures from the Nebraska secretary of state's office.

Only about 29 percent of those registered voted in the 1984 2nd District race in which only one candidate, Kermit Hansen, ran. About 74 percent of 2nd District registered voters took part in the presidential election that year.

Seventy-three percent of the Nebraska population was registered to vote in 1984, according to figures from the Department of Economic Development.

In 1988, 51.6 percent of registered voters, 39 percent of the 3rd District population 18 and older, took part in an uncontested regent election.

In the 4th District, 66.5 percent of registered voters, 48 percent of the eligible population, voted in the regent race in 1988. In the 5th District, 68.9 percent of registered citizens, 50.8 percent of the eligible population, voted for regent candidates, while turnout in the 8th District, which consists only of Douglas County, was 27.9 percent of registered voters.

In 1986, a non-presidential election year, 56.8 percent of 6th District voters cast ballots for regent candidates. In the uncontested seventh district election, 45.3 percent voted for regent.

## Education

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than just the number of degrees and credit hours generated.

It often is more important, Burns said, to consider the quality, not quantity, of the program.

Many programs not meeting legislative standards only fail in one of the categories -- often the number of degrees generated, he said.

Often these programs generate many more credit hours than required by law, he said, because they may be required for another major.

Bruce Stahl, executive director of the coordinating commission, said although NU reported the highest percentage of programs not meeting legislative criteria that were continued without review, institutions do not necessarily have to report to the commission whether they monitored a program.

The state colleges reviewed 75 percent of programs that did not meet the criteria, did not monitor 21 percent and ended or consolidated 4 percent.

The community colleges discontinued the highest percentage of programs, with 21.8 percent cut or consolidated. Of programs continued, they reviewed 40 percent and did not monitor 38.2 percent.

In 1989, six UNL programs were reviewed by the commission. The only one not meeting legislative standards was the Department of Food Science & Technology. Food Science had only an average of five bachelor degrees, 4.8 master's degrees and 2.8 doctorate degrees. It averaged 190.7 credit hours per full-time faculty member and the university planned to continue the program without review.

The report states that faculty members said enrollment in the program will be increased after new construction is completed in mid-1990. The university reported

one new program under consideration, a bachelor of science in hospitality management.

The university was commended in the commission report for the "rigor applied to their program review."

The university assembles study teams from peer institutions at program sites to conduct the equivalent of a mini-accreditation review.

"The use of third-party opinion is a telling statement for their value," the report states. "The review materials from the university are exemplary."

Since 1985, the commission has reviewed all 472 academic programs at Nebraska public higher education institutions, 134 of which did not meet legislative standards. Of those, 54 were continued without review, 65 were continued with monitoring and 15 were combined, modified, declared inactive or ended.

Based on those results, the commission recommended that the Legislature consider changes in the review process:

- Requiring institutions to monitor programs for at least a year if the Legislature finds too many programs not meeting its standards.
- Requiring the monitoring process to be clearly specified by law and a report that shows how programs are reviewed.
- Researching alternative standards to number of degrees and credit hours produced.
- Requiring a study, including the impact of financial aid, of how Nebraska higher education can become more competitive in retaining and attracting students.
- Requiring a study of enrollment patterns throughout the state.
- Clarifying language specifying program standards.
- Reviewing proposed programs to determine whether they have state or regional priority and which institutions should offer them.

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