



**CENTER FOR HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND JUSTICE**

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John Hicks, Director-Region 8  
Department of Environmental Conservation  
6274 East Avon-Lima Road  
Avon, NY 14414-9519

July 8, 2002

Dear EPA Director John Hicks:

I am writing to express my deep concern about the recent explosion that occurred at Eastman Kodak's Building 218 hazardous waste incinerator in Rochester, New York, on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002, as detailed in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Report # 0202181. Kodak has a long history of environmental violations, and this is just one more example of that habitual negligence towards the environment and the public.

Not only are communities within Rochester concerned about their health and well-being, but nation-wide the Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign, which is housed at the Center for Health, Environment and Justice, is working to transform production processes, products and disposal practices so that they are not a source of dioxin or other persistent pollution in our food, our bodies, or our environment. The Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign made up of hundreds of grassroots groups are focused locally on their dioxin sources and connected nationally and internationally to educate the public and move all levels of government and elected representatives to pass laws and policies that will eliminate the sources of dioxin. One of our top priorities is to halt all forms of incineration and promote safer alternative technologies and products.

I find it outrageous that Kodak failed to notify the DEC of this explosion and release until over 10 hours after it took place (State Department of Environmental Conservation Report # 0202181). It is known fact that dioxin is a potent cancer-causing agent and is considered to be a "known human carcinogen" by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Toxicology Program. With these significant findings it puzzles me as to why Kodak didn't immediately notify the agency of the release so that they could properly assess the situation. This underscores the need to hire a full time monitor at Kodak's Building 218 hazardous waste incinerator to oversee operations of the facility. In addition, Kodak should install ambient air monitors for the community residents to detect any chemical releases or spills that may enter their neighborhoods if a failure of communication and action like this should happen again.

Kodak is New York's number one manufacturing polluter and is ranked number two for emissions throughout the state; in addition, Kodak is ranked as the largest emitter of recognized carcinogens to air and water in New York State. Since Kodak is one of the largest polluters in New York State, the DEC should make Kodak a top priority for their staff. How many more children, mothers and fathers will need to get sick? Aren't there enough people dying from dioxin already? Kodak needs to make a real commitment to phase out their two hazardous waste incinerators and work for clean production to eliminate the waste streams going into them.

I can assure you - the nation is waiting and watching. The Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign is waiting and watching for Kodak to do the right thing.

Thank you for your time regarding this matter of the utmost importance. I look forward to your swift reply.

Sincerely,

Lois Gibbs  
Executive Director  
CHEJ  
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