

# City spills diesel fuel into river

## Crews react fast to contain Hocking River spill Tuesday

By **CARL BURNETT JR.**  
The Eagle-Gazette Staff

A quick reaction by the Lancaster Fire Department allowed it to contain a fuel spill in the Hocking River on Tuesday.

With help from Lancaster's water department and the water pollution control department, investigators were able to trace the spill to a garage at the city's own water department.

"We received a couple of calls from the public about what appeared to be a suspicious sheen on the Hocking River at approximately 1:30 p.m.," Lancaster fire Inspector Gary Burnside said. "When we reached the river, you could see the sheen and it smelled like diesel fuel. We immediately took steps to contain the spill and contact the EPA (Ohio Environmental Protection Agency)."

Lancaster Fire Department personnel went down to the Maple Street and the South Broad Street bridges and started putting in booms to collect the



**LANCASTER FIRE** Department inspector, Fred Destadio, feeds a boom into the Hocking River on Tuesday near the South Maple Street bridge. A diesel fuel spill from the Lancaster's water department on Tuesday had fire personnel scrambling to contain it. (E-G photo by Dave Kline)

(See FUEL/2A.)

## Examining the finished product



Ohio/Homeless Services of Fairfield County programs in order to offer residents supportive services.

The Fairhaven Place supportive services plan includes both short term and long term goals to assist residents in accessing necessary local services. With assistance from the case manager, locating and maintaining permanent housing will be part of the service plan of all residents.

Most often the goals set for the residents include education, training, employment, counseling and financial assistance.

Edwards said the housing will ideally give an individual some place to live for two years, while we work with them to become employed, keep employment or upgrade employment, so they can get their own apartment using the skills they obtain through the program.

agement and the individual housing components, the project will fill the gap in service where most individuals have difficulty progressing from homelessness to permanent housing. Because of the crisis orientation of temporary housing, individuals find themselves quickly returned to housing situations that are uncertain at best.

The only requirements for applying for Fairhaven Place is an income requirement and the applicants must be adults without children.

Applications will be accepted when the facility is completed.

According to Edwards, groundbreaking should begin in Spring of 1999 and the project is scheduled to be completed six months from the start date.

As partners in the project, Fairfield County Commissioners

there are people out there who are in need of affordable housing.

These people need adequate housing to get started, so they can get a job and raise the funds to come up with a down payment for a home or a deposit for an apartment, she said.

"I think a lot of people do not realize how hard it is for some people to scrape together a down payment for a house or even a deposit for an apartment," Shupe said.

Also partners in the project are the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development which gave \$702,116, Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati (local member - Fairfield National Bank) which gave \$200,000 to the project and the Ohio Department of Development which gave \$400,000.

## Station

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day (one decatherm contains 1,000 british thermal units). The new station will have a capacity of 19,000 decatherms, and Shultz expects it to operate at about 9000 decatherms on a peak winter day.

The city would have upgraded its present facility on West Fair Avenue, but the owners of the land did not want an expanded delivery station on their property, Shultz said. The city has leased the land on a year-to-year basis since the mid-1980s, and Columbia Gas operated it for many years before that, Shultz said.

The city contacted other area property owners who lived with-

in 25 feet of the pipeline and at first was unable to find any interested sellers. Then the city found out Anchor Hocking Corp. had a 35-acre piece of land up for sale that was the last property on Campground Road within city limits.

"Normally, somebody doesn't want to buy a piece of property that has a pipeline running through it," Shultz said. "It was ideal for us. It worked out well."

Earlier this year, Lancaster City Council gave the service-safety director the authority to purchase the land for an amount not to exceed \$375,000. The cost of the land will not be final until the closing papers are signed, Shultz said.

The delivery station will be 900 square feet and will consist of filtration, measurement and regulation units. The facility

will cost about \$175,000 to construct, Shultz said.

If the station should ever need a higher capacity, "We designed it so we could expand fairly easily," he said.

Until the new station opens up, the city will not be in danger of not being able to meet the gas needs of its residents and businesses, Shultz said.

"There's no concern period," he said. "We'll meet the demand. We're doing something before there's any threat of that at all."

Once the new station is up and running, the West Fair station will be shut down within a few days and will ultimately be dismantled by the city, Shultz said. Lancaster gas customers will not notice any interruption in their service once the new station takes over, he said.

## Fuel

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fuel floating on the surface of the River.

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency responded to the call and representatives were sent to Lancaster.

With the fuel being successfully contained and the process of soaking up the fuel being done by the booms in the Hocking River, fire personnel and crews from the water pollution control department and water department started tracing the source of the fuel spill, and it took them back to the water department itself.

nation came from a power washer we were using in the garage," said Dave Bornino, superintendent of the water department. The garage is behind the water department at 225 N. Memorial Drive.

Crews had been using the diesel power washer to clean equipment when the fuel line on the power washer broke, spraying diesel fuel onto the ground.

The fuel then went into a sewer located outside the garage and made its way to the Hocking River.

"The problem is the fuel did not go into a sanitary sewer, it went into a storm sewer," said Michael Nixon, superintendent of the water pollution control department.

Nixon said that the city will immediately take steps to ensure a fuel spill at that location will not happen in the future.

Water department personnel would put in absorbent material into the sewer by the garage and have a sanitary collection system installed, which would collect the material from the garage and could then be hauled out periodically.

No one had estimates on how much fuel had been spilled. However, Bornino said the city drinking water was safe and there had been no contamination of it.

It took approximately two hours to contain and clean up the spill with all the fire department crews wrapping up at 3:20 p.m. Tuesday.

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**EMERGENCY PLANNING COUNCIL  
OF  
FAIRFIELD COUNTY**

**109 North Broad St., P.O. Box 626, Lancaster, OH 43130-0626  
Emergency Operations Center: 342 W. Wheeling Street  
(740) 654-4357 Phone - 653-5690 Fax**

*Vera Coutant - Chairperson  
Steven Sells - Vice Chairperson  
Daniel Bolger, P.E. - Coordinator  
Michelle Dille - Secretary*

*Emergency 740/653-5223*

*County Commissioners  
Allan Reid  
Lisa M. Kessler  
Judith K. Shupe*

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January 21, 1999

TO: Dave Bornino, Superintendent  
Lancaster Water Department

RE: Fuel spill into Hocking River 12/8/98

Dear Mr. Bornino:

Ohio and Federal regulations require a written follow-up to releases or discharges of regulated materials within thirty days of the incident. Details are spelled out in the highlighted sections of the enclosed sheets.

Your response is to be mailed to my attention at the Fairfield County LEPC, 109 N. Broad Street (1st floor), Lancaster, OH 43130. Also send a copy to Ohio EPA DERR-ER, Attention SERC Records Management, Lazarus Government Center, 122 Front Street, Columbus, OH 43215.

If you have any questions about completion, please call me.

Very truly yours,

Daniel C. Bolger, P.E.

