

ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY
MARCH 9**Temporary Closing of FMC
Ordered; 1,200 Affected**

On March 9, 1977, U. S. District Judge Charles Haden issued a ten-day restraining order to the FMC Corporation to cease operation of the South Charleston plant's carbon tetrachloride unit.

CSO: SS.8.9, ELA.8.1, ELA.8.5, ELA.8.21, ELA.8.26, ELA.8.27

Investigate the Document: (*Charleston Daily Mail*, March 10, 1977)

1. Provide a brief outline of the main ideas presented in the news article. Cite *three* facts that the writer provided.
2. What did you find to be the most important information found in the article?
3. Why did the federal court issue a 10-day restraining order to the FMC Corporation's tetrachloride unit? What was the public safety concern in the area?

Think Critically: What was the magnitude of the event in the article? What was the impact? Where did it reach in the news International, national, or local?

- Essay: Find a news article, journal, or digital source where economic or public safety issue(s) are involved with a West Virginia-based industry. Write your own news article describing the events in your source, using *YOUR OWN WORDS* (400-500 words).

Charleston Daily Mail

Without, or With, Offence to Friends or Foes, I Sketch Your World Exactly as It Goes

CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA, THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 10, 1977

FMC Trying To Avert Spill-Triggered Layoffs

By BOB KITTLE
Of The Daily Mail Staff

FMC Corp. was negotiating today with the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency to avert layoffs of 1,300 workers at its South Charleston plant in the wake of a federal court order halting production of carbon tetrachloride.

Virtually the entire plant is dependent on carbon tet production, according to an FMC spokesman, who said most employes could be temporarily out of work because of the court order.

U. S. District Judge Charles Haden yesterday issued a 18-day restraining order requested by EPA officials to cease operation of the plant's carbon

tet unit until safeguards are adopted to prevent further chemical spills.

Last month, carbon tet discharges in Kanawha River twice threatened drinking water of population centers along the Ohio River.

A report from the company that Judge Haden modified the order late last night to allow partial operation of the unit, pending discussions between FMC and EPA proved to be incorrect.

"Investigation at the FMC plant indicates that additional spills might occur unless remedial action is taken immediately," an EPA spokesman in Philadelphia said this morning.

Meanwhile the State Health Department reported today that EPA samples, taken from the Kanawha River after the latest spill Tuesday, contained five to seven parts per billion of carbon tetrachloride. The samples were taken between Winfield and Henderson.

Robert McCall, head of environmental services for the health department, said the concentrations were "quite low" and added the EPA considers 50 parts per billion the threshold level for an acute situation.

"Carbon tetrachloride has serious human health effects. Exposure to very low levels increases the risk of liver damage. We are worried about the long-range impact of exposure to the chemical," EPA spokesman Dick Chlan said.

Haden issued the temporary order under emergency provisions of the federal Safe Water Drinking Act. The ruling was the first time the emergency provision has been exercised since the law was enacted in 1974. Chlan added.

(Turn to Pg. 7A, Col. 1)

Top Of The Evening!



CHARLIE WEST SAYS:

The telephone company's rate increase will get all of us person-to-person.

Dedicated Indian

Jimmy Pritt, a senior guard at Sissonville, shows unusual dedication to basketball. Chuck Landon has the story on Page 2B.

As To Tax Cuts

The Legislature, at the halfway point of its session, isn't sure Jay's cutback program can stave off a tax increase, says Richard Grimes in an analysis on Page 1B. And our lead editorial today notes that the three per cent sales tax removal is in trouble. That's on Page 8A.

Astrological.....	3A Comics.....	4B Hot Line.....	1B Sports.....	2B
Bridge.....	7B Crossword.....	4B Jumble.....	4B Theaters.....	5B
Business.....	11A Dear Abby.....	13A LifeStyles.....	12A TV.....	6B-7B
Classified.....	7B Editorials.....	8A Obituaries.....		10A



FMC WORKERS LEAVE PLANT THIS MORNING
Court Order Issued Under Safe Water Act Provisions

— Daily Mail Photo by Clair News

FMC

Continued From Page One

In handing down the order, Haden said he was concerned about the health of the 1.28 million people whose drinking water comes from the Ohio. The federal judge said the plant appeared to be in a state of disrepair which may have contributed to the leaks.

Persons who drink alcohol regularly or consume barbiturates are especially susceptible to ill effects of the chemical, according to Chlan.

The EPA also is seeking a permanent injunction to ban carbon tet production until adequate safeguards are taken to assure no more accidental discharges of the chemical, which has caused cancer in laboratory animals. A hearing on that request will be held March 18 before Judge Haden in Parkersburg.

Jeff Miller, director of the federal agency's enforcement division in Washington, said findings by EPA investigators during the past two weeks revealed that piping, plumbing and tanks used in the carbon tet unit are potentially unsafe.

"Because of age and poor repair, we found rusted and patched tanks and plumbing which was in very bad shape. It was our conclusion that emergency court action was the only way to protect the health of people downstream," Miller said.

A spill of 6,000 pounds of carbon tet at the plant last month occurred when a

patch on a storage tank erupted, investigators learned, according to Miller.

FMC acknowledged another spill of about 500 pounds Tuesday. The firm has a repeated history of carbon tet spills, including 20 reported to the Department of Natural Resources during the past two years, Chlan said.

The EPA spokesman termed the latest spill "the straw that broke the camel's back, but not the prime factor in seeking court action."

Judge Haden has not yet acted on an EPA request that FMC be forced to employ an independent registered engineer to inspect the plant and make binding recommendations to prevent discharges into the river.

FMC spokesman Bill Currey issued a statement saying, "We are convinced, through extensive investigation, that this extreme action was unnecessary. Unfortunately, the sensationalism surrounding recent events has so far eliminated the opportunity for the facts on both sides of the issue to be discussed in a calm and open fashion.

"FMC also remains convinced that the health of residents of the Kanawha and Ohio valleys has not been jeopardized, and believes it should be a top priority of all concerned parties, both government and private, to reassure the citizens of that fact."

There were no layoffs today, however, and Currey could not say when, if ever, workers would be laid off.