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## I-Team: Kipp Contamination Follow-Up

### *Kipp Says It's A 'Good Neighbor' But Neighbors Ask: Then Why Are We Sick?*

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*Some neighbors say pollution from the Madison Kipp Corporation plant is making them sick. However, Kipp officials defend the plant's environmental record and air emissions.*

*Kipp officials say "science will prevail" and defeat some legal actions filed over its new pollution permits. In May, I-Team Reporter Linda Eggert reported on ongoing pollution concerns among residents in the popular east side neighborhood. Now Kipp has responded.*

*"We talked last month after Kipp met separately with Channel 3's independent editorial board," Eggert reported. "Kipp told us a small vocal minority is wasting everyone's time and money by fighting its DNR pollution permits. Kipp says it is, and always has been, a good neighbor."*

**MADISON, Wis.** -- Next time you hear a Harley Hog, turn on your wipers or open a can of soda, you might think of a longtime Madison manufacturer. That's because recycling aluminum to make car and motorcycle parts is the backbone of the Madison Kipp Corp.

Kipp provides about 600 jobs while melting down 18 million pounds of aluminum a year. That's 75 times more than the whole city collects.

On its first interview with News 3 since our May investigation, Kipp defended its environmental record as progressive -- and its air emissions as legal and safe.

Kipp officials insist there is no way anyone could be suffering from its pollution because it meets all government health standards.

Kipp Corporation: Mark Meunier, Vp of Human

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do feel that we're under attack because our standards are well below the health standards," said Mark Munier, of Kipp. "There is no correlation between us and anything going on in the neighborhood."

But many neighbors remain unconvinced.

"Kipp may be complying with regulations but people are still saying they're sick," said Gail Circle, who lives one block away from Kipp.

Circle was vocal about the alleged problem at a February DNR Kipp permit public hearing. "Why do you keep approving the emissions from this company that we've been telling you is making us sick?"

For more than a decade, hundreds of neighbors have been packing various DNR permit hearings on Kipp's pollution. Each time, people complained about health problems, noise and odor. And each time the DNR raised Kipp's pollution limits -- at times in order to resolve pollution violations.

For example last February, Kipp was cited for violating its limit on hazardous pollution dust known as "particulate matter" or PM. Instead of getting fined, Kipp applied for higher limits, and got them.

The DNR approved hiking Kipp's PM limit by 55 percent or 61 tons a year -- despite the pending violation.

A DNR attorney outlined the logic at the February public hearing.

"Part of the reason for them getting this permit is to eliminate that violation because we have limited authority to make them lower their emissions -- they selected an emission limit which we are obligated to apply because it's the law," said Marlene Penner, a DNR attorney.

Kipp neighborhood

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residents remain skeptical of the DNR and Kipp. For example, in a Kipp brochure labeled "Getting It Right," the

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company claims it's been cited for violations "only three times in the last ten years" and that "all three were for minor paper issues."

But News 3 finds that's incorrect.

The DNR says Kipp's enforcement record is double that, and includes"

- Twice failing to report chlorine spills
- Twice exceeding emissions limits
- Using regulated chlorine without a permit.

Kipp still maintains it's a good neighbor, supplying a lot of jobs, and property taxes. Many in the densely packed neighborhood say it makes sense to voluntarily install some kind of pollution filters. But Kipp says that's unnecessary and expensive.

"To do more would ask us to impose some economic constraints on us verses our competitors," Kipp officials said. "They're asking us to put on a baghouse which depending on what you look at could range in the millions of dollars, the operating costs would be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars a year."

A citizens group called Clean Air Madison has suggested some filters could be installed for much less.

CAM is waiting to go before local and state judges to say the DNR should not have hiked Kipp's emission limits. Meantime, chemical contamination in Kipp's soil and groundwater remains.

DNR officials say in a month or so Kipp will put in test probes. Those are needed to make sure hazardous vapors aren't leaking, like radon, into nearby homes.

#### **Previous Stories:**

- May 26, 2004: [I-Team: Is Kipp Corp. Pollution Making Neighbors Sick?](#)
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