

# Mayor to printer: P.U.

## R'ville plant told to review its pollution procedures

By JAMES B. MOORE  
Journalist/writer

Rockville Mayor Steven Van Grack has sent a letter to the Holladay-Tyler Corp. asking the printing company to shut down one of the presses in its Chapman Avenue plant and to review its pollution control techniques.

Sent yesterday in response to complaints from residents near the plant, the letter charges that the company is improperly operating pollution control equipment, allowing potentially hazardous particles and gases from the printing operations to escape into the air.

"As far as we know, there are still some problems there," said Murray Strier, a member of the city's Commission on Science and Technology, which drafted the letter.

"What apparently is happening is that every once in a while you get a bad dose (of fumes)," said Strier, who stressed that Holladay-Tyler officials have made efforts to curb the emission of the pollutants.

The company, fined \$30,000 by the state in 1985 for air pollution violations, uses incinerators to burn off gases generated in its plant and has other equipment to remove hazardous particles.

Some science and technology commission members theorized that the company sometimes fails to bring the incinerators to temperatures high enough to burn off the pollutants.

The commission also concluded that the company is not using an incinerator to burn the gases from one of its presses and, therefore, "needlessly subjects nearby residents to unknown and potentially serious health effects."

In the letter, the commission said that aniline pigments found in the ink the company uses "are extremely toxic." They may be ingested, inhaled, or absorbed through the skin. Ingestion of less than one-sixteenth of a teaspoon may result in poisoning.

Long-term exposure to the pigments may result in anemia, anorex-

ia, skin lesions, headaches and vertigo, the letter said. "Exposure to the breakdown products of the pigments may result in the formation of aniline tumors of the bladder," it said.

Holladay-Tyler officials declined to comment on the letter, saying they have not yet seen it.

Residents in the Twinbrook section of Rockville have complained for 10 years about fumes from the plant, where magazines, including *The National Geographic*, are printed.

The company signed a consent order in April 1985 in which state Department of Environmental Protection officials said they would require the company to install monitors on two presses to ensure that pollution control equipment was being used.

But the state later relaxed that requirement, saying that it would be unfair to order the company to install the equipment on presses that would be relocated to Glendale in Prince George's County, where the company intends to move.

Two years later, the company has

moved some of its operations to the Glendale site, but company vice president Martin Flemming said he is not sure when the full move will be completed.

"It seems that their moving process has taken a lot longer than the state made out," said Marie Desmond, chairwoman of the Citizens Advisory Task Group on Holladay-Tyler.

And residents continue to suffer noxious fumes from the plant, she said, adding that the problem is still very bad for residents living very close to the plant.

"There's still an odor from the Holladay-Tyler plant," said Margaret E. Pagan, a Calvert Avenue resident. "There are numerous times I've walked out the door and had the odor so bad that it made me nauseous."

Van Grack said the company had been "very cooperative" in the past when city officials asked them to take action to reduce the odors. But he added that city officials can do very little if the company ignores their requests.

"There aren't a lot of options. That's part of the problem," Van Grack said. "We have to be persuasive. If we start calling them bad names, they can say, 'Forget it.'"

Holladay-Tyler reportedly is having financial problems. Employees have said the company is \$2 million in debt and that unions representing press operators were recently told that if they didn't accept wage cuts, the company would fold.

If the company is in poor financial condition, it might be difficult for it to shut down a press, Van Grack conceded. "What we're doing in a strong way is asking them to shut it down," he said.

Strier said that almost any printing plant will produce bad odors, and that the most effective solution would be to have the operation relocate to a less populous area.

"It seems like they're doing the best they can with bad circumstances," Strier said. "It seems like it would be better if they were located in an area where there aren't as many people around to smell it."