

# Lease option sparks interest of cement firms

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Staff Writer

RCJ 18-31-80 (P. 1)

Gov. Bill Janklow's comment a month ago in Rapid City that the state should look into leasing the state cement plant here has prompted a flurry of interest from cement manufacturers.

Janklow said his office has been contacted by at least nine cement makers including Lone Star Cement, the nation's largest, Martin Marietta, Centex, Kaiser Cement and Societe Des Ciments Francais, a French cement company that owns a couple of plants in eastern Pennsylvania.

"We've heard from everybody. It all came about because of that speech. They started coming through the windows," Janklow said. On Sept. 25 the governor told the Rapid City Rotary

Club that leasing the plant might be an option for the state.

Janklow said there have been no serious negotiations with any of the interested companies but that all have looked at the public financial records of the plant. And some have toured the plant.

"We sent a couple of engineers out there to look at the plant a couple of months ago," said George Uding, president of Coplay Cement Co. of Nazareth, Pa., the American subsidiary of the French cement company.

The governor has ruled out sale of the Rapid City plant because he thinks the people of the state would not want to get rid of that great an asset. But he is favorable to leasing the plant. "I wouldn't hesitate to lease it if we could guarantee payments to the state and

turn it into a business instead of a political agency."

The state plant has been in a quandary for most of a year. Sales are down 30 percent from last year, negotiations with the union have been deadlocked since March and the plant laid off 62 workers last month when the commission decided to shut down the wet kilns because of lagging sales.

Janklow said he will look into the various possible lease options and arrangements after Tuesday's election. He would not be specific, saying, "I don't want to screw things up. I don't want this to be a campaign issue."

He did say the state would not enter into any agreement without the approval of the Legislature. "I will be presenting some ideas to the new Legislature," he said. The 1981 session will convene in January.

The Associated Press reported earlier that unidentified workers at the plant were worried about their jobs if the plant was leased. Union official and Democratic candidate for state representative Mike Richardson of Rapid City suggested that the governor was keeping something secret to protect Republican candidates.

The governor told the AP that he was "not going to comment on everybody's political speculation."

The private cement companies are interested in the state cement plant because it is strategically located to provide cement for lucrative construction projects such as oil shale development in northern Colorado and the proposed MX Missile system in Utah and Nevada.

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**EPA testing (P.1)**

## **Valley water radiation levels**

**Malcolm Ritter**  
Staff Writer

Water from two Rapid Valley wells exceeded federal radiation limits this year, but the water system they feed can't be labeled unsafe yet, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

EPA needs another sample of water from Rapid Valley Water Co. before the company's water can be considered in violation of federal regulations.

The state Department of Water and Natural Resources believes the company's 1,400 customers face no immediate danger, according to Mark Steichen of the department's Office of Drinking Water.

The well water tested high in both alpha radiation and in radium content. Radium can build up in bones and cause

**Valley water continued on page 2**

RCS 10-31-80 (P.1)

## **Legal trouble developing over food-TV offer**

**PIERRE** — Legal trouble is developing in Sen. George McGovern's U.S. Senate campaign in regard to an offer of free food and a color television set to spur voter turnout on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

While an attorney advising the campaign staff maintains there is nothing illegal in the offer, a deputy attorney general says bribery charges will be filed.

Rapid City Attorney Homer Kanadas, whose opinion was sought by the campaign, said Republican Attorney General Mark Meierhenry has given a conveniently broad and partisan interpretation to a state law against voter bribery.

Meierhenry, called the offer, in a campaign leaflet distributed on the

**Legal trouble continued on page 2**

evenly split in Rapid City as they were 10 months ago, according to the Journal RapidPoll.

The latest random sampling found 42.5 percent, or 108 people, favor the constitutional amendment while 40.2 percent (102) are opposed. A significant 17.3 percent (44) remained undecided.

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leukemia. But Steichen said the suspect well water hasn't been available long enough to cause a dangerous buildup. In addition, the wells only supply part of the company's water.

The EPA levels exceeded by the wells were set not for short-term hazard, but to protect a consumer who drinks the water over a lifetime, according to Bill Engle of EPA. The agency defines a lifetime as 70 years, which is longer than either of the wells has been operating. One was drilled in 1957 and the other 1967.

To check on drinking water, EPA required a supplier to submit quarterly samples of water it delivers. If the average of four quarterly readings exceeds a federal limit, EPA can declare a violation and take action. Samples from Rapid Valley cover three quarters so far, and a fourth sample is due in December.

Water sampled at one home on the system in May exceeded federal maximums for both radium content and alpha radiation (a stream of microscopic particles given off by radioactive substances like uranium or radium). Three other samples, taken at other points in the system, have met those standards.

Results of water tests at the wells and the home were brought to light Thursday in a press conference by the Black Hills Alliance. "In view of the increasing water needs of Rapid Valley, a solu-

tion to this problem should be found immediately," said Lilius Jones of the group.

Possibilities include bottled water, increased use of Rapid Creek's water and new wells, she said.

"Enforcement and public notification procedures relating to radiation contamination are weak at best, as the radiation in Rapid Valley's water has been known since March without action being taken," she said.

High readings in the wells came from samples taken in March. The readings are expressed in terms of picocuries, a measure of radiation.

EPA's limit for alpha radiation from drinking water is 15 picocuries per liter of water. The wells yielded water with 36.8 picocuries (plus or minus 5.4) per liter and 163.9 picocuries (plus or minus 10) per liter.

For alpha radiation from radium, which the federal government limits to 5 picocuries per liter, one well produced nearly 40 picocuries per liter. The other

well's water had less than one picocurie per liter.

The sample from the home, which is near the well with the higher readings, showed 45 picocuries (plus or minus 5.9) per liter of overall radiation and about 28 picocuries per liter of radiation from radium.

The home belongs to Roy Graff of the water company, who said EPA would close down the wells in a hurry if there were an imminent threat. "There's nothing to worry about whatsoever," he said.

Both wells with high readings draw water from the Lakota Sandstone aquifer, an extensive aquifer in the Hills area, Steichen said. The well with the higher readings is 1,500 feet deep, and the other 1,800 feet deep.

Steichen said he believed the radiation source to be naturally occurring.

The water company gets water not only from the wells, but also from three other sources: Rapid City, Rapid Creek (through a treatment plant now shut

down for repairs) and a sunken box that draws water from these sources together before it gets to 1,400 customers, elements from the system diluted.

The proportion of water gets from the wells varies, he taps into the system.

Engle said that water tests don't say where the contamination is. "There's nothing to worry about whatsoever," he said.

Bob Dugger, water manager, said he places in the system in the vicinity of Graff's home "go from there." He said the two wells and the sources, he said.

Committee - Dick Hoff, Treasurer,  
Rapid City, So. Dak. 57701

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RapidPoll was conducted Monday and Tuesday.

When the same issue was surveyed in December, 238 households were contacted with the following results: 45.7 percent against, 44.9 percent in favor and 9.2 percent undecided.

By late June, RapidPoll found those favoring the Dakota Proposition had gained a slight edge but there was a higher percentage of undecideds: 40.4 percent in favor, 37.6 percent opposed and 22 percent undecided. RapidPoll gathered 218 responses in that survey.

The significance of the latest polling is that there has been extensive media coverage and campaign advertising dealing with Dakota Proposition not present during the first two surveys. In

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all three, the same question was asked: "Do you favor Dakota Proposition."

RapidPoll is not a scientific method of determining public opinion. People contacted are selected randomly from the Rapid City telephone directory.

Dakota Proposition, called Constitutional Amendment B on the ballot, would roll back real estate valuations to 1977 "full and true" levels. The maximum taxes would be 1 percent of that assessment and would be limited to 2 percent annual increases.

It includes other provisions. Two-thirds of the state Legislature must approve new state taxes, and two-thirds of a community's "qualified electors" would have to endorse new local taxes.

Opponents say Dakota Proposition

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The water company gets water not only from the wells, but also from three other sources: Rapid City, Rapid Creek (through a treatment plant now shut

will cut taxes to local governments 40 to 60 percent and cause havoc with public schools. Proponents say governments can survive with less tax money. The measure was patterned after Proposition 13 which passed in California two years ago.

RapidPoll made 632 calls in the most recent survey. Of the 391 people who answered their phones, 254 answered the question,

Opinions on the controversial amendment were varied. "I'm not interested," said one. Three said they needed more information before deciding. An opponent said, "Absolutely not." And one who favors the tax change said, "If it will cut taxes, I approve it."

down for repairs) and a "gallery," a sunken box that collects seepage. Water from these sources is mixed together before it gets to the company's 1,400 customers, so radioactive elements from the well water are diluted.

The proportion of water a customer gets from the wells depends on where he taps into the system.

Engle said that while EPA regulations don't say where a water supplier must sample his system, the final sampling should be done near the home where the high sample was taken. If that reading gives a fourth-quarter average above the federal radiation standards, "we will have to take some sort of action," he said.

Bob Dugger, water company manager, said he plans to sample four places in the system, including the vicinity of Graff's home, and let EPA "go from there." He also will sample the two wells and the three other water sources, he said.

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