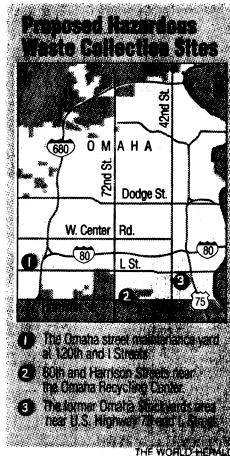


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List Narrowed to Three

Industrial Sites Chosen for Collecting Household Chemicals

BY JULIE ANDERSON
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

An agency planning the Omaha metropolitan area's first collection facility for leftover paint, pesticides and other household chemicals has narrowed to three a list of potential locations.

The three sites are a property at 60th and Harrison Streets near the Omaha Recycling Center; the Omaha street maintenance yard at 120th and I Streets; and a plot in the former Omaha Stockyards area at U.S. Highway 75 and L Street.

All three sites, drawn from a list of 10 original locations, are owned by the City of Omaha, according to the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency.

The sites all are zoned for industrial uses and are not near residential areas.

Other criteria used to pick the sites included their driving distance from a population center pinpointed at 74th and Hickory Streets and their access to major roads, said Fred Scarpello of Jacobson Helgott Consultants, the engineering firm working on the project.

Partners in the project identified a need for a permanent facility to collect and recycle household chemicals.

Participants in the project are the City of Omaha, Douglas County, Sarpy County and the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District.

The enclosed center will accept a variety of chemicals, from drain

cleaner to paint thinner. Plans call for a swap shop where residents can pick up chemicals someone else has left behind.

Estimates put the cost of the new facility at \$1.1 million with annual operating costs of \$420,000. Plans call for having the center operating by 2002.

The project partners received a \$150,000 grant from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality to locate and design the center. Both Douglas and Sarpy Counties have raised their landfill tipping fees, which is expected to bring in about \$110,000 a year for operating costs.

A committee will further evaluate the three sites and pick the most suitable within the next 30 days, Scarpello said.

The center initially would serve residents of Douglas and Sarpy Counties, who together produce almost 1,200 tons of household hazardous waste a year.

The agencies, which are eager to get public comment on the proposed sites, also will schedule another public forum on the facility. The partners held two in late March and also have met with neighborhood groups to discuss the project.

Information about the sites and the criteria used to select them is available on the Internet at www.UnderTheSink.Org.

The City of Omaha also will provide information on the project at its booth from noon to 6 p.m. during the Earth Day celebrations Sunday at the Gene Leahy Mall in downtown Omaha.