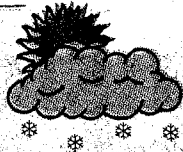


**WEATHER**

Today's High **35°**  
Tonight's Low **26°**



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Wednesday, February 7, 2001

# Lockport Journal

UNION-SUN &

## Simonds meetings draw crowds

By Scott Leffler  
Lockport Journal

Two meetings by the Army Corps of Engineers brought about 400 people to discuss their concerns about contamination at the former Simonds Saw and Steel on Ohio Street in Lockport.

Some came to learn, others to talk.

Still more came to vent to government officials making their first appearance in Lockport over the

sicknesses the speakers said they got working at the steel mill or loved ones they have lost because of cancers they believe were caused by work with radioactive and other hazardous materials at Simonds.

The plant produced thorium or uranium billets from 1948 to 1956.

Karen Barns said her husband Joseph worked at Simonds for nearly 30 years, dying at age 52 of heart complications.

She said she believes the government should make right with her

even though her husband didn't die of cancer.

"That affects the heart, the radiation," she said.

Kate Kimpan, senior policy adviser for the office of environment safety and health of the U.S. Department of Energy, said the government is making available a \$150,000 lump sum payment to those who the government determines got cancer from working at the site.

Kimpan said the program, Energy Employees Occupational Illness

Compensation Program Act of 2000, is for specific types of cancer, Beryllium-related diseases and Silica-related diseases, and is the first entitlement program since the black lung program 30 years ago.

Philip F. Sweet, a Tonawanda resident and long-time researcher of the Linde site in Tonawanda — currently being cleaned up under the corps Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) — said he isn't pleased with the corps and doesn't think its plans

will work.

"These people for the corps," Sweet said, "they really are trying to do the best thing. They just don't know how."

"Don't disturb it now. It's a sleeping giant."

Lt. Col. Glen R. DeWillie, commander of the corps' Buffalo District, said leaving the site alone is one possibility.

DeWillie said he expects his office to complete a preliminary report on the site by spring.

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