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Lockport firm probe set after DEC survey reveals site may be contaminated

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A Lockport firm is one of 29 sites across the state potentially contaminated with hazardous wastes, according to the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

The DEC will begin investigating Introl Design, a manufacturing firm at 48 North St., over the next three months, John Moore, DEC spokesman in Albany, said Wednesday.

It is not known what type of waste is thought to be at the site, DEC officials said.

The site was pinpointed by DEC in its Community Right to Know report, required by an executive order of the governor. That report surveyed businesses on waste generation and past disposal practices at their site.

Once the DEC analyzed the responses, it decided to investigate the 29 sites further. Four others are in Western New York, none in Niagara County.

More than 15,000 facilities and companies across the state were surveyed in 1986 and 1987. They included industries, municipal maintenance and operations facilities, educational institutions, hospitals, utilities, and

dealers in chemicals and pesticides. Also surveyed were headquarters of companies with facilities in New York.

The DEC decided to do the survey after results of a similar 1984 survey were published in 1985. According to DEC officials, the first survey provided them with names of 449 locations that should be investigated for hazardous waste. After the investigations, 64 of them were placed on the DEC's registry of inactive hazardous waste sites.

The survey sought data on types and quantities of hazardous waste generated, the agency transporting it and the place and method of its disposal during 1952 through 1981.

More than 600 facilities failed to respond to the survey. The DEC is finding the firms, whose names were not disclosed.

But just being suspected of having or once having waste doesn't mean there is really waste on one of the sites, said Peter Buechi, a hazardous waste engineer with the DEC's regional office in Buffalo.

If any of the 29 sites are placed on the registry, they will be further investigated to confirm the presence of hazardous waste, Buechi said.