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Article published Sep 27, 2006

### Ithaca Gun pollution

Ithacans were recently shocked to discover that state and federal environmental officials failed to clean up lead contamination at Ithaca Falls despite announcing in 2004 that a \$4.8 million remediation was finished. I was probably more disappointed than anyone since I had worked closely with the agencies and felt a keen sense of betrayal by authorities who I trusted to keep their word.

I identified lead pollution at Ithaca Falls in the summer of 2000 after posting maps of toxic sites that threaten Cayuga Lake and receiving a tip that I should visit an area that the City of Ithaca had purchased from Cornell University for \$1. Near the top of the south rim of the Fall Creek gorge, I found millions of lead shotgun pellets, shell casings and tons of industrial waste dumped on a narrow piece of land called the "island."

I revisited Ithaca Falls after an August fire at the abandoned gun factory, an event that I long feared could spread air-borne lead contamination with devastating consequences. I was absolutely appalled to discover thousands of lead shotgun pellets and shell casings littering the ground in the same area where I originally found the heaviest lead pollution.

I soon learned that EPA did not clean up at least five areas at the site because a developer named Wally Diehl was responsible for remediating those areas as part of a proposed condominium project. Unfortunately, when his project failed to receive a required "height variance" due to neighborhood and Common Council opposition, no cleanup was undertaken.

Diehl and the City of Ithaca have now applied for a Restore New York grant that could help fund the demolition and clean up of the gun factory as part of an effort to revive his condo project. I am highly concerned, however, that the proposal utterly fails to assure that all remaining toxic contamination at the site would be removed.

The grant application is woefully inadequate concerning precisely how much pollution remains to be cleaned up at the site, how it would be cleaned up, how fast it could be remediated and how much pollution would be left. I believe it is irresponsible for the City to propose a clean up that lacks such crucial specificity.

With so many unanswered cleanup questions, I respectfully urge Mayor Peterson and members of the Common Council to weigh all options carefully before supporting an ill-conceived plan that might leave Ithaca Falls worse off than it already is.

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