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Scottsville Revisited - Sewage Pollution of Oatka Creek*

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SCOTTSVILLE REVISITED - SEWAGE POLLUTION OF OATKA CREEK

On July 13, 1966, the Committee issued a report in which it was demonstrated that the Town of Scottsville was violating the B (recreational) classification of Oatka Creek by failing to disinfect the effluent from their sewage treatment plant and by contaminating the Creek with sewage solids and bacteria. On September 22, 1966, a follow-up study of Oatka Creek in the Scottsville area was made.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Coliform Index</u>
Oatka Creek at the Bowerman Road Bridge, upstream from STP	160
Sewage effluent, Scottsville STP	4.2 million
Oatka Creek near the Niagara Mohawk substation, approximately 50 yards downstream from STP	100,000
Oatka Creek at Highway 251 Bridge, at foot of Main Street, approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile downstream from STP	180,000

The sewage effluent of the STP was tested for the presence of free chlorine, and the tests were negative. The sewage contained grey sediment, and sludge banks were observed in the creek. The algae growth on the stream bottom downstream from the STP was markedly different in appearance from that upstream from the STP.

Our results indicate that no change has been made in the very poor quality of the effluent from the Scottsville STP since our earlier report was issued in July. On July 13, Mayor Selden Brown was quoted as saying that the town has known that its STP was inadequate since 1961, that the County Health Department had not told them that they had to chlorinate their effluent, and that the plant was greatly overloaded. He blamed delay in beginning construction of a new plant on delays in handling of the town's applications for aid by the state and federal governments. On September 23 the Committee wrote to Mayor Brown to inform him of the results of the recent tests and to inquire concerning progress in their plans for a new STP. He informed us that "We have been advised that the last forms requested by the State Health Department were forwarded to the appropriate Federal Agency September 30th. The consensus of the Board is to allow the State and Federal agencies until the November 15th meeting of the Village Board to give us the green light. Then we will go it alone with appropriate publicity."

The waters of Oatka Creek below the Scottsville plant are at present seriously polluted. The presence of inadequately treated and undisinfected sewage makes recreational use of this water, especially by children, inadvisable. We note that no signs are posted along the creek to warn one of this hazardous condition. The presence of small footpaths to and along the creek indicates that the area is used. The creek violates the standards of the VanLare Law which gives a maximum coliform index of 2,400 for streams potentially exposing the population.

David J. Wilson