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Pollution of Densmore Creek*

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POLLUTION OF DENSMORE CREEK

Densmore Creek runs under Norton Street just east of Culver Road, at which point it receives effluent from the City of Rochester's Norton Street Chlorinator and Screening Station. It continues northeast in the vicinity of residential areas, passing under the Sea Breeze Expressway and thence to Bayshore Blvd. and Point Lookout, where it receives sewage effluent from the Town of Irondequoit's Southeast Plant. It then discharges into Irondequoit Bay, along the shores of which are numerous houses, boating facilities (such as the Rochester Canoe Club), etc.

The presence of two plants discharging sewage into Densmore Creek prompted us to take coliform counts on this water to ascertain whether or not it is in violation of state standards. Counts were taken on 11 and 18 March 1967. The results were as follows:

<u>Location on Densmore Creek</u>	<u>Coliforms per 100 ml</u>
Just upstream from Norton Street Chlorinator (a)	29,000
Just downstream from Norton Street Chlorinator (a)	74,000
(b)	2 million
Downstream from Irondequoit's Southeast Plant, at Bayshore Blvd. and Point Lookout (a)	390,000
(b)	200,000
(a) sample taken on 11 March	(b) sample taken on 18 March

Free chlorine tests were carried out on both dates on the creek water immediately below the City's Norton Street Chlorinator; these tests were uniformly negative.

These results indicate that Densmore Creek is polluted by the time it reaches the Norton Street Chlorinator; that the creek receives from this facility a large quantity of undisinfected sewage; and that, if the chlorinator is in fact functioning, it is not putting in enough chlorine either to disinfect the discharge or to yield a positive free chlorine test immediately downstream from the the facility. These results do not establish whether or not Irondequoit's Southeast Plant is a significant source of bacterial pollution of Densmore Creek, since the water is already heavily polluted by the time it reaches this plant.

A City of Rochester news release quoted in the Times Union of 19 November 1963 states that the Norton Street Chlorinator would clean up Densmore Creek. Our data indicate the very opposite.

The waters of Densmore Creek violate the state standards set for waters in residential areas. The City of Rochester's Norton Street Chlorinator and Screening Facility is in large part responsible for this violation. In the absence of any municipal warning signs or fences, we warn the people living in the vicinity of Densmore Creek that the creek waters below the Norton Street Chlorinator are massively polluted with fecal bacteria, and are not suitable for free access and play by children. The waters upstream from the chlorinator are polluted by sources unknown to us at present.

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Water Pollution Subcommittee