



The place to stop pollution is before it starts

FILE PHOTO

## A warning about pollution

**Gretna**  
Louisiana citizens cannot take too much comfort in the fact that the state has dropped from first to second in the national pollution ratings.

When the proposed Formosa Chemicals' pulp mill and world's largest rayon plant are built, we will quickly regain first place and the stigma that entails.

As a retired research chemist and research director with more than 26 years experience in the rayon and pulp industries, I can say with some assurance that there is no way to build such plants without a major contribution to air, water, soil and aquifer pollution.

The chemicals used in both operations include huge quantities of sulfuric acid, sodium hydroxide, chlorine, carbon disulfide, zinc, etc. all of which are either consumed or converted to other compounds.

Millions of gallons of clean water are used, which must come from the aquifer underground or from a water purification plant.

This water is contaminated with the waste products from the pulping process and the rayon purification and bleaching. This waste water has to be disposed of, either to the Mississippi or into injection wells with the possibility of contamination of the aquifer.

During my career, I have seen three rayon plants closed mainly because management was not able to solve the pollution problems. Plants at Marcus Hook, Pa.; Front Royal, Va., and Enka, N.C., have all ceased to exist since it was not possible to correct the problems. Pulp mills have spent and are spending hundreds of millions of dollars to reduce their toxic emissions.

I cannot understand how the state of Louisiana can give tax-exempt status to a company who has submitted vague plans for its plants and without realizing the adverse effect on the already threatened environment. The place to stop pollution is before it starts.

**George C. Daul Sr.**