

Campus storage sites for dangerous PCBs

By Laura Boback and Tu Thanh Ha

OTTAWA (CUP) — Carleton University, the University of Lethbridge and the University of Toronto have more than 1,000 litres of PCBs stored on campus, according to Environment Canada documents.

According to government lists, other schools storing lesser quantities of polychlorinated biphenyls include the Technical University of Nova Scotia, Dalhousie University, the University of Windsor, the University of Waterloo and York University's Glendon College.

None of the 200 litres of PCBs at Dalhousie are in storage. According to Peter Howitt, Manager of Engineering Services, Physical Plant and Planning, the PCBs are all in use as coolants for electrical transformers. Howitt

said he was "not at liberty" to divulge the locations of the sites. However, another source confirmed that the Physical Plant and the Weldon Law Building contain PCBs.

The inventory — which lists more than 2,500 PCB storage sites in Canada — was released Sept. 8 following an emergency conference of federal and provincial environment ministers in Ottawa.

PCBs are toxic chemicals that were often used as a coolant for electrical equipment. Their production was restricted in 1977 after research showed PCBs cause cancer, brain disorders and birth defects in lab animals.

The ministers agreed at the conference to phase out PCB use by 1993. The meeting was held in the wake of last month's fire at a PCB warehouse at St-Basile-le-Grand, near Montreal, which

forced the evacuation of 3,500 residents.

While promising to end PCB use in five years, the environment ministers' conference failed to come up with regulations to destroy current inventories.

Kai Millyard, a member of the environmentalist group Pollution Probe, said the ministers' announcement was only a "minimal" solution.

"PCBs have been a known problem for 15 years. It's appalling we haven't had basic disposal standards long, long ago."

Officials at Carleton said that PCBs on their campus are not flammable and that quantities stored are ten times less than stated government figures.

An inventory by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment mistakenly said the university has 23,000 litres of the hazardous substance.



Raymond Mah: Dal Photo

A lurking PCB (lower left corner) stalks frosh at the beach.

"Storage of PCBs by itself is not hazardous if it is inspected regularly — but without disposal methods, you are still left holding the bag," said Pollution Probe's Millyard.

According to him, there are no licensed techniques in Canada to destroy highly concentrated PCBs like askarel yet.

The only PCB incinerator in Canada is located at Swan Hills, Alberta, but it does not accept PCBs from out of province.

There are 1,500 litres of PCBs at Lethbridge and 240 at the Technical University of Nova Scotia. The remaining schools are described as having "less than one tonne" of chemicals.



Juanita Montalvo and Terry Crawley at the Grawood opening.

Ian Mardon: Dal Photo

Pub opens downstairs

by Martin Doucette

The new Grawood promises to be one of the most happening places on campus this year. It's new, comfortable, affordable and the entertainment is free.

In short, it has everything any bar in Halifax has, only it's cheaper and near more students. Grawood manager Debbie Brown says, "Students will have everything the bars downtown have right here on campus."

Brown also adds, "The food is going to be better than last year, we will have brunch every Saturday and a new thing called the 'World Beer Tour' every Monday where people drink a different beer from around the world every week and upon completion of the tour are awarded prizes."

If you haven't found it yet,

there is a Grawood Grapevine Calendar which lists all upcoming events. The ribbon cutting ceremonies took place on the 12th but the real party starts Friday the 16th with the bands Basic English and Weddings, Parties, Anything.

Last year, one problem with the Grawood was the evacuation which took place as the SUB closed before the bar closed its doors for the night. This has been solved by a separate access door which allows passage to and from the Grawood independent of the SUB.

Another plus for the Grawood is that it is not hidden amid offices and conference rooms on the third floor. Now it is located in the basement of the SUB with direct access to the street. This allows those who are semi-conscious to avoid the conscious

few plodding about with regular sobering duties.

The Grawood has also commissioned a new designer, Rick Janson, who designed the new logos as well as a mural.

The food will be supplied again this year by Beaver Foods but all refreshments will be the Grawood's responsibility and this includes lunch drinks. Another plus is the addition of a non-alcohol menu this year.

How much did this cost and where did the money come from? Steve Gaetz, SUB manager, says, "We borrowed the funds from the University for the renovations which have taken place in the entire building and the Grawood money comes from that amount."

"The proposed cost of the Grawood move and renovations was estimated at \$270,000 and at the



Raymond Mah: Dal Photo

More frosh frolics at the beach.

present time appears to be slightly over that estimate at \$310,000," says Gaetz.

At first glance it seems small to be housing the big name bands who will appear there but once you are seated in the subdued lighting and plush new bar chairs (bought at a discount), with your

friends and a favourite cold beer the new Grawood will have achieved its purpose. You will forget you are anywhere near campus and really relax.

All in all, the new Grawood is a tremendous improvement over the old but you can go and judge for yourself. No cover charge.