

Toxins (safely) up stack

by Terry Butler

The U of A will soon begin to dispose of a six year backlog of chemical waste. A sophisticated incinerator, now being completed at the university's Ellerslie research station, will handle the

Stuart Hunt, radiation protection officer in charge of the project, says the waste products, effluent from university undergraduate and research laboratories, are presently stored in 45 gallon drums.

The 8000 gallon backlog resulted from an increased sensitivity toward pollution hazards. In the early days, when amounts of effluent were small and public consciousness less acute, these products were "just poured down the drain," as Mr. Hunt puts it.

This was followed by a semi-annual open-pit burning, a ritual then accompanied by heavy smoke, explosions and other unsatisfactory side effects. This practice was banned outright by the Alberta minister of the environment, Bill Yurko, in April 1971. Since then the material has been stored, awaiting destruction.

The incinerator will burn the readily combustible hydrocarbon material at temperatures from 1600 - 2000 degrees F, and "scrub" the resulting gasses with water. The only atmospheric effluent will be "a great deal of steam" and some trace material which has been rendered harmless.

The scrubbing water, carrying the unsavoury wastes, will be filtered into a lagoon, which will



Up in smoke... The Ellerslie incinerator is nearly ready to burn the university's chemical wastes.

photo Bob Park

from time to time be tested and treated according to its make up. A new lagoon, which has no outlet except through solar evaporation, had to be constructed at the request of the provincial department of the environment. An earlier version, designed for conventional sewage, was deemed unacceptable for the caliber of materials

Radioactive elements with short half-lives are stored until their radioactivity is depleted. They are then disposed of in a conventional manner. Radio nuclides with long half-lives are usually transferred to the burial grounds at Chalk River, Ontario.

Once the needs of the university are satisfied, the waste disposal service will be available

this project will release.

The radioactive isotopes involved are the byproducts of scientific measurement and monitoring at the U of A. The radiation control committee has developed comprehensive guidelines for the safe use and disposal of these materials, and is developing a similar policy for hazardous chemical wastes.

to government and private industry on a limited basis. Some industrial concerns have expressed considerable interest, even at this early stage. Their objectives are perhaps beginning to align with the aims of the radiation control committee — to minimize the danger and discomforts of some of the least pleasant of modern society's byproducts.

Nominations to the Senate

The University of Alberta

We welcome nominations from the public for several vacancies on the University Senate. Members are volunteers who serve on Task Forces and Committees ranging from selection of candidates for honorary degrees to subjects concerning the academic community. Senate meets formally four times a year.

"It is the duty of the Senate to inquire into any matter that might tend to enhance the usefulness of the University." There are no formal qualification requirements, but consideration will be given to community service of nominees from central and northern Alberta.

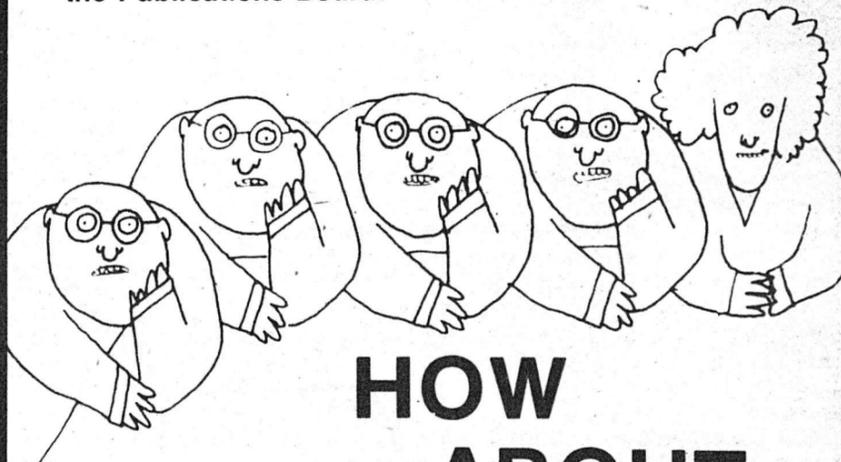
Nominators should provide a brief resume and statement of their reasons for nominating the candidate. Appointments are for three year terms beginning July 1, 1977.

We encourage interested people to submit written nominations no later than March 11, 1977 to:

The Chairman
Nominating Committee, The Senate
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 2G8

For further information, telephone 432-2268.

Notice from the Publications Board:



HOW ABOUT YOU?

Nominations for the position of Gateway editor, 1977-78, were re-opened Thursday by the Publications Board of the Students' Union. The Publications Board, composed of three Students' Council members and six Gateway staff members, voted unanimously to extend nominations until 4 p.m. Friday Feb. 18, as only one nomination had been received by the original deadline, Feb. 4.

The Publications Board feels the position of Gateway editor is too important to be filled by acclamation and invites interested students to submit written applications to Room 282, SUB, before the extended deadline expires. The position of Gateway editor carries with it a \$350 monthly honorarium; the editor's job begins August 22, 1977.

The Publications Board invites all interested Students' Union members to attend this year's public meeting to assess and select next year's editor. This meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m., Tuesday Feb. 22 in Room 270, SUB.