EPA says 2,200 sites may vie in Superfund

3 by DAGMAR OBEREIGNER
Associated Press Writer

The Environmental Protection Agency eventually will place up to 2,200 hazardous-waste sites on a high-priority list that will make them eligible to compete for Superfund money, the head of the Superfund program said Monday.

William N. Hedeman Jr., director of emergency and remedial responses at the EPA, reported on the status of the $1.6 billion cleanup fund at a national conference in Denver on the status of the Superfund. About 190 government, corporate and environmental officials were present.

He said 900 sites have been evaluated as candidates for the national priorities list and that 546 of them qualify for high-priority action under the Superfund. Last week, the EPA's Denver regional office reported that both the Rocky Mountain Arsenal in Adams County and the Rocky Flats nuclear-weapons parts plant in Golden were being considered as Superfund candidates.

The list should be completed by August, Hedeman said, adding that corporation site cleanup work will be included. Hedeman estimated that by the end of fiscal year 1986, when the $1.6 billion authorized for the program is exhausted, about 22,000 sites will have been evaluated.

The Superfund is scheduled to expire in 1985, and Hedeman said officials are working to get reauthorization through Congress. He said the Superfund Task Force has determined that cleanup projects will have to be launched at 1,400 to 2,200 sites, costing $8 billion to $16 billion.

Cleanup work began at 82 sites by the end of fiscal 1983. Hedeman said, but only a little more than half were financed through the fund. "We plan to triple this number by the end of fiscal year 1985," he said.

The program, which began in 1980, continues to be plagued by "physical and administrative limitations," he said. For example, preparatory field work at the sites takes time, and there are not enough personnel and analytical equipment to handle organic-waste examination.

"We will have to increase personnel by manyfold," he said.

Randi Mott, a lawyer who helps clients develop cleanup strategies, said companies faced with cleanup should step up to the plate of the government by developing a cleanup plan and guidelines for the future.

Hedeman predicted that the Superfund program will be cost effective, "as long as we can acquire the numbers of personnel and increase our efforts," he said.

ACTION LINE/ by Amy Shapiro

Memorial sought for Korea vets


A. Gary Mundt, a member of Rep. Patricia Schroeder's Denver staff, checked into this and reports that Gen. Butler and the proposed memorial are indeed for real. However, something in the solicitation letter wasn't — the statement that "The United States Congress has given its full endorsement and support to this project by authorizing its creation."

Rep. Charles Rose, D-N.C., and Sen. Rudy Boschwitz, R-Minn., have introduced bills to permit the memorial to be built on federal land near the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. Mundt said, but both are still held up in committee. Although the bills are expected to pass, hearings probably won't be scheduled until January 1985.

Mundt pointed out the mistake to a member of Rose's staff, who called Michael Panayotopulos, secretary of the Korean War Memorial Committee, who promised to correct it.

Panayotopulos said this clerical error was in about one-eighth of the 2 million solicitation letters mailed. The committee's direct-mail firm has now sent notices ("One of my assistants handled this error...") to all who received that letter, offering to refund donations on request.

Panayotopulos said the memorial's cost is estimated at $6.5 million, of which about $400,000 had been raised. All funds, he said, will come from private contributors. Congress has been asked only to authorize the use of public land, not public money.

G whizzes, dents car

Q. We stopped to eat at the Burger Chef on North Federal Boulevard. While we were inside, the wind blew the letter "G" off the sign. It landed on our hood, denting it. We immediately called the supervisor, who checked it and told us where to call. We got two repair estimates and called them in. Now, five months later, we still haven't heard anything, even after several calls to their main office and their insurance office. What will it take? — D.G., Denver

A. You didn't deserve a break that day, so you've received a check for $91, your low estimate. The problem: Travelers Insurance didn't authorize your claim because it didn't think it insured Burger Chef, which is owned by Hardy's Restaurants. Once Travelers realized that Titus Foods of Salt Lake City, which it does insure, is the franchisee operator for that particular restaurant, you got your check on behalf of Burger Chef. Or is it Burer Chef?

Got a problem? Write Action Line, Rocky Mountain News, P.O. Box 719, Denver 80201. Include your name, address, date of purchase, phone number and a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Send copies, not originals, of canceled checks and other documents. If possible, note addresses and phone numbers of businesses and agencies involved. No phone calls, please.