

Sen. Barrasso has it right

No TCE in our public drinking water has to be the maximum tolerable level

The plan for the Environmental Protection Agency had been to reduce the "tolerable" level of TCE in drinking water from 5 parts per billion (ppb) to .5 ppb. Somewhere along the way, it now looks like they only went to 2 ppb. What's a little TCE in public water drinking supply between friends, huh?

Perhaps the Army Corps of Engineers is hoping that by stalling long enough, the TCE will migrate down gradient and they won't have to clean up anything from the aquifer(s) beneath the former missile silo west on town - on the Belvoir Ranch.

As has been pointed out before, the Corps has looked for every possible alternate source of the probable carcinogen TCE - rather than from its obvious source, the cleaning solvent used at the former missile site.

They've probably even proposed "divine intervention." Well, pray on that one, fellas, because the contamination is not an "Act of God." Nor did the carcinogen get into the aquifer(s) at a high level from a train car spill of chemicals. It was worth a try when you're stalling both from being tagged with responsibility and from having to fund the clean-up. The Corps knows the extremely expensive clean-up on F.E. Warren Air Force Base and the one further west is unlikely to cost less.

By stalling, the Corps has already faced a reduction in the "tolerable" level of TCE in the drinking water. If they don't move soon on the mitigation, maybe the EPA will find a way to reduce the level to the .5 ppb they favored.

It is unfortunate the Wyoming federal delegation didn't step forward to try to help Cheyenne when a Republican administration had control. We can only hope that this contamination won't become a political football and Cheyenne residents be penalized because our Wyoming delegation is not of the same political party as controls Congress and the White House.

Very likely, all but Cheyenne's city government wants that water cleaned up to a "non-detectable" level of TCE. Whether it can be reliably cleaned to that level is questionable. Most of the time it probably can but, as already happened here, there are times when it isn't and contaminated water is entered into the public drinking water supply. It has happened.

At this point and into the foreseeable future, water from a contaminated aquifer is not really necessary. To tempt fate by deliberately sending water with a high level of TCE through a treatment system is wrong and should not be done. Sell water with any detectable level of TCE to our neighbors to the south. They'll love it.

Mail delivery

My support of the postal service and its mail carriers is long held. Not just from satisfaction with delivery of a few letters and packages over the years but from delivery of millions of pieces of my third class advertising mail over 15 years as well.

As a group, none are less appreciated nor more productive.

Yet, technology is taking its toll on the postal service. With the immediacy of e-mail and the efficiency of bill paying over the internet, mail delivery is diminishing in importance in a lot of American homes.

Add to that the fact that letter-writing has become a lost skill and it is understandable why the postal service is constantly trying to find ways to survive.

In a recent issue, I made my personal feelings about mail delivery known and praised those who deliver that mail.

As a customer, if mail delivery were reduced by one day a week, even two days a week, I could manage. I'm not endorsing that plan, only saying that if that's what comes to pass, I can deal with it.

I heard from a retired "letter carrier" a few days ago and he pointed out some of the realities of the situation - needing congressional approval to reduce mail delivery by one day a week, etc. - and he provided me a link to the position of the letter carrier's union. I'll provide it to readers because I think there are some important points - alternatives to reduced service - made in the article. I understand the distinction of interests a union has from the postal service management but, unlike the University of Wyoming, I do not fear hearing or reading both sides of an issue. You may find it informative.

<http://www.nalc.org/news/release/pr032910.htm>

Little Steven didn't get the gig

When University of Colorado men's basketball coach Jeff Bzdelik accepted the head coaching job at Wake Forest, it looked like Steve McClain, the former UW men's basketball coach that alumni came to love to hate, would get the CU job.

Little Steven was the choice of players on the current squad - even to the point of some of them (and their fathers) threatening to leave the program if another coach was chosen. They won't.

Well, another coach was chosen.

CU had three good coaches from which they would choose. The UNC coach, Tad Boyle, who got the job, Little Steven, and Mike Dunlap, the former coach at Metro State in Denver who won two national championship while there and then worked five years for the Denver Nuggets.

McClain, instead of following Bzdelik to Wake, went to Indiana as an assistant.

Franchise failures

The Small Business Administration has loan/loan guarantee programs that are often used to open a franchise operation. The SBA does not often directly fund the franchisee, a bank does - with an SBA guarantee to lessen the blow of a failed operation. Here are some details about loans and loan repayment failures for familiar franchises:

	No. of SBA loans	Avg loan size	Failure rate
Subway	2292	\$170,928	7%
Quizno's	2019	\$144,458	25%
The UPS Store	1085	\$146,943	12%
Cold Stone Creamery	774	\$233,687	31%
Dairy Queen	478	\$328,383	8%
Dunkin Donuts	464	\$582,726	8%
Super 8 Motel	456	\$910,476	4%
Days Inn	390	\$1,023,690	6%
Curves for Women	371	\$ 98,094	16%
Matco Tools	321	\$ 90,131	36%
Blimpies	??	??	46%

A few decades back, a franchise was much more likely to be successful than another business type (non-franchise). That is no longer guaranteed. With franchise chains growing at mach speed, they have taken franchisees that were not capable of running a profitable operation. The failure rates are indicative of the screening process also. A Days Inn owner is more likely to be experienced, with adequate capital to survive and having a much greater investment of their own money than, say a Curves or Matco Tools. The more invested capital at risk to the owner, the more likely success.

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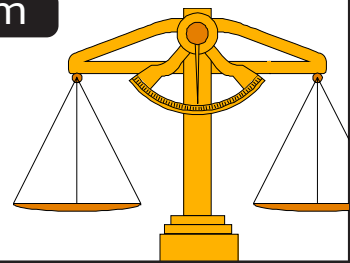
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