

## TOXINS IN THE AIR

### Lack of evidence

Re: "Toxic threat, government neglect," Jan. 6-8 special report series.

Residents of our community are weary of The Denver Post's and writer Mark Obmascik's deceitful insinuations that stigmatize our neighborhood as "sick" as related to groundwater from the former Redfield plant. Neighbors in southeast Denver who have studied the issue over the last four years understand that Obmascik's opinions are unsupported by scientific and medical fact.

The facts are:

Health effects in humans have not been detected at chemical levels found in the neighborhood. There is no clinical evidence that exposure to 1,1-dichloroethene at levels found in the neighborhood causes cancer in humans.

Although Obmascik's own chemical glossary does not list 1,1-DCE as carcinogenic, he does a disservice to readers, and particularly the young family pictured on the Jan. 6 front page, by a duplicitous association. As a matter of fact, soon after indoor air testing began related to the Redfield plume, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment undertook a cancer assessment comparing area residents with the rest of metro Denver through the state cancer registry, with data from 1979 through 1996. The study showed no elevated instances of cancer in the neighborhood.

This series is the third time the Cook Park neighborhood has been featured on the front page of The Denver Post for a problem that has been solved. The Brown Group has remediated all homes found with elevated levels of vapors from the groundwater.

Additionally, chemicals are no longer seeping into the neighborhood. With many possible sources of contamination in modern life, Cook Park neighbors appreciate the information gained from five years of study on the Redfield issue along with the opportunity to track and remediate the problem.

The plume has not stigmatized the neighborhood, but The Denver Post has done so. Neighbors do not appreciate the innuendoes and opinions of the writer that nowhere in the story are documented by expert evidence. The writing represents "reporting" of the worst kind and should be, if worth writing at all, on the opinion page.

BARBARA FALLON

Denver

*The writer is president of the Cook Park Neighborhood Association. This letter also is signed by five members of the Cook Park board and by Diane Wolta, president of the Virginia Village/Ellis Community Association Board, and two members of the Virginia Village/Ellis board.*