

Press Release

For immediate release

Richland County Emergency Management

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Picric Acid and Ethyl Ether Detonated In Richland County

Richland County Emergency Management Director Darin Gudgeon announced that hazardous materials known as Picric Acid and Ethyl Ether were found and successfully destroyed in Richland County around 5pm today. The chemicals were discovered on Hell Hollow Road just outside of the Township of Ithaca. Due to the nature of the materials, a 3 mile evacuation around the property began at 1:45pm today. Residents were permitted to return home around 5:30pm.

Gudgeon stated that the operation was carried out successfully. Clean-up efforts continue, but all dangerous materials have been disposed of. The Ithaca School District evacuation to Wal-Mart in Richland Center was carried out smoothly and all children have been returned to their parents.

The previous land owner was a chemist with his own private research lab on the property. The chemist was very familiar and experienced with these chemicals and the lab was properly engineered for his research. Since his passing, his family was attempting to clean-up the recently sold property and requested the assistance of the UW-Richland Chemistry Department. The family quickly responded when the hazardous materials were discovered and notified Richland County Emergency Management for assistance. The family and new landowner were forthcoming with the information and very cooperative during the entire operation. No illegal activity has been reported.

Richland County Emergency Management was assisted by the Richland County Sheriff's Department, Richland Center Fire Department, Richland County EMS, the Chemistry Department of UW-Richland, Vernon County Hazmat Team, Madison Fire Hazmat Team, and the Dane County Bomb Squad.

Submitted: 9/26/2008 @ 6:30pm

Angie Rizner

Richland County Public Information Officer