

enviro focus

The Newsletter of the Environmental Protection Department

Issue 1: June 2007

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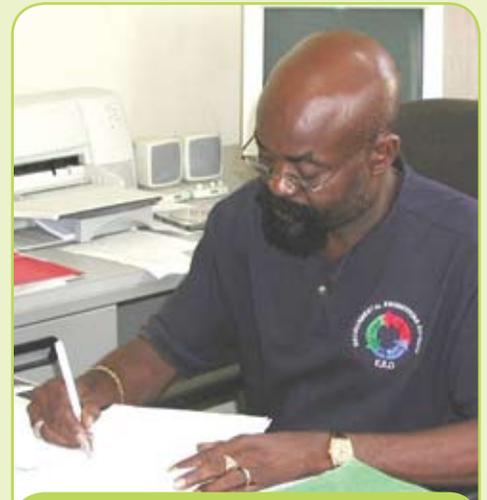
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From the Director

It is my pleasure to write this message of introduction to the inaugural issue of EnviroFocus, the Environmental Protection Department's newsletter. EnviroFocus represents another important step forward in our ongoing work to inform the public about who we are and what we do.

Through this medium we will be letting you know about the EPD's regular responsibilities and functions, as well as highlighting some of our special activities and projects. We will also be sharing information to apprise you of some of Barbados' environmental issues and what you, as a concerned citizen can do to help maintain and protect our environmental quality and our quality of life.

The first issue of EnviroFocus has been published to coincide with Environment Month, a time of year when general attention is focussed on the environment and on the steps we can and should take to manage and preserve it.



*Director of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD),
Mr. Jeffrey Headley*

Subsequent issues will be published on a biannual basis, in March (the Department's anniversary month) and September.

We hope that you find the EPD newsletter interesting and informative. Feedback is invited and welcomed; we hope that comments and suggestions from our readers will help to make the next issue of EnviroFocus even better than the first.

The EPD: A look back in time

The publication of this first issue of EnviroFocus provides a welcome opportunity to take a look at the Environmental Protection Department's evolution since its establishment in March 1971, and to highlight some of its early important achievements.

The first manager of what was then known as the Public Health Engineering Unit was Senior Public Health Engineer Arthur Archer, a pioneer of environmental protection in Barbados. Under his leadership, important research was carried out into the impacts of sewage disposal on Bridgetown's water environs, including the Constitution River and Carlisle Bay. Results of this groundbreaking work provided the basis for the later construction of the Bridgetown and South Coast Sewage Treatment Plants.

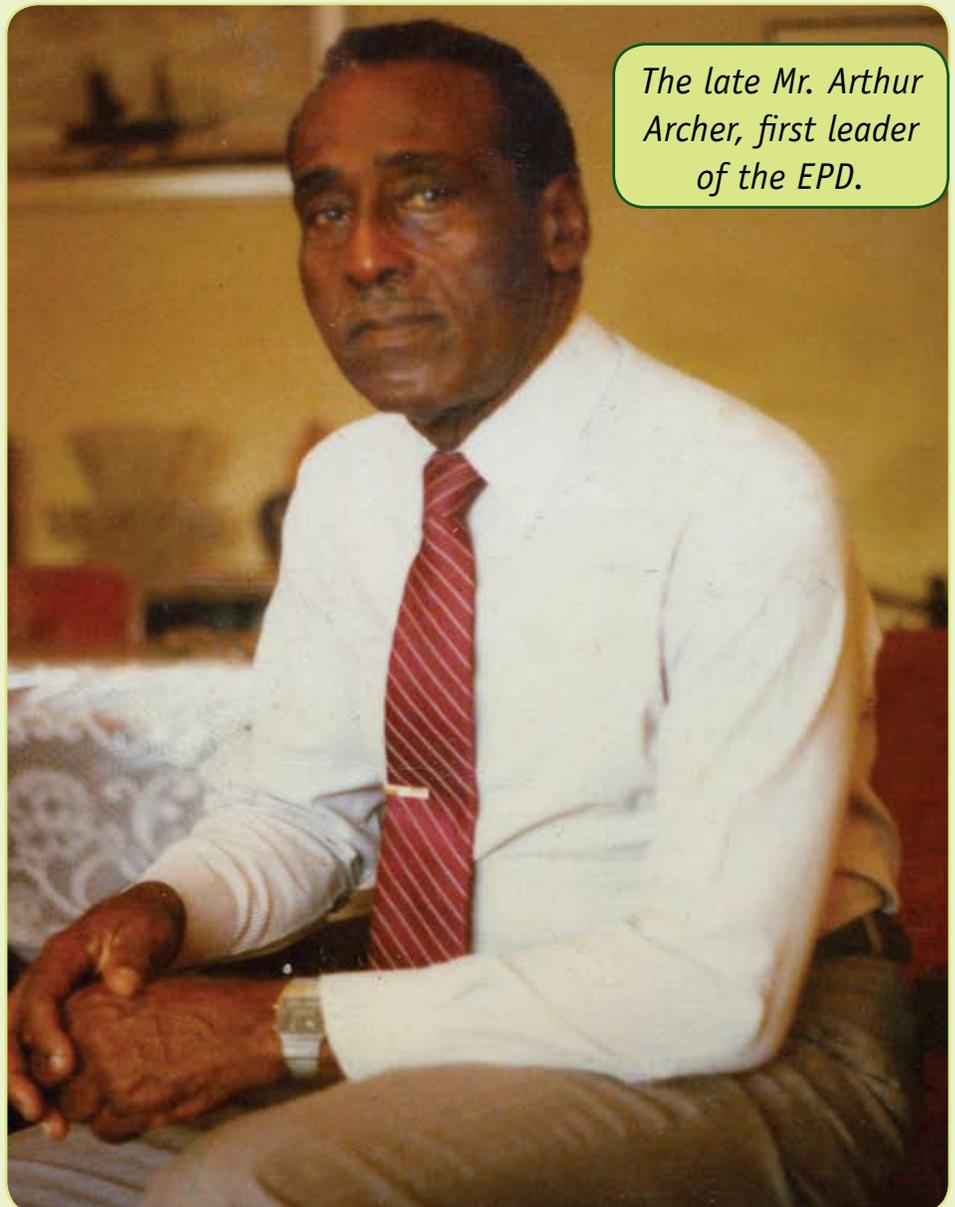
Research by the Unit in the late seventies brought about the construction of first sanitary landfill in the Eastern Caribbean at Mangrove, St. Thomas. The Unit's work was instrumental to the establishment of restrictions on the location of solid waste disposal facilities, in the interest of protecting our national drinking water resources.

Part of the quality of life that we enjoy is also derived from the high

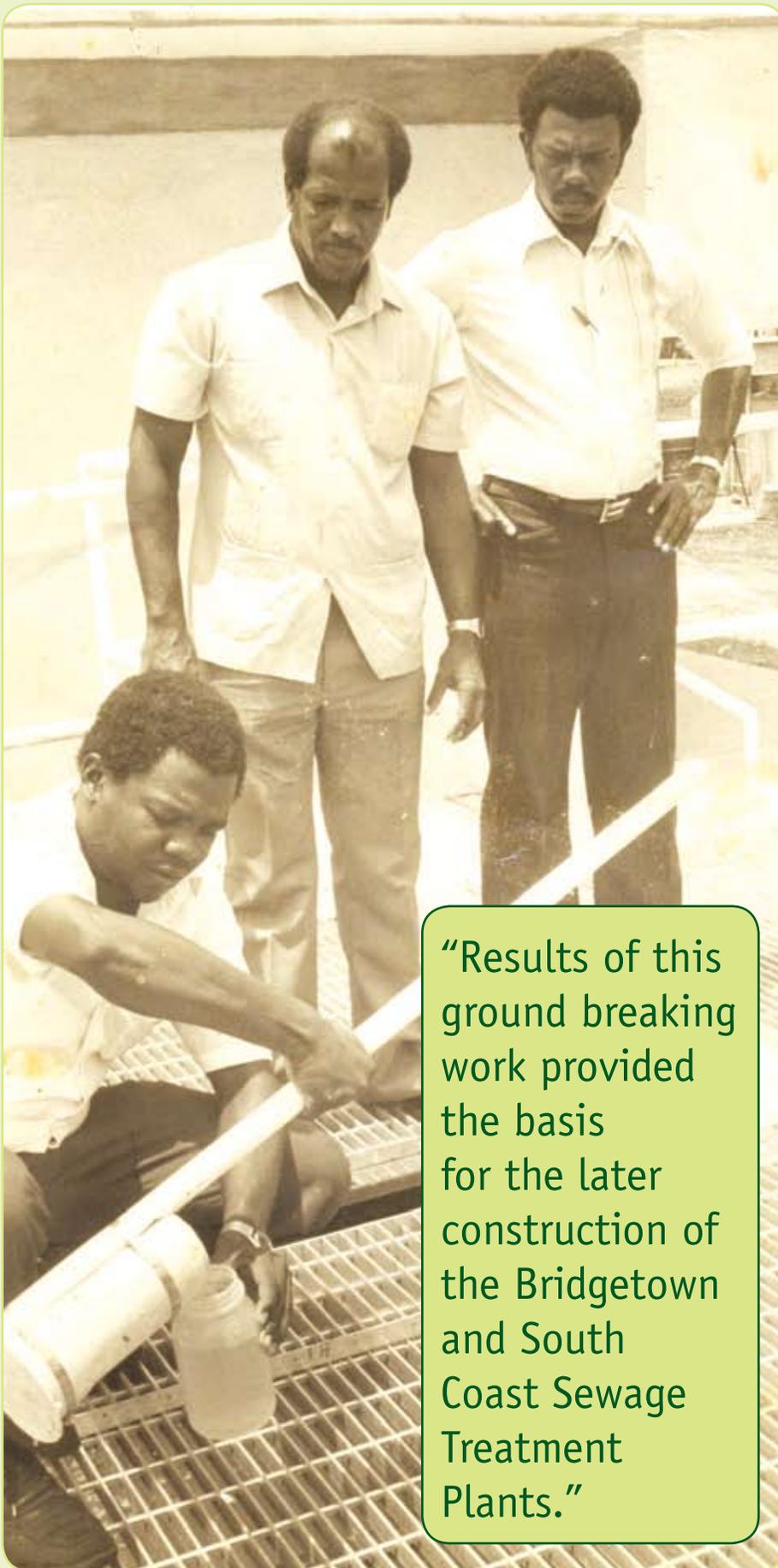
standards set by the Unit, from inception, for residential, commercial and industrial developments, as part of its building development control programme.

The mandate, staff and responsibilities of the EPD have increased since the 1970s; however,

our mission, "to promote sustainable practices through control, regulation and enforcement", remains unchanged. We continue to dedicate ourselves to the goal of ensuring that future generations inherit an environment which is healthy, productive and enjoyable.



The late Mr. Arthur Archer, first leader of the EPD.



“Results of this ground breaking work provided the basis for the later construction of the Bridgetown and South Coast Sewage Treatment Plants.”

Did You Know...

That the Marine Pollution Control Act was passed in 1998 for the protection of the marine environment from land, sea and air borne pollutants?

That nearshore recreational waters at beaches in Barbados are monitored weekly for bacteriological quality?

That Barbados was the first country in the western hemisphere and only the second in the world after Holland to implement a land use, development and zoning policy for the protection of groundwater?

That people's activities on the surface of the land can directly impact upon the natural groundwater quality and quantity?

That in general it takes approximately 90 days for underground aquifers in Barbados to be replenished with rain water from the ground surface?

Well, now you know!



Used Oil Management

The Environmental Protection Department has been pleased to note that over the past five years, the amount of used oil recovered for environmentally acceptable reuse has increased five-fold. An increase in the amount of oil recovered and reused means a reduced threat of contamination of our soil and water.

The quantities of used oil recovered include engine oil, hydraulic fluids, transmission fluids, and other petroleum oils, but do not include used cooking oils. (There is a project underway through which used cooking oils are collected and converted to biodiesel. For information on this initiative, you may contact Mr. Handel Callender at Counterpart Caribbean.)

Used engine oil, hydraulic fluids and so on may no longer be suitable for their original purpose, but they can be used as a fuel for high-temperature manufacturing equipment such as kilns. This reuse reduces the rate of dumping and provides industry with a relatively economical fuel source. In Barbados there are two companies approved by the Environmental Protection Department to receive used oil for reuse as fuel. These are the Arawak Cement Company and Claytone Products Inc.

Used oil that is sent for reuse should be relatively free of impurities such as particles, solvents and thinners, and water. If care is taken to collect and store used oil properly, in covered containers, and not to mix it with other liquids or solids, it should be acceptable for reuse by either company. Businesses should contact Claytone or Arawak directly for more information about the terms under which used oil is accepted.

Individuals or small operations are also encouraged to recover their used oil, rather than dump it. When you change the oil in your car or truck, you can collect the old oil and take it to Trans-tech Inc. in Kendal, Christ Church, where it will be stored for later transport to Arawak or Claytone. By taking small actions like these, you contribute to the overall environmental sustainability of our island home.

“An increase in the amount of oil recovered and reused means a reduced threat of contamination of our soil and water.”

Marine Litter: Survey and Cleanups

From September to December 2006, the Marine Pollution Section of the Environmental Protection Department hosted Marie-Marguerite Sabongui and Eduardo Ganem Cuenca, students from McGill University carrying out a study on marine litter in Barbados. Marie-Marguerite and Eduardo were participants in the Bellairs Research Institute's Barbados Field Semester, and were the fourth group of students to work with the EPD on environmental research projects.

To gain insight into marine litter management in Barbados, the students interviewed representatives from government agencies and NGOs involved in the management of the coastal and marine environment.

Marie-Marguerite and Eduardo conducted field work to collect data on the types and quantities of marine litter on the island's coasts. Litter surveys and cleanups were carried out at six beaches: Brandons, Holetown, Long Beach, Long Pond, Speightstown and Worthing. They were assisted by the Caribbean Environmental Youth Network and the Optimist Club of Barbados South.

Staff of the EPD also participated in the clean up effort, spending half a day picking up refuse and



Marine litter threatens our marine environment.

litter from the shores of Long Pond beach in St. Andrew. More than three dozen large garbage bags of litter were collected for disposal at the Mangrove Landfill. The types of waste found included bottles, old clothing, rope, fishing line, wood, and lots of plastic and styrofoam. The overall results of the marine litter project showed that most of the litter found on the beaches of Barbados originates from the careless disposal of rubbish on the beaches, on the streets or into storm drains. The second major source of litter was improper disposal of wastes from recreational boating, the fishing industry and cruise ships.

Barbadians and visitors can help to keep our beautiful beaches clean by securing our garbage for proper disposal and desisting from the indiscriminate disposal of rubbish and refuse on land or at sea.



Staff and students at the Long Pond Beach clean-up

Working With The Youth

One of the goals of sustainable development is the preservation of the earth, our environment and a good quality of life for future generations. With this in mind, the Environmental Protection Department has undertaken two initiatives specially focused on improving environmental awareness among young people.

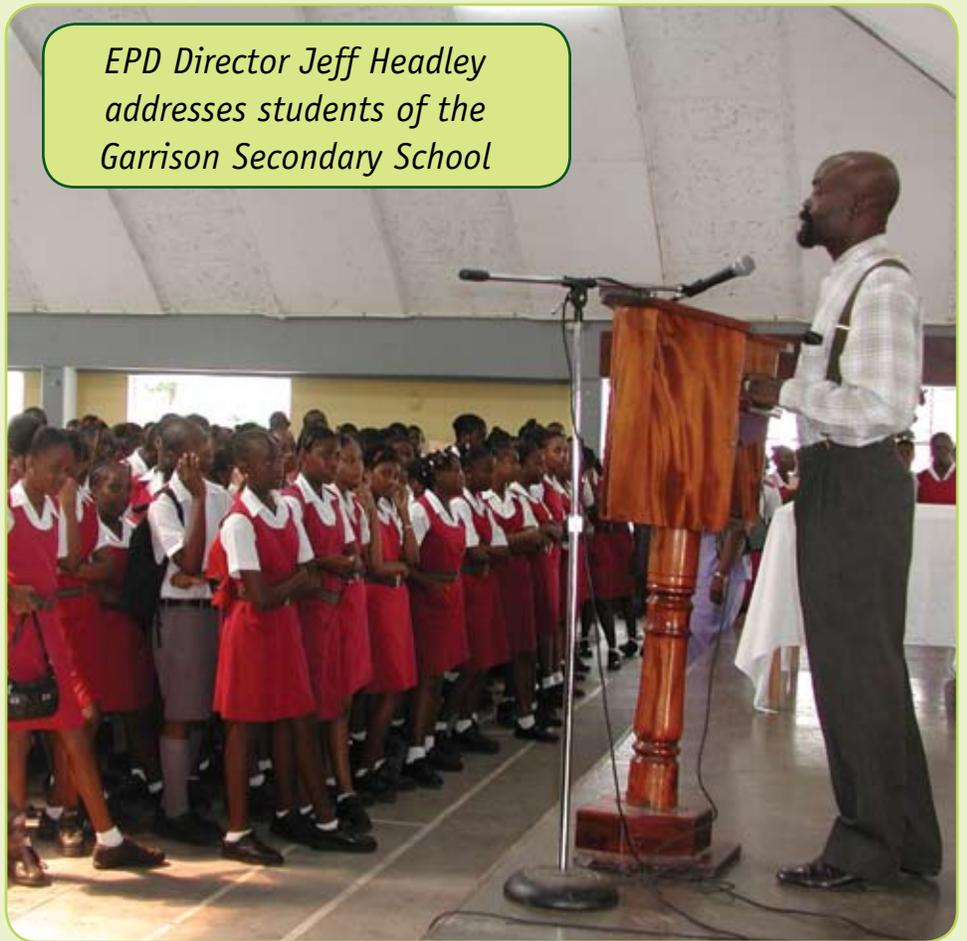
In June 2005, the EPD adopted the Garrison Secondary School. Since the adoption, the EPD has donated equipment to the school's environmental club for their Greening of Garrison project, provided work experience opportunities for students, and taken students on educational tours. More activities are planned for students of the Garrison school in the coming academic year.

Also in 2005, the EPD launched an internship programme for students in the Environmental Science programme at the Barbados Community College. Each year a graduate from the College spends two months doing technical work or a research project at the EPD.

The internship increases the students' awareness of environmental issues in Barbados and how they are managed. It also provides them with valuable practical experience in the environmental field.

The Department recognizes that the country's youth are the future stewards of the environment. We are pleased to play a part in helping prepare them for this very important role.

EPD Director Jeff Headley addresses students of the Garrison Secondary School



Tree-planting at the Garrison School

Indoor Air Quality Seminar

Indoor air quality (IAQ), which refers to the nature of the environment within a building, is a topic which has received a great deal of public attention in Barbados in recent times. The Air and Noise Pollution Section of the Environmental Protection Department routinely conducts assessments of office buildings where complaints about ventilation and air quality are made by the occupants.

The Air and Noise Pollution Section has been making an increased effort to educate persons on how to manage IAQ and make sure that their building environment is healthy. As part of this exercise, the

Section hosted, in 2006, a half day seminar for building and property managers .

The aim of the session was to arm attendees with knowledge that would enable them to conduct inspections of their office buildings, identify factors which could contribute to IAQ problems, and employ the necessary preventative or corrective measures. Approximately 30 people, from both the private and public sectors, attended the seminar.

In order to provide a thorough overview of IAQ and its management in Barbados, the seminar included presentations by the staff of the Air and Noise Pollution Section as well as by guest speakers from the Ministry of Health and the Occupational Safety and Health Section of the Ministry of Labour.

Presentation topics included:

- Indoor Air Quality in Barbados;
- Recognising Potential Indoor Air Quality Issues;
- Indoor Air Quality and Health; and
- The Safety and Health at Work Act and IAQ

The programmes were interactive, with participants actively sharing their experiences and gathering information on issues which may have affected their work places.

The seminar was considered to be a success. A number of attendees requested that this type of training be held on a regular basis and suggested that attendance be made mandatory for all managers and building managers.



Participants in the 2006 Seminar on Indoor Air Quality

Word Search

Can you find all the words below?
Many of them were used in the articles in this newsletter.



- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Beaches | 13. Monitor |
| 2. Bio-diesel | 14. Mould |
| 3. Building | 16. Plastics |
| 4. Control | 17. Pollution |
| 15. Petroleum | 18. Projects |
| 5. Degradable | 19. Recover |
| 6. Education | 20. Regulate |
| 7. Engine Oil | 21. Reuse |
| 8. Impurities | 22. Ropes |
| 9. Internship | 23. Survey |
| 10. Kilns | 24. Used Oil |
| 11. Litter | 25. Ventilation |
| 12. Marine | |

ON SERVICE



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