

WALTON CORRESPONDENCE

Tom Moody,
Sgt.
EP



FLORIDA TRANSFORMER, INC.

P. O. BOX 507 • DEFUNIAK SPRINGS, FLORIDA 32435

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Ella Brown
Department of Environmental Protection
120 Governmental Center
Pensacola, FL 32501

Dear Madam:

We were recently notified of some comments that were made in a recent meeting, in which you were in attendance. We regret having to take your valuable time with this issue, however, due to the nature of these comments we really have no other option but to respond and set the record straight. The comments that I refer to were made by Mr. Gordon Lawyer and were totally baseless and false, if not slanderous. The statements made by Mr. Lawyer indicated that we buried batteries and poured transformer oil on the ground as a means of disposal. This is so removed from the truth that we had to call Mr. Lawyer just to confirm that he actually made these comments. Our General Manager, Al Ward, talked with Mr. Lawyer and confirmed that he not only made these comments, but that he has never even been on our plant site to know what kind of operation we have. Mr. Lawyer stated that he did not have first hand knowledge of this but that a committee member had told him. Mr. Lawyer further commented that these statements were made during a time of heated discussion and that there was nothing to it. We disagree and think there is something to it since it was in reference to us and there were three Department of Environmental Protection personnel, city and county officials and community leaders present at this meeting. Mr. Ward asked Mr. Lawyer to either offer proof of these statements or to make a full retraction of all comments made in reference to us. We are still at a loss as to why someone that we don't even know would make such an attack on our business.

We are very appreciative that Mr. Lawyer called Ms. Brown with DEP and told her that this statement was incorrect. We also appreciate Mr. Lawyer's apology to Mr. Ward that this incident had occurred.

We would like to assure each of you that we certainly don't operate in a manner that would endanger the environment. We have been in this repair and service of electric distribution for almost twenty two years and take pride in our environmental record. First let me address the battery issue. The only batteries that we have on site are for truck, automotive and forklift operation. We have never processed or disposed of batteries at this location. Now to the oil issue. I can really make this simple to understand. If we indeed poured oil out as Mr. Lawyer stated, we would not be in business today. There would be a waiting list of, not only environmental agencies, but representatives from many of our customers who would want to close our facility. We are not only permitted and inspected on a regular basis by numerous state and federal agencies, but are also inspected by the environmental departments of many of the major utilities in the Southeastern United States. If we were as careless with our oil handling as this statement insinuated we would not be on the approved vender list of almost every utility in the Southeast.

I suppose what hurts the most by this kind of thoughtless assault on someone, that you don't even know, is how hard our employees work to make our facility one of the best in the country. Proper oil processing and testing is one of our major priorities in our plant operating procedures. Not only that but our expenditures, just for this area of operation, will verify our commitment to this issue. We currently have a plant addition, which cost in excess of one half million dollars

RECEIVED

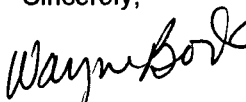
APR 21 1997

April 17, 1997
Page 2.

being constructed primarily for an extra margin of safety and efficiency in the testing, handling and processing of all oil filled equipment received at our plant. We invite you to visit us and see first hand our operation and verify for yourself just what kind of neighbor we are to the community. We consider our public image and reputation to be one of the most valuable assets that we can have, especially if we are viewed by the community as being honest, responsible and a positive contributor to this area.

Thanks for you time and please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, or, better still, if you would like to visit our facility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Bodie", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Wayne Bodie
President

Copies to: Ronnie Bell, Supervisor, Walton County Board of Commissioners
Chet Bush, Private Citizen
Harley Henderson, Mayor, City of DeFuniak Springs, Florida
Gordon Lawyer, Private Citizen
Joe May, Department of Environmental Protection
Jeff Skipper, Private Citizen
Mark Sowell, Department of Environmental Protection
Mike Standley, City Manager, City of DeFuniak Springs, Florida
William A. "Bill" Young, Chairman, Walton County Board of Commissioners