

[The "immaculate" high tech industry is mired in toxic waste and the exploitation of immigrant labor. How long can we ignore the human price?]

How dirty is your computer company?

Ask Rodrigo Cruz.

He was inside a tanker car with a shovel scraping knee-deep sludge toward a drain hole while a defective air supply line to his protective mask slowly suffocated him. He may never fully recover from the resulting brain damage.

Rodrigo Cruz worked for Romic, a toxic recycler on the Peninsula with a host of Silicon Valley companies for clients (see box).

The man he replaced in the tanker car, a more experienced worker who refused to use the leaking air supply patched together with duct tape, was fired.

This wasn't a first for Romic. It's had a history of fires, leaks, spills and explosions since the 1980s.

In the year after Rodrigo Cruz was half-smothered in the tanker car, Cal/OSHA inspectors have found 37 more worker safety violations and levied \$117,485 in fines against Romic.

But that hasn't stopped some of Silicon Valley's biggest names from sweeping their dirt under Romic's rug—with little apparent concern for where it ends up.

That's the dirty underside of Silicon Valley—millions of gallons of toxic chemicals and thousands of workers with no power to protect themselves.

The immaculate campuses that house the Valley's high tech R&D are paradise compared to the assembly lines, chemical transfer sites and toxic incinerators required by the industry.

As long as consumers remain uninformed about the real cost of their PCs, the giants of Silicon Valley can keep on polishing their mirror-bright images. Hostile to unions and with local political leaders unwilling to challenge their economic leverage, these firms simply shuffle safety and environmental burdens onto the Peninsula's immigrant work force and low-income residents least likely to benefit from high tech.



David Bacon

Dumping on East Palo Alto



Twelve miles but a world away from the mansions of silicon CEOs in the Los Altos Hills, East Palo Alto pays the price for the computer boom.

Despite the Information Revolution, the people of East Palo Alto still cannot find out what Romic's around-the-clock toxic handling is doing to their land, water and air.

It has taken intense and persistent pressure from local community groups to force Romic to reveal the most basic information about threats to the working families and fragile wetlands in its shadow.

Romic's Environmental Impact Report is at least 10 years overdue; Romic has been operating on a temporary permit from the state Dept. of Toxic Substances Control since 1991.

To apply the pressure needed to make Romic come clean with its endangered neighbors, please mail the coupons below.

Use the Romic Index

Silicon Valley firms continue to hire Romic Environmental Technologies to cart off their industrial waste. Yet on July 7, 1998, Romic admitted to knowingly violating critical health and safety laws—making it liable for \$105,000 in fines and opening it to criminal investigation. Meanwhile, the E.P.A. has also cited Romic for many violations, including an attempt to falsify documents in the presence of federal officials. Does your computer company use Romic?

Major firms using Romic:

Intel
Hewlett Packard
Linear Tech
National Semiconductor
Seagate
NEC Electronics
Boeing

Major firms not using Romic:

IBM
Apple
Cypress
Texas Instruments
Unisys

Source: U.S. EPA Toxics Release Inventory 1996 Photo by David Bacon

Join us...clean up Silicon Valley.

If Silicon Valley's major firms won't accept their social responsibility, they must be made to do so by a new coalition of workers, Peninsula families, and fully informed consumers.

Computers are ballyhooed as "empowering" technology. But real empowerment comes through old-fashioned means: education, organization, political pressure.

Want to see what's really inside Silicon Valley? Mail the coupons below.

SCCOSH

Santa Clara Center for Occupational Safety and Health

Ujima Security Council (East Palo Alto)
Health WATCH (Workers Acting Together for Change)
Youth United for Community Action (YUCA)
Philippine Workers Support Committee (Hawaii)
Greenaction
Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
Urban Habitat
Earth Island Institute
Asians & Pacific Islanders for Reproductive Health
South Bay Labor Council, AFL-CIO
GABRIELA Network USA
Asian Immigrant Women Advocates (AIWA)
Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition



Raquel Sanchez

Craig Barrett, CEO
Intel Corporation
2200 Mission College Blvd., Santa Clara, CA 95052

Stop doing business with Romic Environmental Technologies, a firm plagued by questionable labor practices and serious health, safety, and environmental violations. As a computer industry leader, take real responsibility for your dangerous manufacturing waste. Intel is the largest supplier of toxic waste to Romic in Silicon Valley. Don't keep shoveling it onto the lowest-wage families.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

James P. Fox
District Attorney's Office
400 Government Center, Redwood City, CA 94063

Romic has admitted that it knowingly violated health and safety laws when it supplied Rodrigo Cruz with an air supply it knew was defective and sent him inside a tanker car. But fines mean little to large corporations. To hold them truly accountable, we believe that Romic should be criminally prosecuted. Please open a criminal investigation immediately.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

SCCOSH
Santa Clara Center for Occupational Safety and Health
760 N. First Street, San Jose, CA 95112

I'm with you. The computer industry has yet to face up to its health and environmental impacts. You've scored victories over the years—eliminating use of mutagenic solvents, for example. Now's the time to force the computer industry to finally grow up. To support your campaign, I enclose:

____\$25 ____\$35 ____\$50 ____\$75 ____\$100 or ____.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

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