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National Environment and Plan-

NEPA Responds Immediately to Waste Oils Dumped in Montego Bay Illegally "Conducting Investigations to Determine Culprits Responsible".



A bird caught in an oil spill.

The National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) is currently conducting an investigation into allegations about the dumping of waste oils illegally in Ironshore, Montego Bay. On Friday, December 14, NEPA received reports that oil had been dumped near a wetland area in the second city.

NEPA initiated a response through the Montego Bay Marine Park which was asked to contact the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM), the Marine Police and Coast Guard and asked for their assistance. The ODPEM with assistance from the Marine Park responded and contained the spill and are now doing a clean up of the area.

NEPA conducted follow-ups at the site on Saturday and is convinced that the spill was caused by unknown person/s. The oil was deposited along the side of the North Coast Highway in the vicinity of the Blue Diamond complex. It made its way to the marine environment via the drainage system of the old main road and through nearby wetlands.

Fortunately, the oil has not been widely dispersed into the marine environment. It has been contained in a man-made channel. Expectations are that the environmental fallout will not be catastrophic, once clean up is complete.

NEPA is presently continuing its investigations along with the assistance of the Island Special Constabulary Force (ISCF), in an attempt to determine the culprits responsible for this disaster. Members of the public who are in possession of information in relation to this activity are invited to contact NEPA at: 754-7540, or our Hotline at: 1-888-991-5005, the nearest police station or 119.

NEPA would like to remind the public that it is the principal regulatory Agency for the management, treatment and disposal of fats, oils and grease (FOGs) but

acts in collaboration with other stakeholder regulatory agencies to educate industry players by guiding them on environmentally acceptable management of FOGs.

The former Ministry of Health developed guidelines for the transportation of septage including FOGs with the involvement of the stakeholders. It is currently drafting regulations to license the septage service providers. The Natural Resources Conservation Authority's Permits and Licences Regulations (2004) require a permit for the construction, operation, maintenance and modification of waste treatment facilities.

And the Winner is!



Award Ceremony for the recent Agency-wide clean up. The Second Floor (at Number 10) won the prize for the cleanest floor.

In photo:

Faith Walker, Senior Secretary, Eco-systems Branch, (left), collects cheque in the amount of ten thousand dollars from Mrs. Wright-Martin, Director, Corporate Management Division.

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Editorial, Christmas Edition



The yuletide season is here...again! This affords us another opportunity to 'pause for cause'. Of course, it is customary to be concerned with issues related to the commercialism of the Season such as buying presents and eating special foods.

However, there is more to the Season than this. Among others, it is also Advent—a time in which we reflect on the real meaning of Christmas, as we awake and become vigilant in our anticipation of the auspicious gift of the coming of the Christ Child.

For those not so inclined, Christmas also affords us the wherewithal to stop and refocus on some of the key areas of emphasis in our professional and personal lives. Many will be using this period as a 'rest stop', to gather their bearings and refuel for the road ahead.

Of course, we are none too aware of this here at NEPA, especially as the mandate for the effective management and protec-

tion of Jamaica's land, wood and water looms as an ever present beacon in this regard. The urgency of the challenge of balancing responsibilities of the nation's business with the exigencies of good governance and proper environmental management are real and pressing.

The recent Two-Tiered Application Processing System Pilot Project and changes to the AMANDA file tracking system are two such measures. Among others, these are aimed at refining efficiency and ensuring improvements in our customer service.

The recent updating of the Human Resources (HR) Procedures Manual is another of the strategies in this regard – all of which, together, will hopefully drive the thrust to increase service capacity and, ultimately, efficiency.

Efforts to plan properly, in terms of budgeting and other activities, for the coming financial year are also important benchmarks in the movement forward. Added to

which, the recent ongoing clean-up will also be a welcomed respite for sapped energies and waning spirits. Congratulations to the Second Floor, at 'Number Ten'. They copped the award for cleanest floor.

So, as we pause and reflect – whether on the gift of the Messiah, or for family, friends and, or needed rest and recreation, the realities are still the same, the coming season urges upon us the need for renewed focus. Let's take the time, then, to utilize this moment to that end. The continued dedication to these goals must become one of the primary rallying points in the coming year.

Best wishes and Seasons Greetings!

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Minutes (On the Road) With...Radiocation!

Somewhere between getting up before dawn, packing boxes, printing and folding endless pieces of paper otherwise known as brochures as well as securing that ever necessary toolkit, **NEPSETTER** decides it is time for a 'road trip'.

But this morning it is more like we *had* to take this excursion. We are off to see and learn about "Radiocation" – Radio Jamaica 94 FM's "education by radio on location" which is broadcast on RJR 94 FM every Friday during the secondary school term from 12:30-5:00 p.m.

NEPA's role is that of the Government agency responsible for educating the youth about current environmental and planning issues in Jamaica. Discussions range from proper watershed management, to deforestation, marine ecology to any and every other related subjects in between.

As a result, we are not really on a sight-seeing project today. In reality, we are also doubling as

the NEPA "Radiocation" team. Our responsibility is to promote key environmental messages to the students...So much for distinctions!

What to do? Well, it is simple really – write a story about 'obligatory Fridays'. And get 'the story' we must! So, we are off! After all, these overlapping responsibilities become increasingly blurred over time.

Today's mission is to learn all we can about "Radiocation", in five minutes. Is it possible? We are not sure, but we will see. So, Patrick Henry, Driver, Reneive Rhoden, Research Assistant and I are off... and running.

It is very slow going. The waterlogged roads we encounter on the way to Portland are equivalent to dutiful traffic marshals in a speed zone deliberately slowing us down on an otherwise cool and peaceful Friday morning.

Many sections of the roads have also had their surfaces completely destroyed after the recent down pour which pummeled the island, especially the parishes of Portland and St. Mary.

Hence, the bad roads and our general feelings of grumpiness!

Reluctantly, we banish from our minds thoughts about sun-kissed Kingston afternoons; this is more like "five *hours*" with Radiocation. The trip is long and arduous. No one is keen on the constant bump and throw of the Pick-Up as it struggles to navigate the rugged terrain of the roadway. But, we are troopers we will survive... somehow!

Half way there – (don't even ask where we are now, because we are tired and just about ready to get out and walk the rest of the way), the insistent cackle of a cell phone sears into our conscious, cutting off our monotonous chatter. This is part of our in-transit entertainment ritual. No, not the cell phone; the conversations which range often from politics, to the environment to entertainment...even taxes.

"*H-b-bello?*" Stammers the almost hoarse voice (too many early mornings and long Fridays). "*(Name), where are you guys? Are you still coming?*" responds the insistent voice emanating from the

5 Minutes With... (On the Road) With...Radiocation!

square-like instrument. It is pleasant though coolly professional. Its owner, no doubt, has also felt the pinch of the long ride into the 'Eastern Outbacks' of Portland. Jamaica is big, no doubt!

"Sure we are! We are at..." the response trails off into description of the sea of greenery which engulfs us. It is hard to see a sign anywhere but we finally locate one and tell our inquisitor where we are.

"Okay then." is the brisk affirmation. And with that the monotone returns as the voice slithers away into the distance and the pesky instrument falls silent once more. The journey continues.

We are still being pushed around by the badly scarred roadway. Surely, this is our comeuppance for failing to heed the warnings which we received earlier from other drivers. Along both sides of us also, streams gush out in happy abandonment, gurgling in mock disregard for the rigours to which we have been subjected.

Splash! The noise of water and marl hastening to meet metal quickly reminds us that these are not just mere puddles which have settled in the gouged out craters we encounter *enroute* to 'Porty'. They are in close competition with the river courses running alongside us.

But, we are troopers. We will survive. At least that is how we console ourselves.

... Finally, we are here! Phew! We do not have to do this again, at least not until another six hours or so. But, the temporary reprieve is welcomed just.

And, so we arrive at Titchfield High School. It sits atop a gentle slope terrain, encircled by a crystalline expanse of blue. This is the Titchfield Peninsula. "*I would love to live here!*" No one can argue with that simple affirmation. Reneve is right. Its picturesque beauty is arresting.

Momentarily, we begin disembarking from the vehicle, happy for the secure grip of terra firma.

Must find a teacher; must find Coleen Douglas, the trusty Radiocaiton Producer. She will tell us where to set up and what to do now that we are here...in the 'Outbacks'.

First, we must find an ideal location for our double boarded displays of Jamaica's marine



"Students assemble at the NEPA booth, during the recent Season of Radiocation. Radiocation is a programme undertaken by Radio Jamaica (Radio 94FM) Limited, in conjunction with a number of corporate sponsors and Government agencies, including NEPA. The forum, aspects of which are broadcast nationally, provides students with an opportunity to learn about various aspects of Jamaican society, including environment and planning issues."

environment. Then, there is the matter of displaying our leaflets and brochures – all of which have been counted and are ready for distribution to the energetic masses.

There is also the small matter of discovering which classroom the students will assemble in for the scheduled talks. Of course, this is before they devolve into the excited gaggle of dancing and merriment occasioned by the RJR broadcast team. All the latest tunes will soon be blaring from strategically positioned speakers. This will, undoubtedly, break the semi calm of an otherwise mundane Portland school day. But, the students are game; they are eager for the distraction. It will get them out of listening to Mr. Edwards' geography lesson and Mrs. James' treatise on proper home management techniques in the Caribbean, at least for today.

So, we get to the business of setting up. "*Yeah, that will work!*" commands the hoarse voice. There is a quizzical look. "*(Name) where are we to put this?*" Even Patrick is in on the set up. *Pop-pop!* Our staple 'gun' is working alright. All of us smile knowingly. No one wants the unlikely task of replacing the staples. That is a job all of its own.

As soon as we finish the students begin to assemble. Some of them also helped to lift the boards up the stairs and into the auditorium and onto the stage where we have taken up residence in the right hand corner. An important vantage point we tell ourselves for targeting young minds eager to learn about the environment.

But, we know better there are many others here today, so it helps to get in early and take control of one of the stronger positions, visually that is. After all, there are no free phone cards here; nor bags or other types of 'freebie' to attract the students' interests.

Our booth is all about reading. We are consoled, however, by the fact that it is one of the fundamentals around which the school system is based. We have discovered though that these youngsters are hardly patient this way.

The many activities involved in the crush of bodies and cacophony of noise and music that ensue shortly means even more work to keep their attention. But we did say we are troopers!

And so, the day rolls on. In between lunch, water and bathroom breaks we have spoken to upwards of six hundred students. Others have chosen to read and talk to each other. After all, the pictures of the sea on the boards are also right outside the window in live, three dimensional textures and tones. They talk with us in between panel discussions about economic opportunities in rural Jamaica, interviews, deejay competitions, elocution and singing contests – all of which have been broadcast nationally by RJR.

We are satisfied though that despite the early mornings and late evenings, the students have learned about the sea as well as methods involved in protecting the Ozone Layer. We did give out instruction manuals. We have even shown videos on the Kingston Harbour and proper watershed management.

Nearing five o'clock we pull down our booth and begin to prepare ourselves for the return leg of the journey. It has been a long day, no doubt. "Radiocation" was clearly more than a five minute affair!

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Bird Shooting Season 2007



This year's Bird Shooting was shortened due to the passage of Hurricane Dean and ran from September 1-23. At the end of an otherwise eventful Season, at least one hunter pleaded guilty under the Wild Life Protection Act (WLPA) and was fined \$35,000.00 or three (3) months imprisonment in the Resident Magistrates Court in Falmouth for shooting protected birds during the 2007 Bird Shooting Season.

The hunter was arrested on Sunday, September 23, the last day of the hunting season, after being found with five (5) protected birds; three (3) Blue-winged Teal, one (1) Great Egret and one (1) Moorhen. In Jamaica, birds are protected under the Wild Life Protection Act; however, the law allows for the hunting of some Game Birds during a prescribed shooting season.

The public is reminded that all illegal shooting or hunting of

protected birds should be reported to NEPA at 754 7540 extension: 2225, 2412 or 2408; or to the local police. The 2007 Bird Shooting Season closed on Sunday, September 23.

NEPA also wishes to remind all Hunters that they are advised to return their Bird Shooting Report Forms to our offices by December 31, before closing time at 1:00 p.m.. Otherwise, a \$5000 processing fee will be applied in instances where forms are not returned. All incomplete forms will be treated as non-returns.

Any Hunter who fails to make a return will not be granted a Hunter's Licence for subsequent Bird Shooting Seasons, until the requisite late processing fee is paid and the returns for the last hunting year (2007) are made.

All returns are either to be made directly to the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA), at 10 Caledonia Avenue,

Kingston 5, or are to be sent by Registered Mail to P.O. Box 207, Kingston 5.

The public is further reminded that it is an offence to shoot birds during the closed Season. Offenders will be prosecuted.

Under the Wild Life Protection Act, it is illegal to shoot protected birds or hunt outside the shooting season. Breaking the law carries a maximum penalty of \$100,000 and or twelve (12) months in prison. In addition, all Hunters' Licences expired at the end of the season.

The Origins of Christmas

While Christmas is usually associated with goodwill, giving, compassion family, good cheer, gifts and food, some persons seem not to be aware of the origins and history of the holiday. Christmas is actually an annual Christian holiday that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ.

The actual celebration of Christmas dates back to 221 AD, with the idea of Jesus' birthday being popularized by Sextus Julius Africanus (a Christian traveler and historian of the 3rd century) in a reference book for Christians. The identification of December 25 as the birth date of Jesus did not at first inspire celebration, as theologians denounced the idea of celebrating the birthday of Jesus, as they believed that only sinners, not saints, celebrate their birthdays. Those however who supported the celebration of Christmas contend that

Christmas is based on the story of Jesus' birth as described in the Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 1:18-2:12) and the Gospel according to Luke (see Luke 1:26-56). It's said that Roman Catholics first celebrated Christmas, then known as the Feast of the Nativity, as early as 336 AD.

The word Christmas is said to have entered the English language around 1050 as the Old English phrase *Christes Maesse*, meaning "festival of Christ." Scholars believe the frequently used shortened form of Christmas—Xmas, may have come into use in the 13th century. The X stands for the Greek letter *chi*, which is an abbreviation of Khristos (Christ), and also represents the cross on which Jesus was crucified.

But, regardless of the controversy surrounding the exact day Jesus was born, Christmas has

become an annual celebration on the Christian calendar. For persons of Roman Catholic and Protestant faiths, Christmas is celebrated on December 25, while Orthodox Christians in countries such as Russia, Ukraine and the Holy Land celebrate the holiday on January 7 as they use the Julian Calendar; others who are of the Armenian Faith celebrate Christmas on January 6.

Sources

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FROM THE "DOC" Centre



Have you ever spent Christmas in a non-Western, non-Christian country? Do you favor Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), or would you like to make a short journey to Christ's place of birth, Bethlehem? No? Yes? Well let's celebrate Christmas in Japan and Jordan this year.

With less than one percent (1%) of Japanese being Christians, December 25th is not a national holiday, however the Japanese are great lovers of festivals including Christmas. The Japanese celebration of Christmas is very commercial and is said to be similar to us Westerners' concept of Valentine Day. For the young at heart it is a time spent with one's boyfriend or girlfriend in a romantic setting. Presents tend to be cute and fancy restaurants and hotels are often booked solid. Older couples attend dinner shows hosted by hotels featuring major singers, actors and actresses. During the season similar to Western countries, Christmas Carols are played, believe it or not in English, there is Santa but only in advertisements, and there are window displays in the stores and malls, Christmas lighting and gift giving among



(Shibuya, Tokyo)

family and friends.

Believe it or not KFC is a favorite during this time. Many Japanese make reservations for their "Christmas Chicken" and line up outside KFC outlets to pick up their orders for dinner. This love for KFC during this time is due to the onslaught of advertising of the restaurant in the country. What about Christmas cake you ask? Well, the Japanese idea of a Christmas cake is not a fruit or rum cake, but a white sponge cake topped with whipped cream and strawberries. This Christmas cake is picked up by the father, (the cakes are bought at the bakery) on Christmas

Eve which is more popular than Christmas Day. The stores try to sell the cakes by Christmas Eve and the price is reduced drastically on December 25th in order to sell them out by the 26th as they are not in great demand after that. There is an expression in

Japan, young unmarried girls twenty-five (25) and under are referred to as "Christmas Cakes" meaning they are marriageable, while girls over the age of twenty-five are regarded as requiring heavy discounts to get married.

Though located in the heart of the Muslim world, December 25th is a public holiday in Jordan, but for Christians only. Approximately, six percent (6 %) of the population is Christian and they celebrate Christmas freely. Have you ever wished that Christmas was more than once per year? Well, if you are in Jordan that would be granted. Jordanians have an extended Christmas sea-

son. Christmas in Jordan is celebrated on three (3) different occasions by the different sectors of Christianity. The first celebration is from December 24th-25th *a-la* Western style in the capital of Jordan, Amman and a traditional Middle Eastern Christmas in the outer villages. The second celebration is on January 6-7 when the Greek Orthodox celebrate their Christmas. The third is on January 18 by the Armenian Community. Although Christmas celebrations seem a bit more subdued than in Japan, in Jordan the traditional Christmas tree is mounted and decorated. The houses are decorated with red and gold lights. Jordanians feast on Grilled chicken with rice which is a traditional dish as well as "Wara Dawle", vine leaves which are folded around rice and meat. Some families attend Christmas Mass after dinner while others go off to parties at hotels which are held both on the 24th and 25th. Christmas in Jordan has an added bonus with it being so close to Christ's place of birth, pilgrimages to Bethlehem is another way to spend your Christmas in Jordan.

The Buzz on Technology: *Christmas shopping...online*

Shopping online offers lots of benefits that you won't find shopping in a store, for example, you can shop online seven days a week, 24 hours a day and the bargains can be numerous online. This phenomenon is simply known as Electronic Commerce (E-Commerce), which is the buying and selling of goods or services on the Internet. The growing popularity of e-commerce is understandable considering the time and hassle involved in running from store to store, searching for an item in the traditional stores. It not only takes valuable time and energy, but gasoline. With today's traffic and high gas prices, shopping online whenever the mood strikes—even in the middle of the night—has unarguable, unbeatable advantages. While e-commerce maybe one of the greatest innovation in the 21st century, users must make every effort to protect themselves while shopping online. When shopping online, it's important to look for privacy and security seals on retailers' sites.

Before entering your personal information, look for a padlock icon on your browser's status bar, or check that the URL begins with https:// -- the "s" is for "secure." You should also read a Web site's privacy policy to find out how it handles your personal information. Beware of crooked deals. Crooks love the holiday season. One prevalent scam this time of year involves promising to deliver hard-to-find items. The odds of getting burned increase when you deal with no-name online merchants.

Your first line of defense is to know the seller. When you buy items on eBay, avoid sellers who have recently received poor feedback from other buyers. Under certain circumstances, PayPal, a subsidiary of eBay, offers a guarantee to buyers who use it to pay for an item.

Though early e-commerce was stunted by security fears, improved technology has made

millions of people worldwide feel comfortable buying online. Seeing the vast potential in e-commerce, most credit card companies helped allay fears by guaranteeing cardholders they will not be held responsible for fraudulent charges as a result of online shopping. All of these factors have helped e-commerce become the booming industry it is today.

Now that you more aware of the of the 'click and buy' syndrome, get out your credit card, go online and purchase your loved one or friend something special so they too can have a merry Christmas.

Source: http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/computers/shoponline/shoponline.htm
<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-e-commerce.htm>





DID YOU KNOW?



Growing Christmas trees provides a habitat for wildlife. Recycled trees have been used to make sand and soil erosion barriers and have also been placed in ponds for fish shelter.

Christmas trees remove dust and pollen from the air.

Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States (1901-

1909) banned the Christmas tree from the United States White House for environmental reasons but relented when he learnt of the industry of commercial farming trees and that no virgin forests were cut down to supply demand during the holiday season.

Recipes for Christmas 2007

Rich Fruit cake

Ingredients

5oz. Margarine	2 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg	1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 1/2 cup brown sugar	1/2 cup bread crumbs
1/4 cup guava jam	2 cups red wine (for soaking fruits)
3 eggs	2 teaspoon cocoa
1 1/2 cups prunes	1 cup brandy
2 cups all purpose flour	1/4 cup crushed peanuts
2 cups raisins	1 cup mixed peel & fruits
1 table spoon dry instant coffee	
12 cup glace cherries	

Directions

1. Combine prunes, raisins, cherries, mixed peel and fruits, wine and brandy.
2. Allow to soak overnight.
3. Cream margarine and sugar until light and fluffy.
4. Add eggs, one at a time
5. Stir in combined coffee, water and jam.
6. Sift flour. Baking powder and mixed spice, fold into batter half at a time
7. Drain fruits and reserve liquid. Add fruits and peanuts to batter half at a time. Mix well.
8. Spread batter into greased lined 9" cake pan. Bake at 300 degrees Fahrenheit for about 2 hours
9. Brush reserved liquid over hot cake, cover and allow it to cool in pan.



Christmas Roaster

Bread stuffing

Allow 3/4 cup stuffing for each pound of ready-to-cook chicken

Ingredients

1/2 cup finely chopped onion
3/4 cup chopped celery
1/2 margarine of butter
4 1/2 cups soft bread cubes
1 tsp. salt
3/4 tsp. dried sage leaves
1/2 tsp. dried thyme leaves
1/4 tsp. pepper

Method: Cook and stir onion and celery in margarine in a 10-inch skillet until onion is tender. Stir in about 1/3 of bread cubes. Place in deep bowl and add remaining ingredients, toss. Stuff chicken just before roasting.

4 1/2 cups stuffing
2 oz. chopped garlic
4 oz. chopped onion
1 oz. chopped sage
Salt to taste
1/2 oz. black pepper
1/2 chopped thyme

Method:

combine all seasoning ingredients in mixing bowl and season the roaster.

Timetable for roasting chicken

Unstuffed - 5-7 lbs. Oven temp. - 325 degrees Fahrenheit
Approximate cooking time - 2.5 -3.5 hrs.
Stuffed - 5-7 lbs. Oven Temp. - 325 degrees Fahrenheit
Approximate cooking time - 2.7-3.75 hrs.

