

Almost everything in a recent WELD article was factually incorrect. *Even the gravestones.*

If you read an article in the August 28 issue of this magazine, or on weldbham.com (“A big hole in the heart of Vincent”) about the siting of a quarry in Vincent, Alabama, **please take just a moment to review the many serious factual inaccuracies it contains.**

Then, draw your own conclusions about who is misleading whom.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

The WELD article would have you believe that our Vincent Hills Quarry will pose a threat to the Birmingham metro area’s drinking water. But the fact is, White Rock has an unblemished record on issues relating to protection of water resources and the environment.

Never once have we had an environmental citation. Not one time in our more than 27 years as a company. Not for water violations, air, or any other environmental category.

The Vincent Hills Quarry will pose no threat whatsoever to any body of water or any drinking water source. Any discharge (having first been treated to stringent standards) will comply with the Clean Water Act and all other applicable laws and regulations, and will be overseen by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

INTERACTION WITH PUBLIC OFFICIALS

The WELD article insinuates that both White Rock, as well as officials from the Town of Vincent and Shelby County “robbed and cheated” homeowners in the area. This allegation is libelous, and is completely and utterly baseless.

There is not one shred of evidence that either White Rock or any public official, whether elected or appointed, did anything wrong. In fact, when quarry opponents filed an ethics complaint alleging just that, the Alabama Ethics Commission rejected it. **The Commission found that neither White Rock nor the official who was falsely accused did anything illegal or unethical.**

WELD implies that a landowner who sold her land to White Rock had influence over the rezoning of the land, but once again WELD is factually incorrect.

The article says, “Robbie Green was a voting member of the Vincent Planning and Zoning Commission that would approve the proposal for the White Rock quarry.” Yet, Ms. Green had resigned from the Commission, not just before the vote on the White Rock zoning took place, **but even before it was brought before the Commission.**

PROTECTION OF GRAVESITE

WELD claims White Rock’s operations pose a threat to a gravesite “under the site of the proposed quarry.”

This is simply not true. And WELD knowingly misled its readers to make its cover story more sensationalistic.

Before White Rock purchased the land, nothing was being done to protect the gravesite. In fact, it was used as a cow pasture. Once the presence of the gravesite became known, White Rock hired an archeologist, in consultation with the Alabama Historical Commission, to conduct a scientific survey of the site.

We then fenced off the gravesites to protect them, and **we have completely redesigned the plans for our holding ponds to ensure they remain away from the graves.**

When operations begin at the Vincent Hills Quarry, we will erect a permanent fence around the gravesite, and provide access so that anyone who wishes to visit the graves may do so freely—even though no one is known to have visited the graves for at least three decades.



To make matters worse, WELD chose to use the photograph of the above gravestones to illustrate its article, despite the fact the writer knew that the graves in question were unmarked. **The gravestones pictured in the article are not even on White Rock’s property, and the writer knew it.** What does that tell you about the overall truthfulness of his article?

RACIAL EQUALITY

Perhaps the most troubling falsehood in the WELD article is the charge that White Rock discriminated against property owners on the basis of race. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

For starters, WELD claims, without any evidence whatsoever, that “The area is populated mostly by black residents.” But the latest U.S. Census data provided by the Environmental Protection Agency on their website (see bit.ly/VincentEPA), shows that is simply false.

According to the U.S. Census, in the area within three miles of the quarry, 73% of the residents are white. Only 23% are African-American.

WELD also alleges that White Rock chose not to purchase land from black property owners, **but the fact is White Rock bought land based solely on the location of the geological, high-quality limestone seam and two existing main rail lines** for product distribution to customers. If the property was over those kind of limestone reserves or necessary for the quarry’s operation, White Rock sought to purchase it. If not, White Rock did not buy it. Period.

White Rock most certainly did not and does not discriminate on the basis of race. **Our company’s history on the issue of race relations is exemplary,** and we bitterly resent WELD’s unsubstantiated charges to the contrary.

DEMOCRACY IN VINCENT

WELD asks, “...how did these city officials remain in office...?”

The answer is simple. **They were re-elected by a majority of the citizens who voted in the Town’s recent election. And, they were re-elected after the majority voted to approve the quarry** (and bring over new 100 local jobs to Vincent).

Would this outcome have been possible if, as WELD would have you believe, a majority of town residents opposed the quarry?

TRUCK ROUTE

WELD says the truck route used by the quarry would “take trucks through residential areas of Vincent, specifically through River Loop.”

This, too, is factually inaccurate. **The River Loop is not on the truck route.** Again, what does that tell you about the author’s truthfulness? The writer also studiously ignores the fact that **95% or more of the rock shipments will travel by rail** rather than in trucks.

WHY WE BOUGHT THIS AD

White Rock is a family-owned company, and we take threats to our reputation very seriously. Our company and our good name are one and the same.

That’s why White Rock paid for this space to set the record straight. And why we are grateful to you for taking the time to allow us to point out the unmistakable bias of WELD in reporting on this matter, as well as their numerous factual inaccuracies.

ROCK SOLID FACTS ABOUT VINCENT HILLS



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