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LETTERS

Goschka owes DEQ apology

Editor, The News:

The Saginaw News ran an article, "Legislators, DEQ spat over brochure," Aug. 8, recounting state Sen. Michael Goschka's accusation that a Department of Environmental Quality employee had sent out a "rogue" brochure on dioxin contamination to homeowners along the Tittabawassee River without the knowledge of his supervisors or DEQ management.

The accusation is not true.

The real story is that DEQ management approved sending the brochure in June 2003 to help residents protect themselves and their families from exposure to dioxin. This was communicated to Sen. Goschka, but he refused to accept the truth and claimed the DEQ was trying to "put lipstick on a pig."

It is not unusual for the DEQ to be criticized for doing its job. The law requires that we make difficult decisions, which rarely please everyone. Sen. Goschka may disagree with the depart-

ment's decision to issue the brochure, but his "lipstick on a pig" comment was totally inappropriate.

In making that statement, Sen. Goschka demeaned the integrity of the entire DEQ staff. For that, he owes them an apology.

In my career I have had the good fortune of working in both the private and public sectors, and I can honestly say that I have never worked with colleagues of higher integrity, dedication and professionalism than the staff and management of the DEQ. Virtually every day that employees come to work they face adversity and conflict with composure, objectivity and fairness.

Rather than impugn their integrity, Sen. Goschka owes the DEQ staff a debt of gratitude for the outstanding public service they provide to Michigan's citizens.

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