

11-14-1988

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Recommended Citation

"Inventors of Solar Incineration Technique Win UD's Top Research Award" (1988). *News Releases*. 5113.
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The University of Dayton

News Release

INVENTORS OF SOLAR INCINERATION TECHNIQUE WIN UD'S TOP RESEARCH AWARD

DAYTON, Ohio, November 14, 1988--The University of Dayton has bestowed its top research award to two environmental scientists in the Research Institute who devised a way to destroy hazardous waste through solar-powered incineration.

Barry Dellinger, group leader of the environmental sciences group, and John Graham, research engineer and 1980 UD graduate, were named co-recipients of the 1988 Wohlleben/Hochwalt Award at a luncheon on Nov. 14. Endowed by the late Carroll Hochwalt, the award recognizes outstanding professional research at UD. Dellinger, of Washington Twp., and Graham, of Kettering, will share the \$1,000 award.

The two spent nearly four years in the laboratory to develop a solar concentration technique to destroy toxic wastes to efficiencies greater than 99.9999 percent--a target that meets all and exceeds most federal hazardous waste disposal standards. Field tests conducted in Las Cruces, N.M., over the summer showed that toxic wastes, such as dioxins and PCBs, could be destroyed in a matter of seconds by using highly concentrated sunlight as an energy source.

Experts say their research, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Energy's Solar Energy Research Institute (SERI), holds promise as a practical solution to the multi-billion-dollar problem of safely cleaning up the nation's Superfund toxic waste sites. The technique has been featured in "Business Week," "Chemical Week" and numerous daily newspapers. Dellinger and Graham, who now plan to build a small pilot unit to treat soil, have received \$330,000 in research contracts and \$230,000 in equipment grants to finance the research. At least one company, VEDA, Inc., of Alexandria, Va., has expressed an interest in commercializing the technology.