

REGIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

■ PROVIDENCE

Judge finds schools in contempt: A Superior Court judge recently found city and school officials in contempt of court for failing to provide copies of environmental reports and nurse logs to a group of parents who filed a 1999 lawsuit alleging that the Springfield school site was unsafe.

Judge Michael A. Silverstein signed the contempt order after a May 21 hearing. During the hearing, the plaintiffs — the Hartford Park Tenants Association and individual parents — alleged that the city would not give them copies of monthly nurse logs or quarterly reports detailing the result of environmental testing done at the site of the Springfield Elementary and Middle School complex.

The 10-acre site became the subject of controversy after neighbors questioned whether it would be safe for schools to be built atop a former municipal landfill.

While an environmental firm hired by the city did find low levels of lead, arsenic and petroleum compounds in the soil, those contaminants would be contained by a DEM-approved remedial plan implemented by the city. The plan called for contractors to put down two-to-four feet of clean soil and install a gas-extraction system in the ground beneath the schools, to allow for monitoring of potentially hazardous gases.

Finding no evidence of immediate danger, the judge allowed the elementary school to open