

11 7A

# Toxic-gas firm gets court to block order to shut down

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO — A La Mesa chemical firm denied an operating permit because of the potential for a catastrophic accident like the one that killed thousands of people in India averted a possible shutdown with a court order.

Phoenix Research Corp., a subsidiary of Union Carbide, obtained a temporary restraining order Mon-

day against the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District, citing the economic harm from the permit denial and questioning whether the action was within the district's jurisdiction, company president Randall Kelley said.

A Jan. 22 Superior Court hearing was scheduled on the company's request for a preliminary injunction against the air-pollution control district.

Phoenix Research can continue normal operations while the temporary order is in effect, said Richard Sommerville, an officer for the pollution control district.

The agency rejected Phoenix Research's permit application Dec. 31, saying the company failed to show it could adequately safeguard the public if an accident occurred.

"There are documents on file with the court and with the APCD

that dispute that, based on solid scientific review," Kelley said. "We've operated safely for 13 years here."

The company manufactures highly toxic arsine and phosphine gases, which are used in the manufacture of silicon chips for the electronics industry. Exposure to the gases can be lethal.

La Mesa city officials last year asked the company to relocate,

fearing a chemical accident in the densely populated area would cause many deaths.

Phoenix Research promised to move, but its proposed relocation to rural Washougal, Wash., met with resistance from residents there. Kelley said the firm still wants to move to Washington state and is preparing environmental impact reports for review by the Washington Department of Ecology.

were ready for testing, B said.

"The document implies thrax was in the bombs, but tedly it doesn't say that ex, Bernstein said Tuesday.

The 5,000 bombs, Bernst were only to be the first si from a plant in Vigo Cour Terre Haute, Ind., that was up to making 250,000 bomb

British scientists estima the 5,000 bombs in the origi could be carried to Germar planes and kill all life in square-mile area. A small is Scotland, Gruinard, where experiments were carried c in the war is still uninhabit