

# Water rate increase threatens suburbia

By STEVE BARNABY  
Farmington editor

City of Farmington residents could be socked with a 305 per cent increase in water rates because of a legal battle raging between Detroit's Mayor Coleman Young and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

That's the word from Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman, who told city council this week that the federal government is demanding that Detroit either correct current water pollution violations or pay the sewer

system's share of a pending \$170 million federal grant.  
The present sewer rate structure doesn't provide sufficient revenues to correct the current water pollution violations or to pay the sewer system's share of the grant.  
Hence, Young wants to negotiate with the 76 suburban communities using the system for a rate increase.  
"The suburban users of the system could have to construct their own sewer treatment plants, as they wouldn't be permitted to ship their water to Detroit," Deadman warned. That would happen if Detroit fails to improve the system or if the state of

Michigan revokes Detroit's operating permit.

THE STATE ALREADY revoked the system's license once, but reinstated it when some improvements were made, said Deadman.  
Young is asking for a 30 cent hike per thousand gallons to alleviate the situation. This rate increase would provide approximately \$88 million.  
George Alexander, EPA regional director, says Detroit rates are one of the least expensive in the country. Today, the charge is 16 cents per thousand gallons. The national average is 72 cents.

For the water user, this means an increase from 91 cents per thousand cubic feet in the City of Detroit to \$3.75 cents. In Oakland County, the current \$1.94 charge per thousand cubic feet would be raised to \$4.94.  
This would raise the total city charge from a planned \$108,000 this year to \$405,000, approximately a 305 per cent increase.  
Detroit must prove it can provide 20 per cent of the federal matching funds by Sept. 30, or the federal funds for improvement of the system will be lost to Detroit.  
"The money could be reallocated to

other states and then we would have to come up with the \$170 million in addition to the increase," said Deadman.  
Young, said Deadman, fears that if he imposes an increase, some suburban communities may seek legal recourse. That would prevent an increase from going into effect until after the Sept. 30 deadline.  
Young has laid out three options which he could take to deal with the problem.  
"Detroit could enact an emergency rate increase, risking a lawsuit from suburban users, delaying the deadline past Sept. 30.

"Detroit and suburban users could enter into a consent decree from the federal courts on a negotiated rate increase sufficient to properly operate the sewer system and to sell the necessary bonds to acquire the federal funds to complete the project."  
"Detroit could do nothing and let the federal and state courts find it in violation of EPA rules in which case the courts would order a rate increase which the court deemed necessary to correct the situation."  
A meeting will be conducted later this month between suburban users and the City of Detroit in an attempt to settle the crisis.

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## Parish worker fights elderly stereotypes

There are 40 years between becoming a senior adult and celebrating a centennial. That large expanse of years is afflicted with almost as many generalizations and stereotypes.  
"I enjoy all kinds of seniors and one of my chief concerns about them is that people tend to generalize about them the way they do to most minorities," said Sister Claire Nicolai, 62. Sister Claire works with senior citizens through Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church, Farmington Hills.  
Stereotyping helps younger residents decide what a senior would enjoy or need without asking the older person for advice. Persons tend to find it difficult to perceive senior adults as individuals, according to Sister Claire.  
"Among the errors made by persons who are working with senior adults is that we're not treated as adults who know what we want and need. They do things that senior adults wouldn't enjoy," she said.



SISTER CLAIRE NICOLAI

FOR SISTER CLAIRE, a prime example of this is the concern over senior housing.  
"Senior adults want to stay in their own homes. They don't want to be put into a nursing home. They want to stay where they are," she said.  
Some seniors would like to stay in their homes but are forced by increasing property assessments or rising rents to move to another place.  
Freeing property assessments for seniors to the amount that was charged the year they retired would help homeowners who live on a fixed income, Sister Claire suggested.  
Rising rents are a serious concern to apartment complex tenants who live on a fixed income.  
"I don't foresee something to be done to help those who have had their rents raised by \$40-\$60. I'm in constant contact with pan-stricken senior adults who don't know what they'll do if their rent goes up again," she said.  
It was a deep concern about money

ty of senior adults through her second career as a parish worker. She taught business education in high school until 1970.  
"I wasn't strongly into this kind of thing until 1971, when I came into contact with more and more seniors. Originally, I was to work with seniors in the parish, but that has expanded.  
Her work takes her to Oak Hill Nursing Home, its annex and Whitehall Nursing Home. She administers communion to shut-ins and visits Baptist Manor to conduct prayer meetings.  
IN ADDITION, she is part of the senior adults group at Our Lady of Sorrows.  
She visits many of the seniors in the area who are living in apartments.  
"When I go to the Gathering Place all the seniors look so happy. I do the hustle and the alley cat with them. It's fun. I've liked dancing since the year one," she said.  
"But then the homebound seniors are so lonely," she added.  
Society emphasizes the young and forgets the old. Fashionable senior adults read through magazines that feature only young models.

that forced one elderly woman to cut back on her medication. Her health began to waiver, but her husband assured Sister Claire that his wife's condition would soon improve.  
"She should have been taking four pills. But they were worried about the money so for a while she was only taking one a day."  
"THEY COST 25 cents each and they were worried about their money. She began to take all four, again, eventually," she said.  
While conceding that senior adults would rather live in their homes, she sees a vital need for senior citizen apartments and supervised living conditions.  
"There are waiting lists at Marion West and Baptist Manor. These things are true. We haven't just made them up," she said.  
Besides housing, senior adults need to be needed. The expertise of a lifetime is abandoned by younger society when a senior retires, according to Sister Claire.  
"We can use the expertise of seniors who are retired doctors and lawyers," she said.  
She comes into contact with a varie-



It's a honey of a hobby

Gerald Judge holds a scoreful of the Italian bees that he raises on his Farmington Hills property. He estimates he has 2 1/4 pounds of bees hanging out the screen. To learn more about Judge and his little winged friends, turn to Page 3A. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

## Legal, ethical guidelines posed Board eyes financial statements

By LYNN ORR

Farmington area residents may soon see the Watergate backlash filter down to the local level.  
Election to the school board may require disclosures concerning personal data as well as business associations and real estate holdings in the district if the Farmington School Board adopts policies similar to those submitted by Trustee Michael Spiece.

Board members voted 4-2 at Tuesday's meeting to consider policies on both financial disclosure and conflict of interest. Trustees Mervyn Ross and Gary Lichtman cast the dissenting votes.  
Two policies submitted by Spiece were not adopted at the meeting, but board members passed two resolutions expressing a need for similar policies. Spiece's policies will be returned to the policy committee for further study. The committee will be studying guidelines for both board members and administrators.  
The state legislature is concerned about ethics involved in local politics, according to Spiece, and he suggested adopting guidelines before the legislature imposed its own suggestions.  
"The purpose of this is not to accuse anyone or note a lack of integrity," he said. "We're trying to establish guidelines. If the board doesn't act, the state may act for them, and we may not like what it decides."  
"I don't like the potential innuendoes this reflects," Ross said in explaining his opposition to the policies.  
"I'm going to vote 'no' on principle. This is infringing on my personal rights. My income is not derived from the school district."

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board "When the reputation of elected officials as a group is at or near the lowest ebb even steps like this have to be considered."  
Vice-president William Gravus, acting president in the absence of Anne Struble, surprised the board members by voting to formulate the policies because he had earlier expressed his disapproval of the matter.  
"If this board passes a policy of this nature, I will not conform to the board policy," Gravus had said. He did not reveal why he changed his mind.  
Attorney Robert Kelly said he did not see a need for such policies in the district.  
"I think it's a lot of baloney," he said. "I have never seen any conflict of interest or anything else or a nickel taken. The ones that are going to cheat don't care what they sign or what they file. I think you're going to keep a lot of people from running for office because they're not going to make these statements."

## Crime down; weather, jobs help out

Bad weather and an improved employment atmosphere are factors suggested by City of Farmington Public Safety Director Daniel Byrnes for an overall decrease in reported crime for the first three months of this year compared to the same period last year.  
Byrnes presented his quarterly report at this week's city council session, noting that major crimes reported in Farmington registered a 35 per cent decline.  
Farmington, he said, is joining the rest of Oakland County which has seen a reduction in major crimes which include murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny over \$50 and auto theft.  
Oakland County Sheriff's Department figures show that major crimes were decreased by 14 per cent.  
"In south Oakland County, the decrease is even more dramatic at 22 per cent," Byrnes told the council.  
"Speculating on the reason for these decreases, we would think that the lower rate of unemployment coupled with a very long, cold winter were contributing factors," he said.  
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT was the only major crime which increased; incidents were up from one last year during this time span to two this year.  
Property stolen dropped from 627, and 1189 to 622, 1191 this year.  
Overall larcenies increased from 80 incidents last year to 117 this year.  
Larcenies include shoplifting, larceny

from motor vehicles, motor vehicle parts and accessories, bicycles, and larceny from buildings.  
Less serious offenses, which include vandalism, registered an increase because of a three-person windshield smashing spree at the beginning of the year. In that case, 32 different incidents were reported, boosting the vandalism rate from 49 offenses in 1976 to 83 in the first quarter of 1977.  
Accidents have decreased by 12 per cent this year, with 183 being recorded last year and 160 for the first three

months of this year. Decreases were seen in private property accidents (99 this year, 109 last year), and private property accidents (119 this year, 38 last year).  
The only accident category to log an increase was non-fatal injuries which jumped from 36 last year to 43 this year, a 19 per cent increase. No fatalities have been recorded.  
BECAUSE OF elimination of the two-man traffic enforcement bureau, Byrnes noted, violation tickets issued have decreased by 25 per cent, from

579 last year to 728 this year. Byrnes cited the same reason for a 42 per cent drop in written warnings, with traffic warnings decreasing from 671 last year to 389 this year and ordinance warnings decreasing from 60 last year to 51 this year.  
As a crime-fighting deterrent, Byrnes hope his newly instituted citizen band radio Community Observation Patrol Service (COPS) will be effective. Currently, he told council, more than 100 persons are participating.

## Film festival seeks entries

Media activists, attention. The Fourth Annual Orchard Ridge Film Festival Contest is ready to judge your entry.  
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Prizes will be awarded and the winning films screened on June 17 at 8 p.m. on the campus.  
Contest categories are best film of show, color, black and white, the Abel Luz Memorial Prize for best silent film comedy, drama, documentary, videotape and best junior filmmaker.  
Prizes include film books donated by Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.; Atheneum Publishers; Farrar, Straus and Giroux; Holt, Reinhart, and Winston; MacMillan Publishing; Prentice Hall; Oxford University Press and Random House.  
OTHER PRIZES include film equipment from Beckert Camera and a \$25 gift certificate in each category from the Classic Movie Center, Farmington.  
The panel of judges will include

Steve Barnaby, editor of the Farmington Observer; Bob Handley, of the Detroit Film Collective; Vic Hurwitz, Channel 4 producer-director and independent filmmaker; Ken Krato, news-film director at Channel 2; John Mason, assistant professor of film at Wayne State University; and Dan McCosh of Ward's Automotive Reports, who has written extensively about films as well as automobiles and business affairs.  
The panel also includes Doreen Matthews, a Farmington film editor and her husband Matt a film producer-director; Bill Saltzger, Channel 50 production manager; and Wallace Smith, who teaches cinematography, broadcasting, and theater at the Orchard Ridge campus.

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