# Suburbs can pay for, but not control, sewers

Frustration!
Suburban officials used the word
often in meetings last week as they
found their federal aid for sewer construction of off.

Agency is returned protection
Agency is returned by the service of the
funds for sewers in West Bloomfield
and Aven townships, along with a
dozen other local units, while it takes
the City of Detroit to cour to force
improvements in its Jefferson Avenue
sewage treatment plant.

the City of Detroit to commitment of the City of Detroit to commitment of the City of the

per cent to help pay for improve-ments to Detroit's treatment plant. (The actual retail percentage increase to the homeowner, however, is ex-pected to be less than that.)

MEANWHILE, Cakland County MEANWHILE, Oakland County Drain Commissioner George Kuhn, well known for his frequent political battles with Detroit, was preparing his own move to get an outside in-vestigation of, and regional control over, Detroit's water and sewer de-

vestignation of, and regularity convertible of the convertible of the

issue aired." Among them:

\*Ask the federal district court to put the Detroit system into a receivership.

\*Seek a court order for, and legislative approval of, a Southeastern Michigan Wastewater Treatment Ausbortty to replace the Detroit plant's armsmanaged and deteriorating." said Kuhn. "It's operating at only 50 per cent of capacity.

"It's a series of borror stories: Their purchasing policies—it takes three months to get anything; their personnel—they have to work through Detroit's civil service, and they cam' get good help; their training programs—they just don't have trained persons to operate the plant.

"Why tack on \$200 million (the amount estimated to improve the Jef-

tive Daniel T. Murphy sent the proposal to committee.)

RUBH AND DEPUTY Drain Commissioner Robert Prederichs, an attorney, could task for any one of a number of options to "get the whole sase aired." Among them:

«Auk the, federal district court to get the very careful.

«Seek a court order for, and legislative approval of, a Southeastern Michigan Wastewater Trestment Authority to replace the Detroit-run department as manager.

igan will go to other states, said Alexander.
Asked by West Bloomfield's Doberty if it wouldn't be the lesser of
two evils to advance the subur's its
sewer funds so that it would cases polluting local lakes, Alexander replies!
"From an environmental standpoint, that argument carries a lot of
weight. But from a legal standpoint, it
doesn't carry much weight. I can't
sign off those grants or I'li go i jail,
and I don't want to go to jail."

KUHN'S AND Fredericks' tactic of intervening on the side of the govern-ment could have other legal implica-tions.

Kuhn suspects Detroit Meyer man Young may seek to have unban customers drawn that was as co-defendants with the chystuation, the suburbs would paying whatever fines were the city and take a back seek at my waster consent derive the stated by EPA and Detroits.

On the other hand, by size on the side of EFA, kidns word on the side of EFA, kidns word one a co-plaintiff, perhaps and the suburbs' being fined for Jacks' mismanagement of the tripplant, and be in a positive vestigate aggressively for and management, of this positive and management, of this positive control of the positive control of the

### System serves region

## 3 water board reforms talked up

Several plans are afoot by which suburban customers of Detroit's water and sewer department could have a voice in the management and rate-setting procedures they have been complaining about for years. The department is governed by a seven-member board—four Detroiters

and three suburbanites—all appointed by Mayor Coleman Young and all re-movable by him, with no fixed term of office.

In such a setting, the board mem-bers have the status of administrative

political appointees.

At present, the board is down to

by Westwood
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Sale 15%

five members, two suburbanites having quit with blasts at the administration.

ONE LEGISLATIVE plan for restructuring has been reported out of a State House of Representatives committee in Larsing.

The work of State Rep. John Bentite OF-Refford), it would set up a nine-member water board with five appointed and removable by the mayor and four appointed by an "assembly of governments" of suburban customers.

Such a plan passed the house last

semony of governments" of suburban customers.

Such a plan passed the house last year but ded in the senate. Bennett says it has a better chance this year.

A SECOND plan is being advanced by Golden's being advanced by Golden's being advanced by Golden's being a plan to be the senate of the sena

If Bennett is having a hard time getting his rather modest change through the legislature, the chances of Kuhn's plan being passed are far more remote.

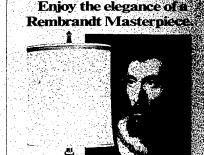
FINALLY, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, plodding laboriously through a maze of committees and public meetings, is sisting dozens of different ways to manage water quality in the seven-county region.

water quality in the sever-county region.

The contender would be a twotiered arrangement, with SEMCOG appointing a regional Water Quality
Board to do regional planning and
monitoring of wast disposal, and
with local authorities continuing to operate their own systems.

Still another possibility no SEMCOG's list would be a single planning
and operating authority. No one is
touting it politically, but the plan not
far far from what Kuhn is advocating—except for one important detail:
Kuhn assigns SEMCOG no role.

Pro-SEMCOG people see that organization as the only one with the strucdure, experience and outlook to manage it.



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Area dentists group

Three Oakland County dentists have been elect-ed officers of the 4,400-member Michigan Den-tal Association (MDA).

Dr. James R. Lyons of Lathrup Village is the new president; Dr. James V. Barone of West Bloomfield, presi-dent-elect; and Dr. Wil-liam Travis of Birming-ham vice-president

head state

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