

# Oakland speeds pothole repairs

Road repair efforts to cope with potholes and other damage resulting from a long, wet winter have been stepped up by the Oakland County Road Commission.

"Maintenance crews have been authorized additional overtime to get the work done as quickly as possible," said road commission chairman John R. Gnau Jr.

"Patching of potholes, road base repairs, addition of gravel and slag to unpaved roads and grading have been allocated \$385,000 more than the \$1.1 million originally budgeted for fiscal 1986 — a 35 percent increase," he said.

THE ADDITIONAL funding is made possible by larger-than-ex-

pected fund balances at the end of fiscal 1985 and revenues from state-collected vehicle fuel and licensing taxes being greater than expected thus far in fiscal 1986, said Gnau.

Roadways suffered heavy damage this year for several reasons: heavy November rainfall, early onset of winter freezing, more snowfall than usual, a longer period of freezing conditions, prior deterioration of the roadways and, on unpaved roads particularly, heavy travel during the spring thaw.

Pavements have deteriorated because of road funding shortfalls during the early 1980s. It wasn't possible to resurface at a pace necessary to overlay excessive cracking.

**'Maintenance crews have been authorized additional overtime to get the work down as quickly as possible.'**

— John R. Gnau Jr.  
road commission chairman

THE CRACKS catch water, which freezes, expands, breaks the pavement edges so that material is pushed or thrown out — leaving potholes. The more cracks, the more water, the more freeze-thawing — the more potholes.

Unpaved roads rut when vehicles use them while extremely wet. The first warm weather in spring turns ice at the very top to water, but it takes longer for lower layers to be thawed. Until the frost is entirely out, the surface water cannot seep down and away.

This winter, 20 inches of November rainfall saturated the ground and was frozen in place even before snow fell. Then the winter added 50 inches of snow — compared to the usual 40 inches. Roadways simply could not dry out fast enough.

THE ROAD commission decided last fall to increase levels of snow and ice control on its roads, particularly subdivision streets, in the winter of 1985-86.

"We determined to provide service to subdivision streets the same way or by the following day whenever possible, even if it meant doing them at overtime costs," said Gnau.

"The cost of subdivision street snow and ice control soared by 50.4 percent compared to the previous year, compared to only 0.5 on other county local roads, 16.9 percent on county primary and 15.2 percent on state trunklines. But we feel it was worth it," said Gnau.

"We increased funding of county road snow and ice control by \$385,032 to \$3.1 million this year," Gnau said.

## Pollution grants stuck in logjam — Blanchard

Federal funds for four suburban water pollution control projects are stuck in a congressional logjam, Gov. James J. Blanchard said.

In a letter to Michigan congressmen, Blanchard said he prefers the House version of Clean Water Act construction grants because it is more generous, by \$87 million over five years, than the Senate formula.

The suburban projects that could proceed if Congress renews the Clean Water Act grants and their amounts are:

- Oakland County Evergreen-Farmington sewer, \$29.2 million.
- Wayne County — South Huron

- Valley sewer, \$9.1 million.
- Ecorse Creek Drain District, Lincoln Park, \$18.5 million.
- Wayne County, upgrading of Wyandotte sewage treatment plant, \$6 million.

Without congressional action, Blanchard said, the only project that can proceed this season will be the \$17.7-million Wayne County-North Huron Valley sewer.

The deadlock, he said, threatens to expose 149 Michigan communities to a mid-1988 federal deadline to meet pollution control standards with neither federal nor state aid.

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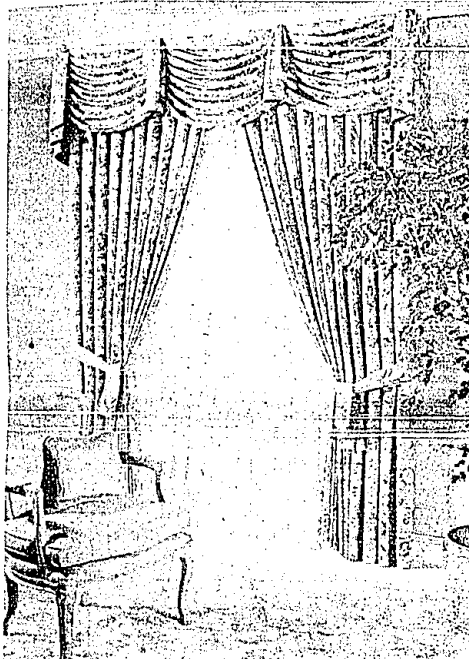
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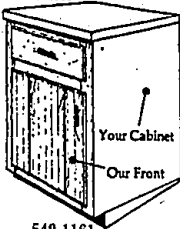


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