

# Sewer system improvement in works

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pected to pay for the majority of construction costs of an additional sewerage line, called the North Hamilton relief line, that would have been used to provide extra capacity for sewage from the suburban communities on the way to the Detroit Department of Water and Sewerage System for treatment.

What will happen to the North Hamilton relief line is still undetermined. Whether the Evergreen-Farmington system will pay for the relief line is an important question that remains to be answered.

But in the overall scheme of sewerage improvements, the word is still go for the Evergreen-Farmington project.

County and city officials are confident the EPA will come through with financing in the form of a 55-percent matching grant, available under the Clean Water Act.

The EPA's interest in the project and willingness to provide financing has been sparked by environmental damage caused to the Rouge River by overflowing sewage from suburban communities.

Though 16 communities are involved in the Evergreen-Farmington system, Farmington Hills and Southfield have had the greatest sewage problems and will pay the greatest local share to improve the system.

THE BASIC problem is overloaded sanitary sewer lines. Because

there has been nowhere to put the overflow, diluted sewage has seeped into homeowners' basements, backyards and eventually into the Rouge.

In Farmington Hills, the Kendallwood subdivision, along 12 Mile, between Orchard Lake and Farmington roads, has had more than its share of sewage problems.

Sanitary sewage lines are overloaded and don't have the capacity for the amount of sewage pumped through the lines on the way to Detroit for treatment.

To ease the problem, Oakland County pumps overflowing sewage into the Mijon Pond Drain, which empties into the Rouge.

"(basement and backyard flooding) doesn't happen as frequently as it used to because now it's being pumped into the (Minnow Pond) drain sooner," Blasell said.

But occasionally flooding still occurs, especially when heavy rains fall.

Evergreen-Farmington improvements will alleviate Kendallwood's problems. A large underground storage facility will be built behind Dunkel Middle School, on 12 Mile, between Farmington and Orchard Lake roads.

The storage facility will release sewage at a controlled rate into the lines that will carry it on its way to Detroit. Relief lines will also be built in the Kendallwood subdivision to provide additional capacity to the existing lines.

THIS PROJECT, plus improvements in Southfield, near Eight Mile and Berg Road, comprise the first of two improvement segments in the Evergreen-Farmington system.

Of the total \$44 million project, the EPA will pay 55 percent of about \$22 million (though not all improvements in the project are grant eligible). Southfield and Farmington Hills will pay the remaining share.

Farmington Hills, which will receive the greatest benefit from the first segment, will pay \$7.7 million and Southfield \$4.5 million. The total local cost for the first segment is \$12.3 million.

The second segment again addresses overloaded sewerage lines.

Capacity will be added to a major sewer interceptor. A relief line north I-666, near Middlebelt, and continuing through Southfield to Eight Mile, will be constructed.

An additional outlet/relief line will be built that will tie into the Middlebelt Interceptor. This outlet will relieve sewage backup in the Middlebelt sewer and, in turn, relieve some of the problems that the Lincolnshire subdivision, south of 11 Mile, east of Middlebelt, has experienced.

Improvements will help Lincolnshire homeowners. But improvements would still be required within the subdivision to totally alleviate problems, Blasell said.

FOR THE second \$10 million segment, Farmington Hills will pay \$2.3 million and Southfield, \$12.3 million.

It's still undetermined how Farmington Hills will pay for its local share of Evergreen-Farmington improvements. At a Farmington Hills City Council study session in November, council and administrators discussed the possibility of increasing consumer sewer charges and tap

fees to help pay the city's bill.

Other Oakland County communities — Birmingham and West Bloomfield Township, for example — will pay Southfield and Farmington Hills as they take advantage of additional capacity created by improvements in the Evergreen-Farmington system. Other communities must make local improvements though before taking advantage of additional capacity.

Though financing for the first segment of improvements is pretty much in place, financing for the second segment is still in question.

## She's battling against chemical abuse

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"One of the most important messages that society has given, is that you can't have a party without drugs," she said. "It's the responsibility of parents, police, schools and the community, it's trying to change the attitude of people. Kids don't even consider the illegality."

Families are the key to helping a child or teen with a problem, Nicolay said. She has the support of her own family — one daughter who is

a senior at Arizona State, another son who is a junior at Miami of Ohio, another married son and her husband and high school sweetheart who has supported her efforts throughout the past few years.

In her 28 years of living in the Farmington area, Nicolay has noticed changes in the way society treats young people. Today, students expect "instant gratification; you should never feel down," she said. "It does make you stop and

think: Your kids look at it (alcohol) as a necessary part of their lives. Alcohol makes everything better."

Teens use drugs differently than in the 1970s when hallucinogens were, she said, "There is still a problem today; I see it as a different type of problem. It's the attitude that it's no big deal anymore."

ANOTHER DRUG problem facing today's society, according to Nicolay, is that "some parents of adolescents are (drug) users. They

don't understand" when their own child has problems.

Nicolay is a woman who at one time considered herself shy.

"I used to be petrified to get up in front of people," she said.

Today, she talks with anyone, if she feels it will help the cause. For example, it's not uncommon for her to contact area hotels and limousine services during high school prom time to ask them their policies about drinking at student parties and in the limos.

## Secretaries ratify pact

The Secretarial Association of Clarencville has unanimously approved a contract with the Clarencville School District.

All 16 members of the association voted to ratify the agreement Tuesday.

The one-year contract, retroactive to July 1, gives the workers a 6 percent raise and one additional day in the winter break, president Donna Julien said. It also calls for the dis-

trict to pay for classes in work-related courses attended by the employees.

The district includes parts of Livonia, Redford and Farmington Hills.

All three employee groups have now ratified new contracts in Clarencville. In November, both the custodial, maintenance and cafeteria workers and the teachers approved agreements with the district.

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