

# County expands drug team Oakland roads

## Board votes \$392,000 for narc squad equipment see more snow

By Tim Richard  
staff writer

Oakland County has nearly doubled the size of its Narcotics Enforcement Team in a cooperative deal with Michigan State Police and five communities.

The County Board of Commissioners approved, 22-0, dipping into its \$392,000 contingency fund to equip five sheriff's department officers

and five local officers with cars, uniforms, radio links and other supplies. "The board of commissioners added the staff in the budget (passed in December)," said Dale Cunningham, business manager for the sheriff's department, "but missed on the operating funds. That's how this came back."

Participating communities, each of which will contribute one officer,

include the city of Troy and West Bloomfield Township.

"THE ORIGINAL concept was that the county, State Police and local departments would make contributions," Cunningham said.

"The State Police would contribute five command officers. The county would contribute two deputies, two clerical staff, and operations expenses and autos. The local units would contribute one officer each."

"The narcotics enforcement board and Sheriff (John) Nichols got to-

gether and decided it was time to increase both staff and funding.

"Sheriff Nichols requested five additional staff — one sergeant and four deputies — plus operating costs. The county executive didn't recommend it in his budget, but the Board of Commissioners added the staff anyway."

"At the same time, they said 'how about more participation from the local units. So the local units agreed to five additional officers.'"

THE NEW lineup is five State Police command officers (unchanged), seven sheriff's officers, plus two clerical staff and operating costs, and 10 local officers.

The budget commitment is for two years now that Oakland County has pioneered with a biennial spending plan.

The equipment bill runs high: \$4,800 for four body transmitters, \$52,000 for 10 radios and \$1,625 for five guns, among other things.

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The snow has been nearly double, but removal costs are up less than 2 percent for the Oakland County Road Commission.

"We live by the weather. We're like farmers," said James Dunleavy, a one-time farm boy who now is director of highway maintenance for the OCR.

In three months from Oct. 1 to Dec. 31 — the first quarter of fiscal '88 — 17 inches of official snow fell on Oakland compared to only nine inches in same quarter of fiscal '87.

"Official" snow is an airport measurement, Dunleavy said. "The largest snowstorm dropped three to four inches in the north part of the county and nine inches in the southwest. Troy has had substantially less snow in recent years," he added.

ALTHOUGH THE 1988 first quar-

ter snowfall has been nearly double, salting costs are down to \$138,000 this year vs. \$249,000 a year earlier.

Dunleavy gave two reasons:

- Salt is cheaper — \$15.35 a ton vs. \$19.37 last year.
- Less salt is being used — 8,627 tons this year vs. 12,868 last year.

"We're environmentally conscious," he said, citing the damage brine runoff can cause.

Snow removal costs depend on what time of the week the white stuff falls, and this year the OCR hasn't been so lucky. Regular time hours are about the same, but overtime hours are up from 4,680 to 6,043.

"Overall, it's about right in line with budget," he said.

THIS FISCAL year's heavier snowfall has had impacts on other kinds of maintenance.

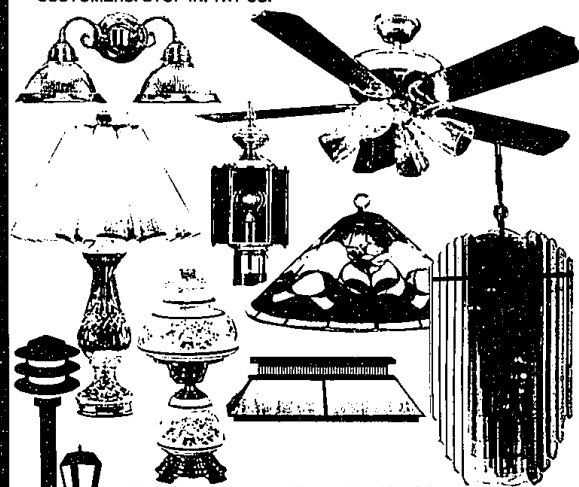
OCR crews have had to do more cleaning of catch basins plugged by leaves and trash, more drainage work, more jettisoning of sewers and far more freeway patching — particularly in the Southfield district.

Crews have been able to do less paving and painting of road stripes.

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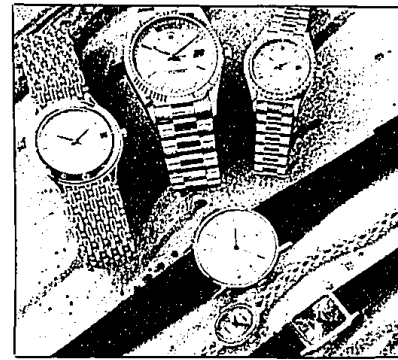


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