



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Tipped truck

Officer Dan Singer (left) of the Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division and Officer Carl Swanderak of the Farmington Public Safety Department investigate a roll-over accident at the Nine Mile exit ramp from M-102 Monday afternoon. The 3-axle truck, owned by Best Way Recycling, Inc. of Inkster, was carrying 30 tons of garbage and tipped after going off the road shortly after 1:30 p.m. It took Livonia Towing three hours and three trucks to lift the garbage truck from its side. The freeway ramp was closed all afternoon. No tickets were issued.

Black gold fever

Houston firm surveys Hills for trapped oil, gas

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

It would delight J.R. Ewing. The Houston-based Grant-Norpac Co. has spent the last few weeks testing Farmington Hills' underground for natural gas and oil for an undisclosed company, Grant-Norpac regional manager Paul Grote said.

"I can't say (which company). But we've been testing in Oakland County, St. Clair, Wayne, Washtenaw and Livingston," Grote said.

Grant-Norpac is testing to determine whether there is a continuous line east from the South Lyon and Milford areas where natural gas and oil were discovered in recent years, Grote said.

Grant-Norpac has been conducting tests, similar to seismic tests used in earthquake detection, along the city's major local and county roads, city engineer Skip Otwell said.

The city issued permits to the company June 21. The company also has permits from Oakland County to test along the rights of way on roads under county jurisdiction, Otwell said.



photos by PETER BALDWIN

The Houston-based Grant-Norpac Company has been testing in Farmington Hills and other Oakland County communities for natural gas and oil. Testing is expected to be completed within two weeks.

"We were concerned they might damage the utilities under the roads or the roads themselves," Otwell said. "But we were satisfied with what they were going to do without

doing any damage."

TESTING IN Farmington Hills is expected to be completed within two weeks. If any natural gas or oil is found, Grote said residents can ex-

pect to see a return of the specialized trucks that have been seen along the roadsides lately.

Grant-Norpac's tests will result in a two-dimensional substructure map of the city, but 7,000-8,000 feet underground. Geophones, which monitor motion much like earthquake tremors are monitored, are inserted into the ground in the rights of way.

"It takes motion and induces a minute electrical impulse," Grote said.

The testing equipment shakes the ground and measures the motion. With the measure of the motion, Grant-Norpac can determine whether there is natural gas or oil in the underground sandstone. The testing process is designed to locate anomalies — a bump in the underground structure, Grote said.

"Sometimes they (gas and oil) are found together."

When the testing is complete, Grant-Norpac will provide the company it is working for with a two-dimensional "slice of the earth," Grote said.

"You might think of it as looking like an ant farm," Grote said.

Grant-Norpac is testing to determine whether there is a continuous line east from the South Lyon and Milford areas where natural gas and oil were discovered.

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