

County asks state hand in recycling rates

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Oakland County wants a state law that will help it sell energy from trash incinerators now on the drawing boards.

The county board of commissioners gave 24-0 approval to House Bill 5591 providing a method for resolving price disputes between generators, like the county, and utilities. "The Legislature is saying you have to be fair in dealing with electric rates or steam," said county executive Daniel T. Murphy. "The Michigan Public Service Commission will set the rates. This (bill) gives them guidelines."

THE BILL, which has passed the House 103-3, is now before the state Senate.

It requires that "public utilities with more than 500,000 customers in Michigan shall enter into power purchase agreements for the purchase of capacity and energy from resource recovery facilities which are processing qualified solid wastes."

It gives the MPSC the duty of resolving rate disputes between incinerator authorities and utilities such as Detroit Edison and Consumers Power Co.

Oakland's solid waste plan calls for up to three incinerators burning 1,800 tons of trash a day. While some of the trash may be recycled as raw materials, much would be converted to electric energy.

THE RESOLUTION backing the House bill was sponsored by Commissioner John P. Calandaro, R-Nov. It notes that Michigan is burying 85 percent of its trash — 32,000 tons a day — in landfills whose average life expectancy is five years.

It also notes that the state Department of Natural Resources has set a goal of recycling 50 percent of that trash.

In related business, the board supported another House bill requiring applicants for state permits to accept trash from outside Michigan disclose details of their background. The disclosures would include the names and addresses of the operator, five top owners and three top employees; any criminal convictions for environmental statutes; and a list of all other environmental licenses

Oakland backs a bill to give the Public Service Commission the duty of resolving rate disputes between incinerator authorities and utilities such as Detroit Edison and Consumers Power Co.

they hold.

IN OTHER BUSINESS last week, the Board of Commissioners:

• Awarded two asbestos removal contracts totalling \$330,000. Contractors are Ogden-Alford Abatement and Decontamination Services, Inc., Chicago, \$113,165; and Depend-

ent Insulation, Inc., Detroit, \$216,268. Affected are Public Works, central heating plant, North Office, Troy Street and Oakland Avenue buildings.

• Signified its willingness to continue the tri-partite road plan by putting \$1 million in its 1989 budget — half for cities and villages, half

for townships. Local units and the Oakland County Road Commission will put up an equal amount, assuring a total of \$3 million for road improvements.

• Approved a contract with Offender Aid and Restoration, a private agency, to house and counsel 10 adult male probationers at \$35 a day each. The board shifted responsibility for administering the contract from the Sheriff's Department to the executive's auditing division.

• Accepted a 90 percent state Department of Mental Health grant for a \$183,333 Arabic-Chaldean Mental

Health Service program. DHM will put up \$166,667 and the county a matching 10 percent, \$16,667.

Watching Thursday's meeting were three new commissioners elected on Nov. 8: Mark Chester, R-Troy, replacing James Doyon, D-Hadison Heights; John Olson, R-Huntington Woods, replacing Angus McPherson, D-Ferndale; and Donn Wolf, R-Farmington Hills, replacing John McDonald, R-Farmington Hills.

Republicans gained two seats in Tuesday's election, giving them a 20-7 advantage in 1989.

October was chilly; more gas burned

Last month was the coldest October in 63 years, according to the National Weather Service statistics.

As a result of the cooler-than-normal weather, deliveries to the 2 million people served by Consumers Power Co.'s Metro Region natural gas system amounted to approximately 12.1 billion cubic feet for October 1988, up 9.4 percent over the 11.06 billion cubic feet in October 1987.

The Detroit office of the National Weather Service reported an average high temperature for October of 54.2 degrees Fahrenheit, a normal average of 62.5.

This year's average low was 37.7 vs. the normal low of 41.2.

The company's metro region serves nearly 660,000 customers in Oakland, Macomb and part of Wayne County.

Macomb backs BA degrees

Voters in the Macomb Community College District passed two higher education proposals on the Nov. 8 ballot.

The first proposal authorizes the college to engage in major facilities repair and equipment updating. The second was for the implementation of bachelor's degree programs through partnerships with senior colleges and universities.

The bachelor's degree partnership program passed 132,860 to 108,477 margin. The facilities repair and equipment updating proposal passed by 134,681 to 107,132.

Albert L. Lorenzo, MCCC president, said, the bachelor's degree program authorizes the college to construct a building to house senior-level courses. The building will include science and computer labs, as well as classrooms and library facilities. It will cost one-third of a

mill of the property tax for three years.

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