

Communities face possible water rationing

By Ralph R. Echlinaw
staff writer

State public health officials told local officials last week that water rationing might be necessary in their communities this summer.

In addition, the Department of Public Health said it's thinking about not approving water-line extensions for new service until a planned 72-inch, 12-mile line is approved.

The communities facing possible restrictions are Orchard Lake, Farmington, Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield Township, Keego Harbor, part of Bloomfield Township, Walled Lake, Commerce Township, Novi, Wixom, northwest Detroit, Northville, part of Northville Township, Livonia north of I-96 and east of Farmington Road and Redford Township north of I-96.

The planned water line will start at Adams and Square Lake roads, run south on Adams, west on Quar-

ton Road, south on Lahser Road, and west on 14 Mile Road to a pumping station on Inkster Road. Detroit Water says it will take two years to install the line once work starts.

The line will bring Lake Huron water to an area beset by low water pressure problems that were particularly evident during the 1988 drought when some residents could get no water out of their taps at all.

DETROIT WATER engineer Fred Janeczek agreed that water rationing may be necessary. "If we get a summer like we had in '88, that would happen," he said. "Each community would have to ration their own (water). We just pump as much as we can as fast as we can."

Janeczek added that water customers on hills would feel the crunch first because more pressure is necessary to pump water uphill.

State officials have stepped in, they say, because the low water

The communities in the water line's path, Bloomfield Township, Bingham Farms, Beverly Hills and Franklin, are concerned about what sort of damage will be done to the landscape when the water line is installed.

pressure situation should be ameliorated as soon as possible. "From a public health standpoint, that (kind of low pressure) is unacceptable," state engineer Richard Sacks said.

Low water pressure could lead to a backflow of contaminants in the water system as well as blinder fire departments in putting out fires.

Sacks met with representatives of

Negotiations between these communities and Detroit Water are the snag that is holding up the new water line's installation.

"I think the ball is in the local communities' hands now," Sacks said. "I think we made tremendous progress this week."

THE LAST major stumbling block seems to be Franklin Village, said road commission spokesman John Joy. "(Franklin and Detroit Water) are talking to each other about the project, but they're not talking about the same things."

Sacks added that "they're being pretty picky over there (in Franklin)." The village plans to hire an environmentalist to see what impact the line will have.

Village President Whit Jones said he wants to know how the line will affect some large trees. He has also asked Detroit Water personnel to show how taking the line down 14

Mile Road is cheaper than Maple. Janeczek said a study revealed that going down 15 Mile would cost \$3 million more. "(Franklin officials) just don't remember it," he said. "They're just playing games. They don't seem to want us in there at all."

But Jones said everyone is getting closer to agreement. "I think we've been clearing the air a bit at the last couple of meetings," he said.

However, the delay has gone on long enough, Sacks said, that construction won't begin until next year.

The "virtual ban on permits for new construction, if instituted, will remain in force until everyone involved agrees and the line is ready to install," Sacks said. And even then, whether a contractor gets a permit or not will depend on project size and length of construction.

The specter of water rationing will remain a possibility until the new line is installed and operating.

U.S. Senate candidate capitalizes on Flag Day

By Amy Rose
staff writer

The only thing missing was a baby to kiss.

The candidate shook hands, patted backs, smiled endlessly and remembered names as only a politician could. If anyone knows how to work a room, it's U.S. Rep. Bill Schuette.

That was evident Thursday as Schuette — one of two Republican challengers trying to unseat U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, a Democrat — made the rounds at the Troy Chamber of Commerce's monthly luncheon at the Northfield Hilton.

Although Schuette, 36, said his appearance wasn't a fundraiser, and proclaimed he wouldn't go on about why he wants to be a U.S. senator "143 days from now," politicking was the name of the game.

And it was probably no coincidence that it was Flag Day and everyone was served apple pie — with a flagged toothpick stuck in each piece, no less.

Schuette, who is based in Midland where he grew up, has since 1984

served the state's 10th Congressional District, which extends from mid Michigan to the tip of the lower peninsula.

AND SO, IN an effort to win name and face recognition elsewhere, Schuette has been taking to other Michigan roads.

It isn't surprising his campaigning took him to Troy — a Republican port of call centered in a conservative county.

"I have the support of every county-wide elected official," Schuette claimed to reporters following the luncheon, "from Brooks Patterson to Dick Thompson ... you name them."

The congressman faces Grosse Pointe attorney Clark Durant in the Aug. 7 Republican primary, whom he consistently has refused to debate. The winner will then take on Levin, who is unopposed on the Democratic side, in the Nov. 6 election.

But to hear Schuette talk, he only faces one opponent — Levin.

When asked why he never mentions Durant, he said, "A nice guy, but I'll take the 11th Commandment: Thou shalt not speak ill of a fellow Republican."

But on the other hand, Schuette has no problem speaking ill of the Democratic Levin.

SCHUETTE was quick to claim that Levin has "flipped" on the flag burning issue, while he himself has been consistently against flag burning. Schuette said Levin originally voted against an amendment banning flag burning, but now claims to be for such an amendment.

But according to Willie Blacklow, Levin's campaign secretary, the senator voted against the amendment only because it was poorly worded. Levin would support a "carefully constructed" amendment prohibiting

flag burning. Blacklow said, and claiming Schuette was "intentionally distorting" Levin's voting record.

The press secretary cited several published newspaper articles in which Levin is quoted as saying he is against flag burning.

Both politicians' views conflict with the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on a Texas case last week, which found that burning the flag is protected by the constitutional right to free speech.

"In the America I know, we don't burn flags," Schuette told chamber members. "We're not outlawing the right to say 'Red, white and blue, I spit on you.' We're prohibiting conduct, not speech or expression."

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— U.S. Rep. William Schuette



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