Lack of permit could delay solid waste vote

Unless state officials act with un-characteristic swiftness, the Novem-ber vote on Oakland's proposed solid waste program may be in jeopardy. The problem is Oakland does not

The problem is Oakland does not yet have a permit to operate the contributerial 2,000-ton-per-day incinerator, the cornerstone of the \$500 million solld waste program designed to handle municipal waste into the next century.

Without that permit, commissioners are they are reluctant to go

ers say they are reluctant to go ahead with plans for the Nov. 5 bal-

iot proposal.
"I don't see any reason to vote on
the incinerator if we don't have our
operating permit," explained commissioner Lawrence R. Pernick, D-

548-4422

Southfield, who personally favors the proposed solid waste program, including the incinerator.
While voting day is more than two months away, commissioners face some kind of decision around Sept. 12, the deadline for printing ballot proposals.
County officials will definitely be in a bind, acknowledges commissioner John C. Pappageorge, R-Troy.
"But we need more information. We don't know, for example, if Sept. 12 is a firm deadline."
THE MOST IMPORTANT bit of

is a firm deadline."

THE MOST IMPORTANT bit of information remains with the Michigan Air Pollution Control Commission that would issue the permit based, in part, on recommendations from the Air Quality Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

349-5040

Oakland's permit to operate the incinerator has been pending before the commission for 15 months, despite repeated attempts to hasten the process, according to Roger Smith, deputy director of Oakland's Solid Waste Management Division.

On several occasions Smith and others thought the commission was about to schedule a public hearing — an important preliminary step. But such was not the case.

Officials even considered asking Gov. John Engler to prod the commission into reviewing Oakland's permit application — submitted in

December 1989 — and making a de-clsion one way or the other.

Part of the problem has been changing federal standards on air emissions, said Smith. "But we real-ly don't know when they (the Air Pol-lution Control Commission) is going to move."

Given 19 months of inaction on the part of the state, county officials are concerned about an answer corning by election day, much less by the Sept. 12 deadline.

Pappageorge said commissioners have several options. "We can posi-

pone the election," he said, "Or we can go ahead on the assumption that the commission will eventually approve the permit. Or we could hold the election with the stipulation that he whole thing is off if we don't get our permit."

BUT HOLDING the November yole without first having a state op-

BUT HOLDING the November vote without first having a state operating permit is risky, according to commissioner Donald W. Jensen, R. Birmingham. "There's bound to be some confusion among the voters.

"I would have no problem with going ahead with the vote," he said. "But voters would have to know we can't go ahead with the incinerator without the permit. That might be too offy."

.New survey says voters will say no

By Pat Murphy statt writer

Walting for the state permit to go shead with a vote on the solid waste permit long to the state permit to go shead with a vote on the solid waste permit long to the state permit long to the st

thue its citizen campaign to flight re-opening of the Madison Helghis incinerator and the construction of a new municipal waste facility in Auburn Hills." Atterns and.

While Aterno and other insist the county program dismissed it as unscientific and unreliable.

"I was one of the people interviewed for the survey," said Ann

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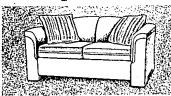
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