

Gas Shortage Pinches Area Business

Impact Now Being Felt In Area

By W. W. EDGAR

The shortage of natural gas which caused Consumers Power Co. to seek — and obtain — authority to restrict its sale and refuse to accept new customers has begun to threaten industrial and commercial development through northwestern Wayne and Oakland counties.

The authority Consumers Power sought was granted by the Public Service Commission last October. CP pleaded that demands for additional natural gas had far outstripped prospective supplies

from the companies that develop the gas producing fields and which supply gas to distributing companies such as Consumers Power.

"AT THE TIME our company's request was granted," said James Thomas, district manager of Consumers, "it included a curb on residential, commercial and industrial divisions. Since that time we have been taking care of residential areas, but no new commercial or industrial clients can be accepted."

While the curb has been in

effect since last October, the impact hasn't been felt until the past month or two.

"We had to turn down the proposed mammoth shopping center at 13-Mile and Haggerty Road in Farmington Township," Thomas said, "and there are several others in the offing."

"The mere fact that these projects can not get gas does not mean they won't be developed."

"There are other types of fuel and power. It is just a condition where we can't supply gas."

Thomas emphasized that the reasoning behind the request to restrict service to industrial and commercial clients was that the company wanted to make sure that there is an adequate supply for its present customers.

DEVELOPERS also are beginning to feel the pinch.

"We already have lost one large building in Farmington," Bill Bowman, executive vice president of Thompson-Brown Co., revealed.

"This is just the beginning," he continued. "There may be several more large undertakings in jeopardy."

Bowman pointed out that the present curtailment goes beyond the clients now seeking service.

"What we fear," he said, "is that word will spread and many big concerns will pass by this area when looking for buildings sites. That would be a blow for the simple reason that most of these places are purchased well in advance."

"And with the wide-open territory we have in the northwest section, this could curtail our growth for years."

DURING THE hearing before the Public Service

Commission last October, it was revealed that Consumers Power, in an effort to develop additional supplies of natural gas, is engaged in exploratory well drilling efforts in southern Louisiana under agreements with independent producers.

This is being done through the Northern Michigan Exploration Co., a wholly-owned subsidiary. This subsidiary also is carrying out drilling operations in several northern counties of Michigan's lower peninsula. Some indications of oil and gas have been reported in this area, but the extent of these discoveries has yet to be proved.

Consumers Power serves more than 850,000 customers in 46 counties of the lower peninsula. Michigan Consolidated Gas Co., working out of Detroit, has yet to ask for authority to restrict its service.



SUMMER TRAINING—Brig. Gen. James O. Freese (left), assistant division commander for the 70th Division (Training) of Livonia, discusses plans for summer training during a recent conference at Ft. Campbell with Lt. Col. Warren R. Porter (center), assistant deputy post commander, and Lt. Col. George C. Scott Jr., adjutant general. The 70th Division will be conducting two weeks of training at Ft. Campbell, Ky. this summer. (U.S. Army photo)

\$38,000 Raised For Trash Plan

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments and Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, seeking \$75,000 from private sources to provide most of the local funding needed for a regional solid waste disposal plan, have passed the half-way mark.

Fred Cheek, chief of SEMCOG's office of facilities planning, reports that contributions from supporting firms and groups of enterprises exceeds \$38,000. And many firms that have indicated support have not yet submitted checks.

The solid waste disposal plan project is to cost a total of \$179,000. Of this, \$14,500 will be added by SEMCOG to the \$75,000 from the private sector to match \$89,500 from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) through the Michigan Department of Public Health.

The project will produce a system for region-wide disposal of all waste that should not be flushed through public sewer systems.

E. Robert Turner, SEMCOG executive director, called the project a "splendid example of private sector's willingness to join with regional voluntary associations of local government to solve a problem of mutual concern."

330,000 In Wayne Get SS Increase

Some 330,000 Wayne County residents will benefit to the tune of nearly \$45 million

Book Sale Aids Blind

Rosedale Park Junior Women's Club will hold its second annual book sale Saturday, April 3, from 9-9 in the Sears-Chatham court of Livonia Mall, Seven Mile at Middle Belt.

Proceeds will aid the Penrickton Center for Visually Handicapped Children in Taylor, which provides training and therapy for young blind children and, in some cases, their parents.

On sale will be children's books, science fiction, educational material, novels, paperbacks, rare books and magazines. Donations will be accepted at the sale booth after 8:30 p.m. Friday and all day Saturday.

Guards Base

Army SP5 Gary L. Worthington, son of Mrs. Heidi-gard Worthington of Farmington, is serving as a security guard with Special Troops near Long Binh.

He is responsible for maintaining proper security police functions on his base.

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