On Nov. 5, Oakland County vot-ers will decide on a ballot propos-al to finance the county's pro-posed solid waste program. This is the start of a continuing series on the solid waste program and the controversy it has generated.

By Pat Murphy staff writer

William Con

Proponents of Oakland's proposed solid waste plan call it the most advanced in the world—an integrated program that supplements recycling with incincration and mash landfill. Homeowners and businesses will be required to separate their trash. Reussible material will be recycled will be burned in an Auburn Hills incinerate with the same than the recycled will be burned in an Auburn Hills incinerate with the absolute material will be country. tor, with the ash buried in a county-controlled landfill in Orion Town-

shlp.
Opponents — including West
Bloomfield attorney Michael A.
Schwartz — call it a "White Elephant," an expensive, complicated
system that will never work."

"It's a quick fix," said Schwartz, who is also chairman of the Oakland Environmental Protection Council. "It's never worked anywhere else and it work work anywhere else and it work work the property of the order o

THE HEALTH ASSESSMENT Is in volumes, solid Ann Hobart, a former county commissioner who is
now the public information spokesmanagement division. "But it comculdes that in a worst case scenario,
emissions from the incinerator could
POSSIBLY result in one additional

incident of cancer in 70 years. But that's only if the person breathes the air and eats food grown in the vicinity of the incinerator."

The DNR apparently agrees with that assessment, or one close to it. In a Sept. 11 press release, the DRN said it is perpared to approve an operating permit for the incinerator. "Our approval will be in a staff report made to the Air Pollution Control Commission (which issues incineration permits)," said Dennis Armbruster, a supervisor in the Air Quality Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Quality Division of the Michigan De-partment of Natural Resources.

While that staff report is forth-coming (within the next two weeks), the DNR has tentatively approved Oakland's operating permit, Arm-

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bruster said.

Experts opposed to incinerators state their case in more direct—and understandable—terms.

"Any science that says incinerators are safe is bad science," insists incinerators are safe is bad science," insists praul Connett, an associate professor of chemistry at St. Lawrence University in New York who has traveled the world crusading against in-

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cineration.
Connett has participated in numerous international symposiums dealing with incinerator emissions and his message is clear. "Don't put your faith in incinerators. They don't work and they cause health problems."

lems."

LANDFILIS ARE slightly more preferable to inclinerators, Conneit said. But the real answer to solid waste is recycling. "Recycle and then recycle some more," he told an Oakland County audience in October 1930. 'And then recycle again."

Conneit was asked why other sci-

entists do not seem as vocal — or negative — in their assessments of incineration. There is not, for exam-ple, a group of noted scientists speaking out on incineration as they did — with physicist Carl Sagon in the forefront — against nuclear pro-liferation.

liferation.

"That's a good question," said Connett, who believes the threat from incineration is life threatening.

The answer has to do with the fact that chemists and other scientists who would be expected to oppose incineration are not focused, not mobilized — not yet anyway.



Company to inform about incinerators

Westinghouse Electric Corp. —
the Pittsburgh based company that
has a contract to build the controversals incinerator in Auburn Hills
— Is preparing for an information
program aimed at Oakland voters.
— We just want to make sure people have accurate and objective information about the incinerator,
said Vaugh Gilbert, Westinghouse
manager of public relations.
Westinghouse has filled a statement of organization for independent, political bailto questions with
county officials. Such a statement is
required under Michigan campaign
finance laws from any organization
that intends to spend \$500 or more to
influence voters.

THE STATEMENT says the company is forming "The Committee for Responsible Solid Waste Management" to support the solid waste bond proposal on the Nov. 5 ballot. Gilbert, who is visiting Oakland County periodically and operating out of the Westinghouse sales offices in Southfield, sald the committee

will have several mailings designed to inform voters about the safety of the company's inclinerators.

"We will also provide information to organizations," said Gilbert. "We want voters to have as much objective information as possible." While his company is the only particular to the organizational statement, Gilbert said he expects other groups and companies to join in the informational effort. "We'll have more information in the near future."

AT LEAST one community downwind of the proposed Incinerator already has a newletter — also designed to inform voters.
The Rochester City Council last week issued the first edition of "Oakland Tomorrow," billing it as "A newsletter addressing Oakland County's solid waste management issues."

sues."

Rochester — as well as Oakland
County and other communities —
can not spend tax money to advocate
a position on an upcoming election.
But this newsletter seems to come
close to promoting a negative reaction among voters.





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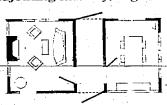
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