Citizens League urges yes vote on trash issue

solid waste program, the most ex-pensive project in county history. This is part of a continuing series on the solid waste program and the controversy it has generated.

By Judith Doner Berne stall writer

The Oakland Citizens League has endorsed Oakland County's solid waste ballot proposal. Following two hours of testimony Monday night in a meeting room of the Bloomfield Township Library, the special ballot committee chaired by George Stern of Birmingham, urged a yes vote on the Nov. 5 \$500 million bond Issue. Their statement reads:

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"There is a compelling need to provide Oakland County with a long range strategic plan to reduce the escalating land size requirements of the county cannot afford to wait until the year 2000. The comprehensity could be solid waste management system.

tems proposed is a reasonable and practical solution.

"Although environmentalists are deeply concerned about the possibili-ty of toxic emissions from an incin-erator, the committee is of the opin-ion that the proposed safeguards are adequate."

adequate."

THE CITIZENS LEAGUE apparently was swayed by Ann Hobart, spokeswoman for for the Oakland County Department of Solid Waste. She told the group that the proposed plan to receptle, reuse and burn will significantly reduce the volume of material that must be put into landfills, generally considered the most hazardous, costly method of disposing of trash.

The county plan is that 50 percent of all commercial, residential and business trash will be recycled, reused or composted. Forty-five percent will be intenderated, with 5 percent will be intenderated by the incineration, buried.

Hobart cited increased road-side dumping, the exportation of one-third of the county's garbage to Washtenaw County — which may

one day not welcome it — and the increase in trash hauling prices as reasons for acting now. Another reason, she said, is that costs to build the incincrator will also go up. "The bill (Act 641) says we must control our own trash. Our goal is to be a net zero importer of garbage," she said.

However, if the measure

be a few zero importer or gardage, state said.

As the said of the measure passes and Oakland County communities continue to be reluctant to sign on (just 18 of 61 have agreed so far), it is possible that the county could decide to burn trash from elsewhere. More likely, Hobart said, is that a smaller waste-to-energy incinerator will be built.

And, if there is no market for the recyclables coming out of the proposed six material recovery facili-

Is not market for them."

NEITHER SHE, nor Westinghouse project manager John Lorinc, would back down on the safety of the proposed incherator, which, they say, will be state of the art, complete with acid gas scrubbers, the latest mercury control devices and bag mouses.

"It will burn cleaner than coal," Hobart sald. The energy, which is already under contract to Edison, is enough to power about 80,000 homes, so in that sense the trash is being reused.

used.

They will make every effort to weed out hazardous waste, which will require education of and participation by residents. "Hazardous waste will be collected up front. We do not envision that to be voluntary." "You have overlooked or downplayed the risk," countered Tara Gocl, a Rochester Hills resident

from the Help Oakland Protect the Environment (HOPE), which opposes the incinerator portion of the trash plan.

She said the health risk assessments which were done center on adults and on cancer. "We're not just talking about cancer. Children are very overlooked.

"The children are the 'canaries' of our society," Goel said, referring to the birds they used to take down into the mines to test the air. If they died, he air wasn't good.

"We don't think the county is aggressive enough in recycling and reuse."

SHERRY CLAIRE, another HOPE spokeswoman, also of Rochester Hills, told the committee: "We got interested because it is downwind of us. But emissions float. And we still will have landfills."

Bettle Buss, of Troy, senior research assistant from the Clitzens Research Council of Michigan, was

the neutral member of the parel. She outlined the history and major prem-ises of the soll: waste plan. Although she later said she intenda-to vote in favor of the proposal, one of her major concerns is funding. She says tipping fees - the amount resi-dents must pay to have their gar-bage "tipped" into the incinerator, or MiRF could go up - if either enough communities don't participate or there is no market for the recycl-ables.

She also pointed out that putting a deposit fee on batteries - considered one of the major hazardous household waste items - could control that part of the waste stream. "That's a public policy issue."

The Oakland Citizens League is the Oakland County affiliate of Civic Scarchlight, a volunteer, non-partisan, fact-finding citi-zens organization dedicated to promoting better government.

.EMEAC opposes burning, but won't refute ballot question

The East Michigan Environment Action Council supports garbage recycling and reuse, and opposes incincing the Birmingham-based environmental group is not taking a stand on the \$500 million solid waste proposal Oakland County voters will consider Nov. 5.

"What we're saying is that each person really needs to make up his or her mind, but we believe there needs to be a regional assessment of capacity needs for new waste disposal facilities, EMEAC executive director Libby Harris. She added the group would eather provide informa-

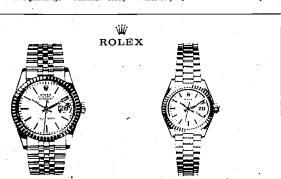
tion to voters than tell them how to decide.

EMEAC opposes the licensing of new incherator, pending the capacity study and additional research into environmental impact of incinerators. It supports the county's solid waste plan goal of recycling half the waste plan goal of recycling half the manner of the propositing waste plan goal of the plan goal of recycling and compositing, and propositing "the permitting of new indecide.

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IN JUST OVER two weeks, voters will consider a county ballot proposal to sell \$500 million in bonds to pay for the construction of an incherator in Auburn Hills, recycling programs and a sanitary landfill. The incinerator proposal has drawn fire from

Harris said that Oakland County residents have made great progress in recycling and reducing their trash output in recent years. Many com-



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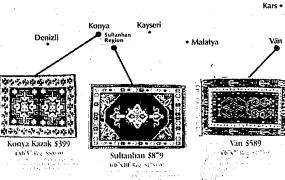
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