

County schedules tax lien sale

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STAFF WRITER

Oakland's tax lien sale for properties throughout the county with delinquent tax payments will begin Tuesday, May 5. The sale is open to the general public. It will include property with tax bills remaining from 1995.

In July and December of each year, Michigan cities and townships send out tax bills to all property owners. If the bill isn't paid in full by the following March, the property is offered at the tax lien sale.

Without the sale, the property owner's debt would continue to grow, said Jim Van Leuver,

Chief, Tax Administration, Oakland County Treasurer's Office.

"We have the tax lien sale to put the property back on the tax rolls," Van Leuver said. "The property owners' debt keeps getting bigger and bigger and that's money that could be going to the schools or state or local governments. There has to be some kind of deadline."

After the sale, the property owner continues to pay the property tax, which is directly reimbursed to the individual who purchased the lien. The lien buyer receives an annual interest rate of 15 percent.

The lien is extinguished six

years after the sale and the property is either turned over to the lien buyer or the state, Van Leuver said.

"The sale is a misconception because very little property ever changes hands," Van Leuver said. "An individual purchases a lien because they want to earn the interest. A vast majority of the liens are redeemed within the first year."

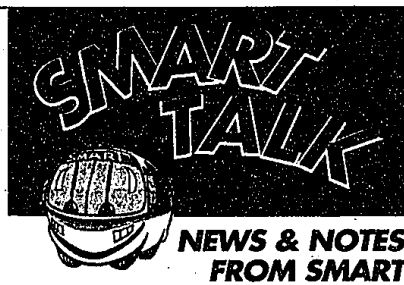
The list of properties included in the tax lien sale will be published in the Rochester Clinton Eccentric on Thursday March 12 and Thursday, March 19. Copies are also available in all Observer and Eccentric offices for 75 cents.

Bus service, MADD team up for St. Pat's

Statistics show that almost half of the traffic fatalities on St. Patrick's Day are alcohol related, making it the number one day for traffic deaths.

With that in mind, Mothers Against Drunk Driving and The Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation are teaming up again to reduce drunken driving on St. Patrick's Day.

SMART will be offering free bus rides to anyone in the tri-county service area after 6 p.m. on St. Patrick's Day.



NEWS & NOTES FROM SMART

Play It Safe And SMART This St. Patrick's Day.

Statistics show nearly half of the traffic fatalities that occur on St. Patrick's Day are alcohol related. To help reduce this alarming trend, SMART and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) are joining forces. After 6:00 p.m. on St. Patrick's Day, SMART will be offering free bus rides to anyone in our tri-county service area. If you're going to drink, please use this free service. Because it's up to all of us to help make this St. Patrick's Day a safe one.



Hunger from page A7

Nearly 30 percent of the clients are 17 years of age or older, while 14 percent are 65 or over.

About 63 percent of client households receiving food emergency food programs have an annual household income of \$10,000.

In 9 percent of the households with children, clients report that children have missed meals in the past month because they did not have enough food or money to buy food; nearly 30 percent of adults have missed meals.

Half of the clients have received food for three months or less; 26 percent have received food for more than three months, but less than a year, and 23 percent have received food for more than one year.

Agencies report that the length of time clients have used their programs has increased in

the past year from 19 to 20 weeks, a change of 7.5 percent.

Although 70 percent of agencies believe that they are stable, 4 percent report that lack of funding presents a problem.

Based on the size of orders placed by various pantries, soup kitchens and other food distribution programs, the hunger rate in Oakland County is slightly rising, Kozlowski said.

For example, in January 1997, 200,000 pounds of food was shipped to service agencies. In January of this year, the FBCC distributed 253,000 pounds of food.

The homeless rate was down but the hunger rate was still increasing, Kozlowski said. "We wanted to see where the occurrences were happening."

Also included in the study were national statistics. The study revealed that nearly 26 million Americans made undu-

plicated visits to Second Harvest network charitable food programs throughout 1997. The survey also stated that more than 38 percent of households receiving assistance have at least one adult who is working.

"I guess you could say I'm not really surprised by the survey," said John Jackson, a Southfield resident, who volunteers at several food pantries. "I know that just because you hold a job, it doesn't mean you're able to support a family and children."

Another volunteer, Gina Cummings hopes the survey will urge businesses and community members to donate food and money to the FBCC.

"I see the people who come to the food pantries and it's very heartening," Cummings, a Pontiac resident, said. "I think that

many of us who are fortunate enough to have a home and food take it all for granted. If we in any way possible can help the less fortunate, I think we should."

Organized in 1984, the FBCC distributes food and household products to 185 service agencies around the county, serving 3 million meals a year, which is approximately 75,000 residents per month.

In 1985, its first full year of operation, the food bank distributed 500,000 pounds of food to 28 emergency pantries, shelters and soup kitchens.

Today, the FBCC operates a 20,000 square foot warehouse in Pontiac. Last year, the network supplied food for 8 million persons.

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Thank you again, David Bolgars

SMART And Your Community. Working Together.

At SMART, we know that each community has unique transportation needs. That's why SMART has joined forces with area communities to form the Community Based Service Plan, giving people a say in how SMART operates in their community. Currently in Wayne County, we're working with Allen Park, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Ecorse, Lincoln Park, Livonia, Melvindale, Redford, River Rouge, Romulus, Taylor and Wyandotte. As a result, we've been able to provide more reliable and efficient transportation than ever before, particularly for senior citizens and disabled riders. And it's going to get even better.

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