

# Public's 'energy joy ride' is at an end

By EDWARD WENDOVER

**PLYMOUTH** — The energy crisis — how did it arise and what's being done about it? It was to that topic — which seems quite in vogue these days — that three experts in the energy field addressed themselves at last week's Plymouth Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

"The inside dope on the energy

crunch" was the title of the program that featured Wendell Mason of Consumers Power Co., James Lagowski of Detroit Edison Co., and Walter McDonald of Marathon Oil Co. as speakers.

Mason, an assistant division manager for Consumers, said, "The energy joy ride in this country is coming to an end fast."

"We have to give some things up. The era of cheap energy and illusions of unlimited abundance is drawing to a close," he said, prophesizing rough sledding ahead.

Mason said the demand for energy has now outstripped energy production and that was caused by technology.

"It rests on technology's shoulders to find a solution, he added.

The various forms of energy and fuel are often inter-related, Mason explained. For example, the production of electricity uses coal, oil and some natural gas as fuel.

In the natural gas field, the present "crisis" was fueled by ecology measures — which he described as "neurotic approach to pollution control" — and a national governmental policy of "keep it (natural gas) cheap," he said.

Although North America represents six per cent of the world's population, it accounts for 61 per cent of the world's natural gas use, he said, describing the situation on this continent.

Because of increased cutbacks from its major supplier, Eastern Pipeline Co., Consumers has also cut back and, describing the situation on this continent.

To help alleviate the shortage, he said, his company is exploring in Michigan for natural gas reserves although this is not believed to be a total solution for meeting residential, commercial and industrial demands.

Lagowski, director of consumer products in Detroit Edison's public affairs department, said the energy crunch is being felt hard by electric companies.

He said that while there is an annual four per cent increase in demand for all types of energy, there is annually a seven per cent increase in demand for electricity.

He echoed Mason's statement that our continent consumes more than its proportionate share of energy, saying that the United States alone uses one third of the world's electricity.

Of that domestic output, he said, two thirds goes to commerce, industry and municipal customers while one third meets residential needs. A total of 10 per cent of all electricity is currently going towards environmental cleanup, Lagowski added.

The electric companies are currently feeling a squeeze because of the changeover from coal to oil fuels for pollution control at the same time there is a gap widening between oil production and demand for oil-based fuels, he said.

Michigan, which Lagowski termed an "energy poor state," gets 95 per cent of its energy from fuel brought in from other states or countries.

He said one possible step toward alleviating Michigan's problems in the electric energy field is the construction of more production facilities. But more financing is needed for that, he added.

"The demand for energy starts with people," Lagowski concluded, "and the energy crisis is going to be solved

by people — individually and collectively."

McDonald, manager of Marathon Oil Co. technical services department, began his talk by scoffing at a statement made by Consumer Advocate, Ralph Nader that "the world is literally drowning in a flood of oil."

He also dismissed the belief by some that the "energy crisis" is a conspiracy by the oil companies.

Consumers are equally responsible — along with the oil companies and the government — for the gasoline shortage now being felt, McDonald said.

Like Mason and Lagowski, the Marathon spokesman also said Americans account for far more than their proportionate energy use when it comes to gasoline. Sixty per cent of all gasoline in the world is burned in the United States, he said.

"The days of bargain prices for oil are probably over forever," McDonald emphasized.

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day, he said, "and that gasoline didn't drive us a single mile."

He said that was just one reason why gasoline supplies were not meeting demands today and suggested these possible solutions:

- The government should develop coordinated and consistent policies toward oil and gasoline production and use.

- Environmental and economic controls should be balanced.

- Price controls should be eliminated, thereby permitting a free market on gasoline and oil production. (This should perhaps be done on a phased in basis.)

- The development of all U.S. energy sources should be encouraged.

- Consumers should try to conserve energy.

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## Outdoor life day is asked

WASHINGTON, DC — The President has been asked to declare next Sept. 28 as "National Hunting and Fishing Day" by Congressman William D. Ford (D - 13), whose district includes Garden City and Westland.

In this era of congestion, shortages and frustrations, says Ford, the need for outdoor recreation is becoming more important.

More than 15 million hunting and 25 million fishing licenses are issued each year in the U.S., he adds, bringing more than \$200,000 into local and state treasuries. This income provides funds for fish and wildlife conservation and for preservation of endangered species. Ford sponsored a similar measure last year which was signed into law by President Nixon.

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