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Oakland County fights sewage rate increase

OAKLAND COUNTY—Homeowners will be spared paying \$8 to \$10 more each year in water and sewer bills if Oakland County wins its lawsuit against the sewage rate increase of the Detroit Water Board.

Directly affected are the 14 South Oakland communities belonging to the Southeastern Oakland County Sewage Disposal District (SOCSDD), which pays to use the Detroit sewage system.

Birmingham, Beverly Hills, Southfield and Troy are SOCSDD members. The Detroit Water Board has approved a 35 percent increase in sewage rates. Oakland County, led by Drain Commissioner George Kuhn, has gone to court to fight the increase.

IN ITS lawsuit, Oakland County alleges that the increase is unwarranted.

The lawsuit asks that Detroit be required to open its books to prove the increase is needed.

So far, Detroit has been unwilling to do this.

A hearing was scheduled for Wednesday before Oakland County Circuit Court Judge John O'Brien in which Detroit was to answer the charges made in the Oakland lawsuit.

DESPITE THE legal challenge, the new sewage rates take effect Aug. 1.

On that date, the sewage charge to the SOCSDD will jump from 65 cents per 1,000 cubic feet of water to \$1.04.

Ordinarily, this increase would be passed on by SOCSDD to its 14 member communities, which, in turn, would pass it on to homeowners on their water and sewage bills.

However, the increase to homeowners will be at least until

their billing for November, thanks to the drain commissioner's office.

Drain Commissioner Kuhn, who called the rate increase "outrageous," said the first three months of the sewage rate increase will be paid with surplus money from his office.

After that, unless the court intervenes and rules the rate increase excessive, homeowners will begin to pay up to \$10 more annually for sewage treatment, depending on what each municipality charges its residents.

THIS YEAR'S rate increase marks the second in five years.

During that period, Detroit's charges for 1,000 cubic feet of water have jumped from 35 cents to the current rate, almost triple.

Things could be worse, however. Late last year, the Detroit Water Board approved an increase in the water rates, as well as the sewage rates.

After loud complaints from suburban officials, Detroit Mayor Coleman Young ordered a reappraisal of the water increases.

Subsequently, the water increases were dropped by the Water Board for 1973.

GOP established--in Michigan history

JACKSON (JULY 6, 1854)—A new political coalition calling itself the Republican Party was established here today, illustrating conclusively the power of anti-slavery feeling in Michigan.

About 1,500 influential citizens from a variety of parties and factions—Free Democrats, Free Soilers, Whigs and others—gathered here for the birth of the new party.

Despite their differences of opinion in the past, all were held together today by a common threat—opposition to slavery and its spread elsewhere in the nation.

The turnout was so enormous that it was impossible to hold the convention indoors.

Temporary chairman Levi Baxter of Jonesville, after convening the meeting in one of Jackson's largest halls, called for a recess and the convention was moved to a place called "Morgan's Forty" on Jackson's outskirts. There a platform was hastily

built in a grove of oak trees and the convention reassembled.

THE CONVENTION adopted a platform articulating the new party's opposition to the practice of slavery and concluded its business with the nomination of candidates for state office.

Kinsley S. Bingham of Livingston was nominated to head the ticket as the party's candidate for governor. Bingham previously had been the Free Democrat's candidate, but that party withdrew its ticket February 22 to support the new party.

Political observers here feel the future of the new Republican Party is uncertain, principally because it seems narrowly based on the single issue of anti-slavery.

However, many prominent Michigan citizens were involved in today's convention.

The party's survival appears to be dependent on how strong the anti-slavery feeling is among the citizens of Michigan. That questions will be answered in the November election.

Persons who want to obtain a schedule of classes or an appointment with a counselor should contact the campus they wish to attend: Auburn Hills, 2900 Featherstone Road, Auburn Heights, Highland Lakes, 7250 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake, Orchard Ridge, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington, Oak Park, 13200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park or Royal Oak, 703 South Center, Royal Oak.

OCC mail registration ends Friday

Mail-in registration for Oakland Community College's fall semester closes Friday, July 25. Students who previously have attended OCC may take advantage of this time-saving method of registration.

Persons interested in attending OCC for the first time should make an appointment with a counselor as soon as possible. Regular registration for the fall semester will be Sept. 2, 3 and 4.

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