

Detroit sewage plant flunks court expert's test

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI
Buried in the middle of a 102-page report is this sentence:
"Unless changes are implemented to the management of on-schedule construction and consultants' compliance with the terms of the consent judgment will not in all likelihood be achieved."
That statement, along with nearly 200 findings, could spell the end of the city of Detroit's control over its massive wastewater treatment facilities.
Jonathan Bulkeley, a University of Michigan engineering professor who was appointed by Federal District

Judge John Feikens to study the operations of the wastewater treatment plant in Detroit, made no clear-cut recommendations in his report, which was released Tuesday morning.
Bulkeley was appointed by Judge Feikens in the United States Environmental Protection Agency's suit against the City of Detroit. The case has been before Judge Feikens for 1 1/2 years.
Bulkeley was appointed to pinpoint reasons behind Detroit's failure to meet certain schedules and pollution standards to which it agreed in an earlier consent judgment.

IN ONE OF the report's first find-

ings, Bulkeley noted that only about one-third of the wastewater flowing through the sewage treatment plant is adequately treated. The rest—60 million gallons a day—which does not receive proper treatment, is dumped directly into the Detroit River.
Bulkeley lays much of the blame for the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department's failure to meet the pollution standards on the department's management.

"The requirements of meeting the terms of the consent judgment has created an extraordinary management problem," Bulkeley wrote.
"Effective coordination of more

than \$15 million in current construction is necessary. Efficient and effective direction of more than \$70 million in current consultants' work is required," he continued.

Bulkeley also pointed to a serious lack of adequately trained management personnel and a speedy, efficient procurement policy that would allow quick repairs to keep the plant fully operational.

"The city has consistently failed to respond in terms of adequate staffing," the court-appointed monitor wrote.

Even though the number of workers at the Jefferson Avenue treatment

plant doubled from 300 to 600, Bulkeley said the City of Detroit's hiring practices have hindered improvements in the plant's operation.

"Plant management has the power to discharge employees, but it has little if any subjective input into who is hired," Bulkeley said. Also, city Detroit residents are hired to work at the Jefferson Avenue plant.

"Promotions," he continued, "have been provided to individuals to fill critical operating and maintenance functions before the individuals were well qualified and trained to perform the necessary tasks."

Moreover, he predicted, "All of these staffing problems are going to be compounded as the facility attempts to achieve higher plant performance required by the effluent limitations scheduled (for) Jan. 1, 1980.

An inability of the treatment plant managers to obtain needed replacement parts quickly helped to put the plant behind schedule in meeting pollution standards, the report said.
Furthermore, Bulkeley said, "Effective preventative maintenance has not been an established process at the facility."

"One of the consultants is just completing the tagging of 20,000 equipment items and preparing an inventory control system."

The University of Michigan professor advised, "It is essential that the city devise, design, implement and maintain procurement procedures which are responsive to the reality of keeping the wastewater treatment plant fully operational."

DESPITE THE collection of findings, Bulkeley reported that the city could make the treatment plant function efficiently.

"The city mounted an extraordinary effort, starting in late November, to improve plant performance," Bulkeley said.

The water department imported a team of more than 35 persons from the consulting firm Camp, Dresser and McKee, established emergency procedures to get much-needed replacement parts and began several other procedures to bring the plant within the pollution guidelines.

Due to those emergency measures, Bulkeley said, the "plant appears to be operating" within the current effluent limitations.

Judge Feikens has taken no action on the report.
One observer, Oakland County Drain Commissioner George Kuhn, who has been involved in the matter since May 1977, said Detroit's crash program in November might convince the judge to give the city more time to straighten out the water department.

There had been speculation that Feikens would remove the water and sewerage department from the city's control and place it in a form of receivership. An Ohio judge recently placed the City of Cleveland's sewage treatment facilities in receivership because it could not meet federal guidelines.

Kuhn, however, agreed with the report's case that the city could not meet future pollution standards without November's emergency procedures being made permanent and further infuses of expertise.

Road board upgrades ombudsman

The Oakland County Road Commission's ombudsman office became the Department of Citizen Services Monday. The staff has been increased from two to four.

Michael Richardson, who headed the ombudsman office since its inception in 1973, is the new department's director. Richardson has been freed of the other duties he assumed in 1976 as secretary-clerk to road commissioners.

"Public acceptance of this specialized processing of complaints for both operational and policy responses has been great during its five year existence," said Fred D. Houghten, road commissioner, who announced the reorganization.

"More than 10,000 citizen requests

are handled annually now. In addition to assuring appropriate and timely actions by our maintenance, traffic and other departments, the ombudsman function has helped develop programs such as countywide road graveling and prompted use of specialized equipment," said Houghten.

THE NEW Department of Citizen Services also assumes the related function of processing the popular dust-control calcium chloride program.

Under this program local units of government and citizen groups contract with the road commission for four applications of the chloride and road grading during warm weather

months, Houghten said, noting, "Now one telephone number (888-4804) will service both complaints and chloriding."

Richardson's old position and title of secretary-clerk was then combined with that of managing director. This is to facilitate handling by the office of managing director the receiving and processing of claims against the road commission, said Houghten. The road commission's new risk-loss management function is a division of the office of managing director.

Other duties of the secretary-clerk have been delegated to a new position of deputy secretary-clerk who is now also director of the secretary-clerk department.

EILEEN WEST has been named deputy secretary-clerk director by managing director John Grubba. She will also continue as office manager to the offices of managing director and county highway engineer.

The new position of citizens services director has a salary range of \$22,785 to \$27,196. Richardson continues at his present salary of \$24,633.

The new position of deputy secretary-clerk-director has a salary range of \$18,418 to \$21,418. Ms. West is salaried at \$18,418.

The reorganization does not change the salary of the managing director, despite addition of the secretary-clerk title. Grubba is salaried at \$44,460.

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48" diameter dining table with chrome strip and four side chairs. The designer of this monster was the first to stand trial at the "Furniture Crimes Trials" in Grand Rapids. When you see it, you'll agree with the jury—"Guilty".....	\$1065	\$599	Spill Fattan, 72" long, 4 door buffet, with Bamboo finish to give authentic "missionary look" to homes with Victorian or Colonial decor. We've got three and if they're not sold this time around—check out the back lot for a real bargain (Ask for Gurdo).....	\$1420	\$895
60" chrome sided upholstered bench with attached cushion. This one's our "Medusa" model. It's been known to turn lookers into stone.....	\$459	\$288	Swivel rocker in grey Italian cotton, with memory foam. Even in Haiti, they no like... Memory foam reminds you never to buy another. It may have been a big hit in the jungle—but so are bananas.....	\$375	\$188
90" steel gray, cut velvet sofa with chrome base that gives it "floating" effect. Effect is right. This thing's been grounded here so long, the manufacturer's name is written in hieroglyphics.....	\$1099	\$549	2 imported custom chairs, stainless steel frame, leather straps, Aztec design. Really a gorgeous chair if you happen to live in rich ruins. Aztec design simulates Montezuma's revenge.....	\$895	\$495
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Two Baker apartment size sofas. Foam and down seats. All down back pillows. Floral design. Did we say Floral design? If flowers looked like this bees would be pollinating mushrooms!.....	\$1140	\$699	Thayer-Coggin dining room chairs. Tubular steel frames, sky blue velvet covers. Well, "sky blue" if you live in Gary, Indiana or Pataskany. These chairs are the perfect remedy for long-staying relatives.....	\$359	\$165
Elo wall system—white glass front with chrome trim. Covers eight feet of wall space. Lots of drawers, lots of doors. This one's got everything but a buyer.....	\$3654	\$1799	Complete wall system with finished chrome hardware by Baker. Not the designer, the Senator. It's the skeleton in his closet. (Oops—there goes the nomination).....	\$5969	\$2995
5 piece Stackmore folding table set. Folding cane back chairs, folding black vinyl table. The only good thing about this ugly folding table is it's easy to hide.....	\$289	\$169	Solid butcher block table (42" in diameter) and 4 leather strap chairs. This table and chair combination makes a delicate ensemble—or was that "delicatessen ensemble".....	\$699	\$399
Thayer-Coggin leather lounge chairs with chrome frames and leather strap arms. These beasts look like contemporary electric chairs. Designed to inflict cruel and unusual punishment on the buyer.....	\$969	\$449	60" inch Loveseat in velvet multi-print floral pattern. The real beauty of this couch is it makes everything else in your home look better.....	\$925	\$488
Olive ash Thayer-Coggin game table. Neither Thayer or Coggin would take the top for this bow-wow. It almost ended a beautiful partnership.....	\$720	\$449	88" inch sofa by Selig with top grade cover and chrome trim arms. As if 85" inches of ugly couch wasn't enough. Our buyer hid under this one a week after it was delivered. If he wasn't the owner he'd be fired.....	\$899	\$499
4 piece curved sectional by Century. Fully upholstered with strange pattern in questionable taste. When you fall asleep on this loser, the nightmare begins when you wake up.....	\$2715	\$1699	Plexi-glass and glass cocktail table. It's glass, brass and plenty crass. This one's responsible for three hernias. Not from lifting—from laughing. When you run out of jokes at the next party point your finger at this one.....	\$499	\$268
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