

Vandals, thefts raise prices of new houses

By MATHEW BRZEZINSKI

Home buyers may be paying more for new homes because of vandalism and theft at housing sites.

Jerry Friedman, general manager for Crestendo Homes of Canton, said that vandalism and theft are major problems, and the consumer pays for it.

He estimated that the average damage done to a house during construction is between \$500 and \$1,000. He added that some homes have been burned down by vandals.

Canton Police Officer Gordon Ste-

vens said that vandalism is "a fairly common problem," and usually involves children and neighbors who live next to the houses under construction. He said that last year in Canton, about a dozen cases of vandalism and theft from housing sites were prosecuted.

Vandalism cases are "handled as reported" and prosecution of vandals and thieves is up to the builders, according to Stevens.

Joseph Trozno, vice president of Republic Development Corp., said that vandalism "runs in streaks, declining

in the winter and increasing in the summer months." Trozno said that vandalism is "not as serious as it was a while ago and that some of the theft can be attributed to the tradespeople on the sites."

He added that he understands "the police are short of men to patrol the subdivisions," and that vandalism costs "a couple of hundred dollars per house sometimes more."

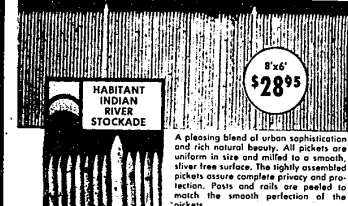
According to Lt. Donald Smith of the Wayne County Sheriff's detective bureau, the department has no special patrols in areas of new housing. He added that some building companies

hire private guards to protect property. Builders and police have reported that boards, plywood and even a furnace have been taken from houses under construction.

On April 30, some thieves went through an unlocked garage door in a new house in Canton and took kitchen cabinets and lighting fixtures worth about \$1,400, according to Canton Officer Stevens.

Stevens suggested that if people see someone moving material from a housing site and doubt that the person belongs there, they should report it.

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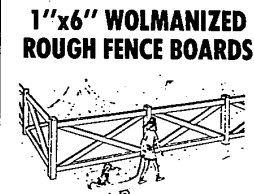
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AAA says gas will be available on holiday

About 77 percent of Michigan gas stations along major tourist routes and 48 percent in the Detroit area will be open during the Memorial Day holiday to serve motorists expected to log a record 722 million miles in the state, according to Automobile Club of Michigan (AAA).

AAA's survey of 300 outstate stations showed 230 planning to operate. The remaining 70 were uncommitted, citing the uncertainty of gasoline supplies.

Forty-eight of 100 Detroit-area stations checked plan to operate. The other 52 also were uncertain because of the gasoline crisis.

Last year, motorists set a record of 720 million miles traveled on Michigan roads during the 78-hour Memorial Day weekend.

"Early indications point to another travel record in 1979," said Joseph Ratke, AAA touring manager.

The Memorial Day weekend is the year's first big travel weekend, and AAA urges drivers to use extra caution on Michigan roads to help continue the downward trend of traffic deaths for this holiday. Last Memorial Day, 25 persons were killed on state highways compared to 31 in 1977 and 34 in 1976.

Alcohol was a major factor in last year's Memorial Day weekend deaths, with 55 percent of the 22 at-fault drivers either known or suspected to have been drinking.

About 60 percent of the fatal mishaps occurred within 25 miles of drivers' homes.

Viet refugees have trouble finding work

Vietnam refugees, rarely achieve new employment at the status level they held in their native country, according to a Michigan State University professor.

Some improve their status during their first decade of resettlement, but most have difficulties in adjusting. Barry Stein, associate professor of social science, testified in Washington recently before the House of Representatives Committee of the Judiciary's subcommittee on immigration, refugees and international law.

He urged the committee to support extensive research on any resettlement program designs, in the areas of patterns of resettlement, services, staffing, relationships between governmental and voluntary agencies, language and retraining effectiveness, and ways in which the resettlement could be internationalized.

Despite the higher educational and occupational status of most refugee groups, Stein said, the initial employment experiences in the country of resettlement are apt to produce severe drops in status.

"Unlike more conventional immigrants," Stein said, "the refugees have journeyed without thinking of the costs of assimilation. The refugees flee out of necessity and fear, and are involuntary immigrants who leave, satisfactory and often prompt posts at home."

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