Cash for trash, if there's enough to burn

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles on the proposed solid waste management plan for Oakland County. The writer is a Farmington Hills resident, well-known environmentalist, and a member of the Act 641 Committee, which will review the solid waste vian.

Though keenly aware of atrocious prices at the gasoline pump, few residents of Oakland County sense the link between energy costs and the growing mountains of garbage they produce each day.

Yet the tax drain from hauling trash and dumping it in landfills can be eased. The magic word is incinera-

facilities that burn and reduce the total amount of waste could also sell the energy and materials that are recovered. In other words, we can get cash from our trash.

cash from our trash.

SOUND, LONG-TERM solid waste management at the county level would coordinate garbage collections from each community, said County Executive Dan Murphy.

Murphy introduced the Oakland County Solid Waste Management Plan at a recent public hearing in Pontiac. He stressed the urgency of the problem, saying only four landfills remain in Oakland. Two will close this year. Studies indicate that by the year 2000, the 4,071 tons per day of refuse now produced by hornes, businesses and industries in the county will grow to 5,000 tons per day.

Inclineration is one way to reduce the county will grow to solid tons per day.

Inclineration is one way to reduce the serviced in health azards.

The 20-year plan, required by state law (PA 641 of 1978), appears to emphasize resource recovery. However, to make recoverable practicial, each community must guarantee a minimum amount of refuse. Thus, a "deficit" in

make recoverance practical, acen community must guarantee a minimum amount of refuse. Thus, a "deficit" in the amount of burnable waste would force a city or township to throw away recyclable paper.

Moreover, Camp Dresser & McKee (CDM), the county's technical consultants, recommend the processing facilities recover only ferrous metals and energy. Paper, and glass recycling would be left to volunteers.

PERHAPS A more valuable re-

source has been underestimated.

Mark Day, of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, foresees a dramatic growth in Michigan's used paper market. Great Lakes Paper Co. is building a plant in the Ohio Valley and will buy "all the paper Michigan can send," he said.

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THE COUNTY would provide only for disposal of solid waste. Collection remains the responsibility of individual municipalities and businesses. Haulers hired privately or by the community would transport trash to one of three destinations:

- a transfer station (a relatively small enclosed building).
- a processing facility
- a landfill.
Transfer stations that eliminate long hauls by collection crews are vital to a cost-effective program, Murphy said.

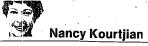
The three inclinerator finits solected by CDM include one large cogeneration-type facility (1,000-1,500 cons per day case facility (1,000-1,500 cons per day) CDM constitution units (150-500 cons per day) One of the smaller units would be in Avon Township, the other in Wixom.

The large unit would produce steam for the County Service Center, Some of

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the excess steam would be used to gen-erate electricity, allowing the county to sell both steam and electricity. The Ford plant in Wixom and the Parke-Davis plant near Rochester will buy steam from the two smaller units.

ACT 641 provides for public partici-

pation.

It requires a 13-person Solid Waste Planning Committee to advise and assist the county staff and the executive in preparation of the plan.

The committee was appointed by the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and represents the solid waste dis-

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posal industry, governmental bodies and public interest groups, Oakland's plan must be completed by July 1982, according to Act 641. All committee meetings are open to the public.

Murphy, the county staff and the commissioners hope to resolve such questions as the location of landfills needed until the year 2000 and the purchase of sites for all facilities.

These issues and othe problems that face the planning committee and the county staff will be examined more fully in future articles.



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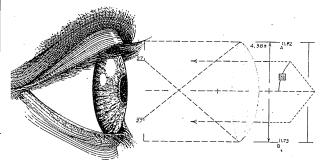
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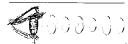
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