

ARCS to have monitor team

Two area Associations for Retarded Citizens have established a Wayne County Parent-Advocating monitoring team to check on the care and program standards in Detroit-area group homes.

The teams will be made up of parents and guardians of the retarded plus volunteers. Forming the unit are the Plymouth ARC and the ARC/Northwest Communities.

Because the monitoring efforts will involve problems of accessibility to the homes as well as identification and credibility, the two groups enlisted the help of the Michigan Department of Mental Health, which oversees group homes for the retarded.

It will train volunteer monitors and clarify standards for evaluation.

Alice Sauls of Plymouth ARC and Irene Brooks of Northwest ARC have been conducting sessions for 15 monitors, who will visit DMH homes in Wayne County with four or more residents.

Each two-person monitoring team will include one of these specially trained core members. They will be equipped with photo identification cards. Their task will be to visit these homes and offer comments on them to the DMH metropolitan regional office.

Pollution 'bank' can aid development

Is there really a pollution banking system used by industry? Please tell me we don't actually reward companies for causing pollution.

Jeff M., Detroit

The ERC, Emission Reduction Credit, banking system, now under consideration for southeast Michigan does in a sense reward those industries that cause pollution problems. But pollution first must be reduced for this program to work.

Initiated by the state of California and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a "trade-off" policy in response to the clean air vs. economic de-

consumer mailbag

velopment dilemma, ERCs are designed to eliminate potential obstacles to economic development in older industrialized areas failing to meet the Clean Air Acts federal air-quality standards.

An ERC is created when a pollution source (like a factory) reduces pollutant emissions by an amount greater than the law requires.

For example, the XYZ Co. emits 100 tons of a certain regulated pollutant each year. The law requires that XYZ reduce that amount by 25 tons per

year. But, through the introduction of advanced pollution-control equipment, the company cuts its annual pollution by 50 tons. The 25 tons, above and beyond the required reduction, becomes an ERC.

"Banking" these credits would allow older industrialized areas such as southeast Michigan to "draw" on them

as needed, thus encouraging expansion of existing industry and allowing new industry to locate in these areas that would otherwise not be available.

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) has created a task force to investigate the possibility of establishing an ERC registering system. For more information, contact the air-quality staff at 961-4266.

Consumer Mailbag answers your questions on consumer and environmental topics. Address mail to Grace R. Gluskin, Concern, Inc., Detroit, 1 Northfield Plaza, Troy 48068.

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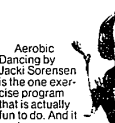
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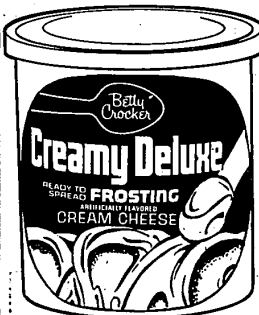
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