

Water lines from page 1A

situated in proximity. That's why this new proposal has some appeal to me. At least we'll get the water lines into the residence."

The Oct. 19 move estimated that owners of the four lots requesting water would pay a total of \$38,000 for the water main. But the payback system for \$44,500 would also be distributed against the 24 lots in the neighborhood.

"The residents of Biddestone have fronted \$2,000 to front the lines and they don't get any benefit," Rycroft said. "We're trying to get it working within our subdivision. Two of our residents are going to get it, and there are five who want it and can't have it."

Rycroft proposed that the city install water lines to the entire neighborhood. She said that

doing so now would save the city money. She also said the \$240,000 cost (based on earlier reports to the council) to install lines throughout the subdivision, would be offset by the 24 lots already willing to pay the original \$1,850 per lot and by eight lots willing to pay their full \$10,000 share immediately to tie into the city's system.

The city avoided taking action on Rycroft's proposal and asked for additional information. City Manager William Costick said the city could investigate the feasibility of installing a water line through the entire neighborhood. The council will revisit the issue in February.

Costick also said such decisions cannot really be made until

the moratorium on hook ups to city water lines is lifted, if it is lifted.

Mayor Jon Grant said he voted against the four-lot special assessment district proposal and that he would vote against the new proposal, saying he did not want the city to front any money toward the mains as long as the moratorium was in effect.

Rycroft said she hoped the council would take action sooner. "I wanted to get this done," she said. "Things change and we all expect to be treated equally and there's a strong feeling that we aren't being treated equally."

But Mayor-elect Nancy Bates told Rycroft that hooking up the Biddestone residents at city expense could set an expensive precedent.

"I see no rationale for treating Biddestone differently," Bates said. "We've stretched our policy to the limit. What we did for those people, we did for other people in other neighborhoods. Just bring us a majority."

When another council member suggested creating a special assessment district for the lots that now want water, Rycroft said that the new lots were not contiguous and that the lot owners did not want to impose additional costs to their neighbors who are content with well water.

"I just want everybody to be treated fairly," Rycroft said. "How can you justify giving two people water for \$45,000? Two residents are going to have water and five more who want it."

CLARIFICATION

A story in Monday's Observer incorrectly said that Michael Shutes, who was sentenced for computer fraud, was a junior at Lawrence Technological University. School officials say he is not enrolled at the school.

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Hazards from page 1A

Along with the Christmas season, comes the heating season. That means chimneys, fireplaces and space heaters will be in heavy use. Farmington Hills firefighters have already responded to chimney fires, Garr said.

"The problem is that the creosote catches fire as the chimney and masonry deteriorate," Garr said. "These fires are usually only visible from the outside. Usually a neighbor calls them in."

Fire places are usually not designed for heavy use, he said. And no matter how few times they are

used, fire places and chimneys should be inspected.

If you like the effect of a fire place, consider converting it to gas, Garr said.

"You get the effect of a real fire place, and then you can turn it off before you go to bed," he said.

Regular home furnaces and water heaters can also be a problem, because people sometimes put combustibles too close to them, he said.

Although Farmington Hills offers residents a free inspection and free smoke detectors, many

do not take advantage, Garr said. "We've given out about 1,000 smoke detectors in seven years," he said. "We will probably give out another 200 this year."

Garr offers these suggestions for winter fire safety:

- Have a smoke detector for each level of your home.
- Test smoke detectors regularly.
- Have a working fire extinguisher in your kitchen, work shop and family room.
- Have your fire department's emergency telephone number at the phone.

- Know how to report a fire: Call from outside the building, give name, location and type of fire clearly.
- Have a fire exit drill for your family.
- Make sure the kitchen area is free of oil and grease.
- Do not smoke in bed.
- Have your furnace cleaned and maintained regularly.
- Keep the furnace area free of trash, papers and paint.
- Do not overload electrical outlets.

Farmington Observer
(USPS 07-840)
Published every Monday and Thursday by Observer & Commerce Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009 0910. Second class postage paid at Birmingham, MI 48009 0910. Postmaster: Send address changes to Observer & Commerce, Newspapers 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009 0910. Telephone 644-1100.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One year (Oakland County)	\$36.40
Resident	per copy, \$04
One year (elsewhere in Michigan)	\$50.00
One year (elsewhere in U.S.A.)	\$60.00

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