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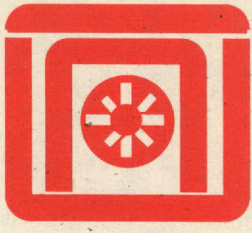
Newsletter of the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority

✓ DEC 03 1997

NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

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November 1997



U.S. HOUSE APPROVES LLW COMPACT COMPACT & SITE ARE 2 DIFFERENT ISSUES

On October 7, the United States Congress took a giant step toward ratifying a compact for low-level-radioactive waste (LLW) disposal between Maine, Vermont and Texas. On a vote of 309 to 107, the House of Representatives approved the compact. Twenty-two of the 30 members of the Texas House delegation voted for ratification. An amendment by Representative Lloyd Doggett (D-Austin) was adopted as a condition of the House's approval of the compact. The amendment states that the compact is approved for so long as "no low-level radioactive waste is brought into Texas from any state other than Maine or Vermont."

The compact will next be considered by the U.S. Senate in the next few weeks.

In many instances, the news media and parties opposing the proposed Hudspeth County LLW site have stated that the compact's approval by the House of Representatives reflects automatic approval of the LLW disposal site. The LLW project and the compact are two separate issues. The Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority (the Authority) was created specifically to site, develop, operate and eventually close a disposal facility for LLW waste generated in Texas. The facility will require a permit from the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission. The Authority's duties are specifically outlined in Chapter 402 of the State's Health and Safety Code.

The Texas-Maine-Vermont compact was proposed by the Texas Governor's office in 1993 in to protect the State and allow it to limit access to its site. Of all the states which are currently unaffiliated with any approved compact, Maine and Vermont are the two which produce the least amount of waste. In addition, the proposed compact statute (Chapter 403 of the Texas Health and Safety Code) would limit waste from Maine and Vermont to only 20% of the total amount of waste to be disposed of at the Texas facility by the host state over its 50 year lifetime. A compact commission comprised of 8 commissioners would administer the laws of the compact to ensure compliance with the law.

All commissioners for the compact commission will be appointed by the governors of each state. To date, two commissioners representing Maine and Vermont have been appointed. The six Texas commissioners have yet to be appointed.

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S.B. SEWER SYSTEM PROJECT MAKING PROGRESS

Despite a few setbacks since its initial 1990 proposal, construction of the Sierra Blanca sewer system project is anticipated to begin early next year.

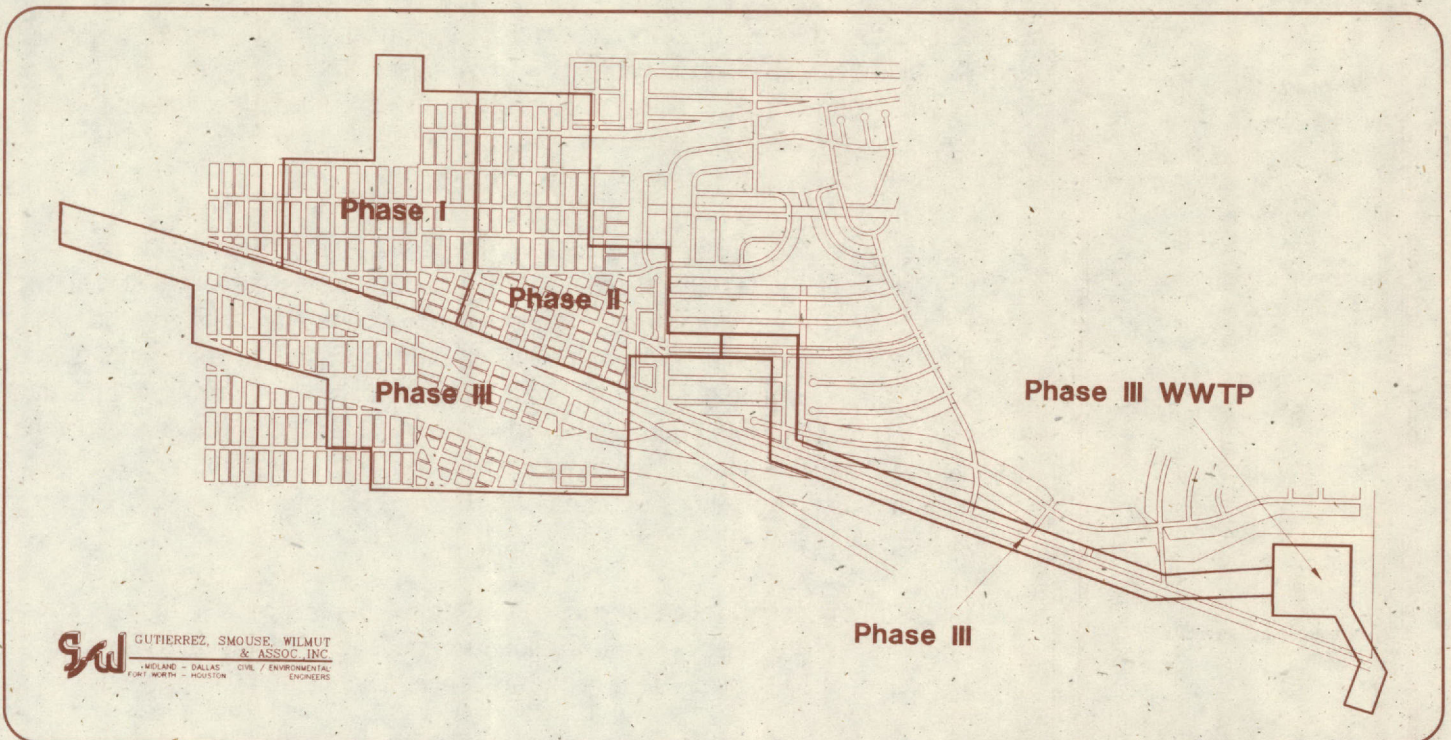
"Pending approval of additional funding for Phase 3 of the project, we are hoping to begin construction in early 1998 and be in operation by the fall," said Steve Dennis, project engineer from GSW & Associates, a civil and environmental engineering firm with offices in Midland, Dallas, Fort Worth and Houston.

The Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) has issued the wastewater discharge permit for the 3-phase project which will consist of collection lines and a wastewater treatment facility to serve all of Sierra Blanca, including an EDAP area (Economically Distressed Area Program) within the community. "Phases 1 and 2, which are funded under the Texas Community Development Program, include the entire area west of the Catholic Church and north of the railroad," said Dennis. Phase 3 includes the EDAP

area - south of the railroad tracks and east of the Catholic Church - and consists of the actual wastewater treatment plant plus collection lines.

Bidding for the project took place in June 1997. Contracts were awarded for Phases 1 and 2, but the Phase 3 portion of the project was recently rebid, and an additional \$950,000 grant to fund it is pending approval by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). "At the direction of the TWDB, this phase of the project was rebid as two separate contracts: the wastewater treatment plant contract and the sewer collection lines contract," said Dennis. On October 21, Phase 3 construction contracts were awarded to two El Paso firms. "Horak Construction, Inc. will construct the wastewater treatment facility and Silverton Construction will construct the sewer collection lines," confirmed Mac Marquez, general manager of the Hudspeth County Water Control & Improvement District #1(WC&ID).

(continued on next page)



Sierra Blanca Sewer System Project Layout

Site Tour for County Residents

The Authority will be offering a tour of the proposed low-level radioactive waste disposal (LLW) site to interested Hudspeth County residents on Thursday, November 6, beginning promptly at 12:15 p.m. The tour will consist of an explanation of the proposed LLW disposal method, plus a tour of the exploratory trench, demonstration trench cap and potential vegetative cover projects. Included in the tour will be the demonstration disposal canisters and typical waste packaging.

County residents interested in participating should contact the field office for reservations at (915) 369-3391 by 3:00 p.m., Monday, November 3, 1997. Participants will be asked to meet at the Authority's field office located at Mile Marker 112, I-10 East, approximately 5 miles east of Sierra Blanca. Duration of the tour may be anywhere from one to one and a half hours.

Hudspeth Site a "Done Deal"?

(continued from pg. 1)

Should the U.S. Senate also approve the compact bill (as passed by the House), the proposed Texas-Maine-Vermont LLW Compact will have been ratified. In such case, under the terms of the compact, Maine and Vermont would have 20% access to whatever LLW disposal site Texas opens up for LLW disposal. However, approval of the compact does not guarantee that the LLW site proposed for Hudspeth County will be licensed.

For more information please feel free to contact either of the Authority's offices. ☺

A Word With the Public...

(will continue with the January 1998 issue)

Sewer Project Overcomes Setbacks

(continued from pg. 2)

"We still can not begin construction until the funding has been approved, but we do anticipate an answer by January 1998," added Dennis. Project construction will take approximately 270 days to complete.

"After all the delays, we feel like we're finally making real progress," stated Marquez. "Acquiring the property for the wastewater treatment facility took up about eight months of our time. We also encountered a property line dispute which, although resolved, held us up some. Now we have funding for Phase 3 pending approval; however, I don't foresee any problems and we should know something by January of next year," he added.

The \$2.3 million construction cost of the project is being funded by grants from the Texas Water Development Board, and the Texas Community Development Program. The County's portion of the funds is being paid with planning and implementation funds paid to Hudspeth County by the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority. Funding for Phase 3 is being administered by the WC&ID.

Silverton Construction Company of El Paso was also awarded the \$409,722 construction contracts for Phases 1 and 2. Construction of Phase 3 will be the most expensive at approximately \$1.8 million. "This is expensive because of the wastewater treatment plant, plus, there are also many highway crossings where the collection system is to be emplaced, therefore, boring and jacking is required as opposed to simple opening and cutting," stated Dennis.

"I look forward to completion of this project by late next year," said Marquez. ☺

TO THE POINT

-- by Rick Jacobi, General Manager

As you know, Beth Absher passed away on August 28 after a long battle with cancer. She was a loyal employee and a good friend, and we will all miss her. In looking back over the few years I knew Beth, I remember her most for her deep commitment to her family and the people of Sierra Blanca, whom she loved dearly.

Beth was the person who I relied on to get things done when they needed to be done. She never objected to my calls to make a quick trip to El Paso, to come to Austin for a last minute meeting, or to respond to a weekend or late night emergency at the field office. She could always be depended on to make whatever decisions were needed to get the job done.

But, what I will most remember about Beth is her loyalty to and love for the people in Sierra Blanca. Few people in the community know about or appreciate the numerous times she would call me to lobby for some person or activity in town. She always made sure that Sierra Blancans got first choice for jobs. She called to make sure that we were planning to support the stock show or the museum or the school children. She never hesitated to talk straight with me, no matter how pleasant or unpleasant it needed to be. I always admired her for that.



TLLRWDA Board to Meet in S.B.

The next quarterly meeting of the Authority's Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, November 13, 1997 in Sierra Blanca, Texas. The Board will convene at 10:00 a.m. in the District Courtroom of the Hudspeth County Courthouse. This meeting is open to the public. For additional information please contact the Authority's Austin office at (512) 451-5292.

S.B. Resident Hired by Authority

The Authority staff welcomes Julie Porter, the new administrative technician at the Sierra Blanca field office. Julie comes to the Authority from Merco Joint Venture where she served as security and traffic coordinator. She brings with her varied work experience including all aspects of clerical work, cotton farm record keeping, and restaurant waitressing.

Originally from Farmington, New Mexico, Julie now shares a home in Sierra Blanca with her husband George and their three children.

"I'm thrilled to be a member of the Authority's work team and I look forward to fruition of the facility and it being a model for safe disposal of low-level waste," stated Julie.

Veterans To Be Honored in S.B.

Sierra Blanca's Chamber of Commerce invites you to help honor the community's veterans on Tuesday, November 11, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Methodist Church Hall. A pancake supper, including "the works", will be available free of charge to all Sierra Blanca veterans and their spouses. The public is invited to join in the celebration: Supper cost for non-veteran participants will be as follows: Adults \$3 and Children (under 12) and Senior Citizens \$1.50.

For more information please contact Ms. Rhonda Willis at 369-4118, or Ms. Billie Dell French at 369-2050.

NOVEMBER 1997

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3 S.B. School Staff Mtg., 3:15 PM Deadline to sign up for TLLRWDA site tour	4 ELECTION DAY	5 S.B. Beta Sigma Phi Mtg., 6:30 PM (S.B. Library) S.B. FFA Mtg. (TBA) S.B. School Progress Reports	6 TLLRWDA Site Tour, 12:15 PM (Auth. Field Office) S.B. Jr. H. S. Football, 5:00 PM (Dell City)	7 S.B. Varsity Ftball. vs. Dell City 6:30 PM (S.B.) (Homecoming)	8 S.B. School Regional Cross Country Track Meet (Lubbock)
9	10 Hudspeth County Commiss. Crt. Mtg. 9:00 AM S.B. 4H Club Mtg. 1:30 PM (Library)	11 VETERANS DAY S.B. School Board Mtg., 6:00 PM S.B. Chamber's Veterans Pancake Supper, 6:00 PM (Methodist Hall)	12 S. B. Chamber of Commerce Mtg. 6:00 PM (Library) S.B. NHS, NJHS Mtgs. (TBA)	13 TLLRWDA Board Mtg., 10:00 AM (S.B. Courthouse)	14	15
16	17 S.B. School Staff Mtg., 3:15 PM	18 S.B. School Varsity Bsktbl. @ N.E.C.A. 6:00 PM H.C. Water District Mtg., 5:00 PM	19 S.B. Beta Sigma Phi Mtg., 6:00 PM (Methodist Hall)	20 H.C. Historical Society Meeting 1:00 PM (Depot Museum)	21 S.B. School Varsity Bsktbl., 6:00 PM (Ft. Hancock)	22
23	24 Hudspeth County Commiss. Crt. Mtg. 9:00 AM S.B. Jr. H.S. Bsktbl. vs. Dell City 5:00 PM (S.B.)	25 S.B. School Early Dismissal 1:00 PM	26 S.B. School Holiday	27 THANKSGIVING DAY	28 STATE & COUNTY HOLIDAY S.B. School Holiday	29
30						



Neighbor To Neighbor is published monthly by the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority (the Authority). The Authority is the State agency responsible for siting, constructing, operating and eventually closing a low-level radioactive waste disposal facility for the State. The Authority is headquartered in Austin, Texas and also has a field office in Sierra Blanca, Texas.

Please feel free to visit or contact the Authority at the following addresses and phone/fax numbers:

ATTN: Adriana Rhames TLLRWDA 7701 N. Lamar, Ste. 300 Austin, TX 78752 Phone: (512) 451-5292 Fax: (512) 451-5296	TLLRWDA I-10 E., Mile Marker 112 P.O. Box 361 Sierra Blanca, TX 79851 Phone: (915) 369-3391 Fax: (915) 369-3181
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TELL US ABOUT IT... 

We are working hard to provide you with the most up-to-date and accurate information pertaining to our project. Please feel free to comment, ask questions and/or make suggestions:

Comments/Comentario :

Multiple horizontal lines for writing comments.

Name/Nombre: _____

Address/Dirección: _____

Phone / Teléfono: _____



Mail To/Envíe á:

ATTN: Editor
TLLRWDA
7701 N. Lamar, #300
Austin, TX 78752

COMPARTA SU COMENTARIO... 

Deseamos ofrecerle la información mas precisa y reciente tocante a nuestro proyecto. Por favor envienos su comentario perteneciente al proyecto y/o a este boletín de noticias.

**Texas Low-Level Radioactive
Waste Disposal Authority
7701 North Lamar, Ste. 300
Austin, TX 78752**