

Alder Creek water rates take 43% jump

by JOHN KLINE

Red Bennett, owner of Alder Creek Water Co., has raised the monthly rates for homeowners on all five subsystems of the company.

The monthly user charge has been raised from \$6.85 to \$9.85, an increase of 43.3 percent over the previous rate.

One property owner with service at the Alder Creek-Riverside system on Kirkwood Drive has protested the increase to Bennett in writing. Ed Bock said he would pursue "through business or legal recourse an action to gain your compliance with reasonable rate increases" for the water users in my area.

But the company is not regulated by the state Public Utility Commission (PUC) and is not required to seek permission for rate ad-

justments.

Rates on the systems had been raised from \$3.17 and \$5 to \$6.85 a month in January, 1978.

Bennett said this week that he raised the fees to pay for additional expenses he expects to incur on the systems this year.

One expense, he said, was to have water samples taken and tested in order to meet water quality standards of the Environmental Protection Agency. He said the state Health Department had been doing the testing but stopped the practice this month.

Bennett also said he will have to pay for improvements to the Alder Creek-Barlow system to bring water quality standards up to par with EPA guidelines.

The company was cited last summer by EPA and the

state Health Division for having unusually high coliform bacteria counts in the Barlow system.

PUC information officer Jonne Hower said this week that the commission does not regulate water companies when the monthly rate is below \$10. Alder Creek Water Company is 15 cents a month under that ceiling.

However, the PUC will regulate small water companies when the total billing for a company exceeds \$20,000 a year, or when there are at least 200 connections.

Alder Creek Water Company is close on both instances. Bennett reported total billing in 1977 of \$17,000 (when the rate was \$6.85 a month). And he reported 190 customers were being served then.

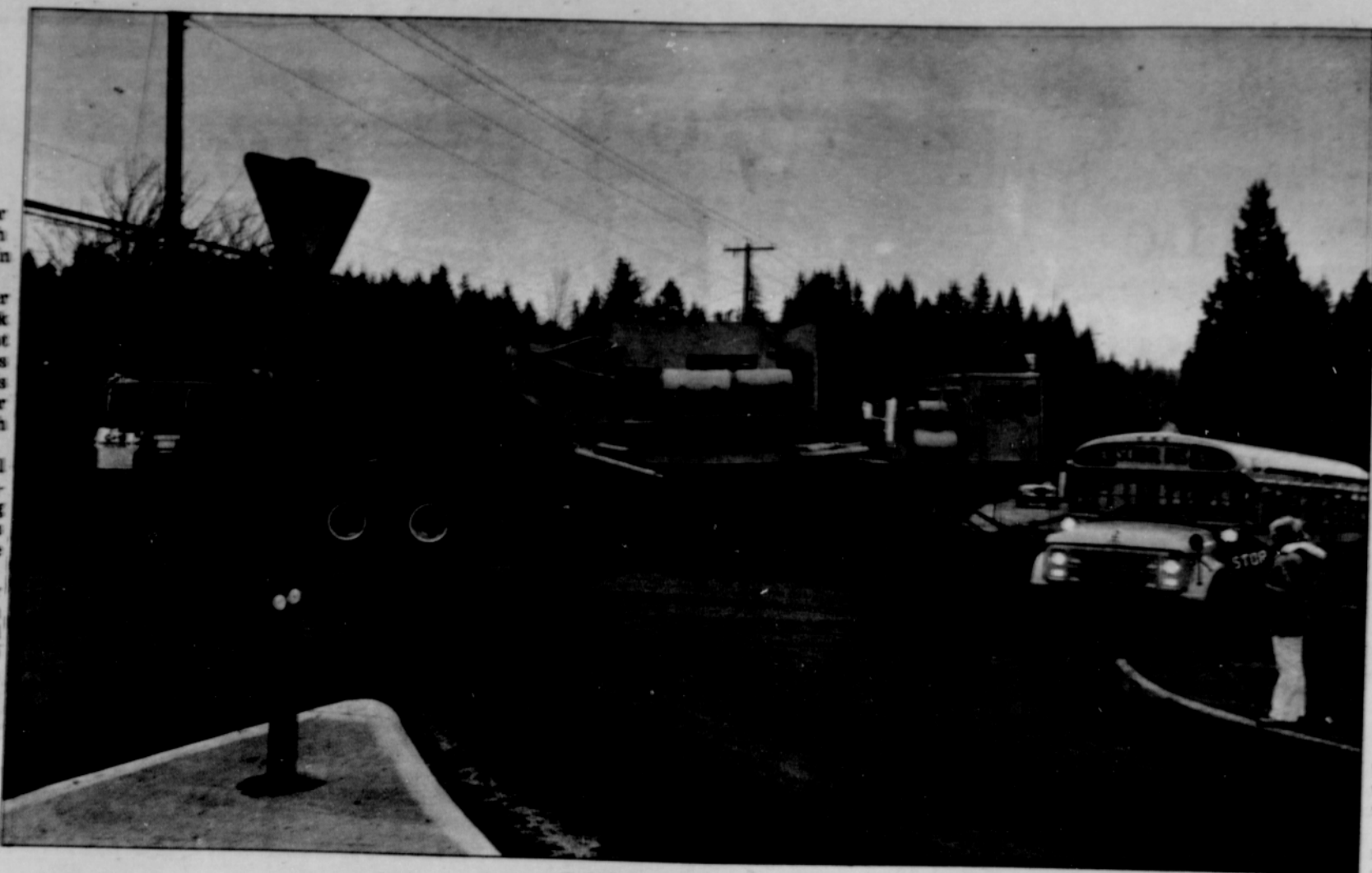
Bennett gave a breakdown this week on the number of customers who currently are served by the company. His figures are: Alder Creek-Barlow, 70 connections, Riverside, 40, Country Club, 42, Sleepy Hollow, 28, and Wildwood Annex, 19.

The total comes to 199, one short of the number required for the company to come under jurisdiction of the PUC.

But at \$18.20 charge per year for each customer, the total billing for the company would come to \$22,458. That figure is \$2,458 above the bottom limit for jurisdiction by the PUC.

Hower said the PUC is reluctant to monitor small water companies. There are hundreds of them around the state.

However, legislation will be introduced in the Legislature this year to give local governing bodies — cities and counties — jurisdiction over the small utilities. If the law is passed, water companies would be required to justify rate increases before passing them on to the customers.



High-centered

Mark Floyd photo

A TRUCK hauling a piece of rock-crushing equipment got stuck at the crown of the hill near the intersection of Highway 26 and 211 in Sandy Tuesday morning. The equipment was being taken to Bend by the C & H Transportation Company of Dallas when the driver had to pull over because of the

icy roads. When the truck backed out onto the highway Tuesday, it became stuck on the crown of the hill and the vehicle's clutch burned out. A heavy-duty tow truck finally removed the stuck rig early Tuesday afternoon.

Dog license sale set

A representative from the Clackamas County Animal Control office will be at the Sandy City Hall Jan. 18 and Feb. 7 and 18 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To purchase a dog license you must have a rabies

inoculation certificate, valid through Oct. 31, 1979. License fee is \$10 for all fertile dogs, male or female and \$5 for spayed or neutered dogs.

For further information, call 655-4628 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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Hoodland Fire Department seeks equipment shed permit

The Clackamas County Hearings Officer will consider a request from the Hoodland Fire Department for a temporary permit for a 2,400 square foot equipment shed and Monday at 7 p.m. in the county courthouse.

The metal building would be designed to house three pieces of large equipment. The existing building would be converted into a day room, an office, reception area and sleeping quarters.

The department's fire engines and hoses have been freezing and deteriorating in the weather, according to Fire Chief Don Armintrout.

Property owners within 250 feet of the county property that the building sits on gave their permission for its construction.

Approval was delayed in early January because the Planning Commission failed to give the official notice 10 days before the hearing date.

"We won't be able to use the building until March or April," Armintrout said. "It's going to be too late to help with the freezing equipment. I'll have to work those guys to death in January to keep the equipment thawed."

Boe leads Senate

State Senator Ken Jernsted received the unanimous support of his Republican colleagues for the job of Senate President when that body reconvened earlier this month.

But he lost out to Democrat Jason Boe of Reedsport who was re-elected to the position.

Jernsted, in his 13th year in the Legislature, was named to four committees. He will serve as vice-chairman for the Joint Committee on

Trade and Economic Development.

That panel will play a role in the state's efforts to develop trade markets in the Far East in conjunction with President Carter's recognition of China, Jernsted said.

Jernsted said he will work to pass Gov. Atiyeh's revenue plans which call for nearly 25 percent of state revenue in the coming two years to be distributed as direct tax relief.

Library Notes

State Aid Grant money has made possible the addition of a new Awareness Library to the juvenile collection of Sandy Public Library, according to librarian Sue Newland.

The Collection covers many subjects, including birth, death, environment, drug abuse, prejudice, adoption and divorce. "The series is intended to help the child cope with problems such as being left-handed or wearing glasses," Mrs. Newland said.

The series includes 34 titles and should answer many

questions of interest and concern to children.

Other new titles added in the juvenile and easy category are: "Benjamin Bounces Back" by Alan Baker, "Blubber" by Judy Blume, "Drawing Dogs and Puppies" by Paul Frame, and "The Hedgehog Feast" by Edith Holden.

New adult books include: "The Far Pavilions" by M.M. Kaye, "Country Things" by Eric De Jong, "True Remarkable Occurrences" by John Train, and "The Glass Flame" by Phyllis Whitney.

Festival committee honored

The Sandy Mountain Festival Committee has won the January award of the Gresham Chamber of Commerce for outstanding community service to Gresham.

The rotating Stuart Anderson Citizenship Award was presented by Gresham chamber president Bob Hauser last Tuesday at Bowman's Resort at a Sandy Area Chamber of

Commerce installation banquet.

The plaque is presented monthly to an outstanding community or individual for "exemplary service to the Gresham community and for setting an example of high standards of performance as a dedicated citizen."

The Sandy Mountain Festival Committee won the award for the month of January.

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