

Pollution Control Measures Are Needed To Clean Up Nation's Water Supplies

Washington—(UPI)—America's need for pure water is growing at an astronomical rate. The nation now uses an average of 322.9 billion gallons of water a day. Experts predict water use will jump to 411.2 billion gallons daily by 1970 and to 597.1 billion gallons daily by 1980.

At the same time, most of the nation's rivers—the main source of water—are becoming more seriously polluted every day.

Residents of Washington don't need water tests to tell them on summer days that the Potomac river has become virtually an open sewer.

New England's Connecticut river has been declared unsafe as a public water supply, and

the pollution situation on the Mississippi river at St. Louis has been classified as "serious." In California, dissolved fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides choke the lower San Joaquin river during the irrigation season. The same problem exists in nearly every part of the nation.

Against this backdrop, some 1,500 persons will gather in Washington Dec. 12-14 for the first National Conference on Water Pollution.

Dr. Leroy E. Burney, surgeon general of the U.S. Public Health Service, has called the meeting at the request of President Eisenhower and Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Arthur S. Flemming.

Rainmaker Ability Still Questionable, Physics Head Says

New York, N.Y.—(Scientific American Feature)—Although it has been convincingly demonstrated by a dozen years of experimentation that man can sometimes cause rain to fall by seeding clouds with various substances, the efficacy of the rainmaker's art is still questionable, according to B. J. Mason, head of the cloud physics laboratory at the Imperial College of Science and Technology in London.

"During the 1930's Tor Bergeron of Sweden and Walter Findeisen of Germany provided a theory of cloud behavior that seems to account satisfactorily for much of the world's precipitation," says Dr. Mason. "They proposed that clouds remain stable until a small percentage of the cloud droplets finally freeze spontaneously or otherwise. When water molecules are locked into place in an ice crystal, they evaporate much less rapidly than they do from a drop of water. As a result the crystals grow more rapidly than the droplets; finally, as the air is denuded of moisture by the ice crystals, the water droplets evaporate and disappear. The ice crystals meanwhile grow large enough to fall toward the earth. (Even on a hot summer day the air above 15,000 feet is usually below freezing.) In falling into the lower, warmer region of the cloud, the snowflakes may melt and reach the ground as raindrops."

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Costs A Lot of Money To Count All Noses

New York—(UPI)—It costs a lot of money to count 180 million noses.

According to the Tax Foundation, the cost of running the 1960 census was \$127 million or 71 cents a person, against \$91 million or 60 cents a person in 1950.

Salem—(UPI)—Rep. Ed Benedict (D-Portland) said Tuesday a proposal to let individual counties choose daylight saving time if they want it will be presented to the legislature in a few days.

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Representatives of federal, state and local governments, industry and agriculture, conservation groups and civic associations will attempt to outline the nation's pollution control needs for the coming decade.

Their findings and opinions, Dr. Burney said, will be presented to the new administration and the new Congress.

Here are some questions and answers about the problems facing the conference:

Q.—What are the chief causes of polluted streams?

A.—Municipal sewage and industrial wastes, along with some agricultural pollution. In the last 50 years, municipal wastes rose 200 per cent, while industrial pollution jumped 2,900 per cent. Streams also have received an increase in chemicals from insecticides that are washed into water supplies. Added to this is the danger, not entirely in the future, of radioactive wastes contaminating the water we use.

Q.—Is the pollution problem widespread?

A.—Yes, every section of the nation is affected. Boston Harbor, southern Lake Michigan, San Francisco Bay and the Hudson, Delaware, Ohio, Cumberland, Arkansas, Red and Colorado rivers are among the major waterways with serious pollution problems.

Q.—What is the pollution-control picture at this time?

A.—The U.S. Public Health Service estimates the nation needs \$4 billion in municipal and industrial sewage treatment plants that it doesn't have. Experts say that 4,000 new sewage plants and the modernization of an additional 1,700 others are needed to handle the present load of municipal sewage and that industry needs 6,000 new projects right now.

Q.—What has been done to combat municipal pollution in recent years?

A.—In the last four years, some \$1,004,000,000 has been spent on municipal sewage facilities. The federal government has provided \$180 million of this amount. Results of the expenditures included 2,156 new sewage treatment plants and the improvement of 21,000 miles of streams.

Q.—How much will it cost to provide full pollution control by 1968?

A.—Local governments will have to spend \$4.6 billion and it will cost industry between \$575 and \$600 million annually if the nation is to have adequate sewage facilities by 1968.

Q.—What is the largest problem in controlling pollution?

A.—The Public Health Service says the biggest difficulty is "building public awareness and public interest in the problem" of pollution.

Q.—What are some of the other problems?

A.—Indifference often results because communities and corporations building sewage treatment plants do not profit directly. It is the cities and industries down river that reap the benefits of clean water. Moreover, proper pollution control requires large-scale planning and this pre-

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Prairie Dogs Get Own Town

Lubbock, Tex.—(UPI)—One of the country's strongest towns is a tiny but bustling village that looks something like a vast bed of baby volcanoes.

The town is only seven-and-a-half acres in area, and has a current population of 600.

It is "Prairie Dog Town, U.S.A.," situated at Lubbock, Tex., where the West Texas plains lay a flatland carpet to the Panhandle.

The chubbier, best-cared-for prairie dogs imaginable live in the town, pampered from visitors' handouts and protected by a fence from outside invasions.

The prairie dogs didn't always have it so good. They were about to be erased from the West Texas countryside until nature lovers stepped in to save the little members of the squirrel family.

The naturalists helped create the town out of part of MacKenzie State Park.

The prairie dog population of 600 at the village is small compared with the estimated 400 million of the little dogs that used to romp the area a half-century ago.

Widespread use of poisoned grain to clear ranch and farming land of prairie dog burrows decimated their herds.

The small animals, which get their name from their similarity to cuddly little pups, are considered rare now in parts of the Texas range.

Kennedy M. Clapp of Lubbock, a former member of the State Parks Board, was their earliest champion.

"Why get rid of them?" Clapp asked. "Why not keep them in their own village?"

So the prairie dogs were given the tract ringed by a stone fence and filled with the doggondest maze of prairie dog burrows one could find.

The dogs sink their homes about 12 to 20 feet underground and the tunnel runs about 6 to 15 feet horizontally below the earth. The loose dirt is used to form a dike around the burrow entrance, giving a volcano-like appearance to the home. The dike wards off flash flooding of the home.

The prairie dogs attract a couple of million visitors each year, and the Sultan of Morocco became so fascinated with the little animals after seeing them in a movie that he asked for several as pets. They also are sent to parks and zoos that agree to pamper them.

Defense System

Along with the protective dikes, they have a civil defense system all their own.

The prairie dogs don't allow vegetation to grow taller than six inches within 100 feet of a burrow. This permits them to keep a lookout for intruders. If an intruder approaches, the dogs chatter a warning to the town. They all freeze until the intruder gets too close, then a final warning sends them scurrying underground. When danger is past, the residents bark an all-clear and the prairie dogs resume their solemn posts at the entrances to the burrows.

Three dozen dried eggs weigh only about one pound.



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