

Growing Population Poses Headache for Health Authorities

By CLEVE TWITCHELL
Mail Tribune Staff Writer

Jackson county's growing population, coupled with the desire of more and more city dwellers to move out into the country, is posing something of a headache for local health officials.

Country homes require private sewage disposal systems, and too many people who build rural homes think of the view, house location, where to put the garage and swimming pool and the well before they get around to considering the septic system.

and other diseases caused by intestinal tract bacteria," Dr. Merkel continued.

"One of the present health problems is infectious hepatitis, which is becoming more and more prevalent. And health authorities feel that no doubt its largest source is sewage contaminated water and food supplies."

Contaminate Garden
Sewage can even contaminate a vegetable garden, especially if shallow well irrigation water is used. Another aspect of the problem is the situation posed by sewage coming to the surface of the ground or collecting in roadside ditches.

Children may play in it and pick up diseases, or pets may play in it and transmit diseases to their owners.

Most rural homes in Jackson county are served by systems composed of a septic tank and underground tile field. Contrary to the impression given by the word "tank," the sewage does not remain in the septic tank.



INSPECTING SYSTEM—Orie Moore, senior sanitarian with the Jackson county health department, looks over a private septic system being installed at a rural area home. The septic tank may be seen partially covered by earth near the center of the picture. The smaller container in the foreground is the distribution box.

"The best soil for a septic system," according to sanitarian Moore, "is one where the effluent gently seeps through — not gravel where it goes through too quickly,

or clay where it seeps slowly or not at all."

Purification of the effluent is accomplished by soil bacteria, which normally are found only in the first three feet of soil below the surface of the ground. And so, if the effluent seeps through too quickly, the soil bacteria do not have sufficient time to do their work. If it seeps too slowly or not at all, it doesn't reach enough of the soil bacteria in order to be purified.

Unfortunately, much of the ground in the Rogue Valley is not well suited for good sewage disposal. "The good ground for drainage systems is about gone and builders are now moving out into marginal ground areas," Moore said.

"The time may come when a metropolitan sewer system will be the only answer."

The main problem with valley soil is that a high percentage of it contains so much clay that water is absorbed too slowly. In other parts of the valley there are only a few inches of good topsoil on top of sandstone or hardpan, whereas good soil to a depth of at least 30 inches is recommended for suitable purification of the effluent.

Still other parts of the valley floor have a tight clay strata or rock formation located near the surface which creates a high water table. A percolation test will reveal all of these factors, Moore noted, and such a test will

also reveal the amount of drainfield required in the particular soil involved.

In a percolation test, holes are drilled in the earth to determine the rate at which water will seep into the ground. The holes usually are drilled to a depth of 30 inches to determine if there are any high water tables or hardpan formations that close to the surface. If a high water table or impervious formation is found, the ground is considered not suitable for a good septic system.

Not Considered Suitable
And soil which will not accept water at the rate of better than 1 inch per hour also is not considered suitable.

The minimum area required for a drainfield is determined by the number of minutes it takes for the soil to absorb an inch of water. For example, if the percolation rate is five minutes per inch, the number of square feet in the drainfield required per bedroom, according to Oregon standards, is 110 square feet. (FHA standards call for 125). If the percolation rate is 30 minutes, the Oregon standard calls for 210 square feet, FHA for 250. And if the percolation rate is a full hour, the Oregon minimum is 250 square feet, FHA 300.

The number of bedrooms in the house also has a bearing on the size the septic tank should be. For instance, a one bedroom house is considered to require a tank capable of holding at least 500 gallons; a two-bedroom, 750 gallons; a three-bedroom, 900 gallons; and a four-bedroom house, 1,000 gallons.

Will Start Overflowing
If the tank is too small, Moore said, solids won't stay in it properly and will start overflowing into the drainfield.

To guard against contamination of water supplies, it is recommended that no septic system be within 50 feet of a well. Actually a distance of 100 feet is recommended, and the FHA requirement is

100 feet. The septic system also should be 10 feet from any property line and 10 feet from the foundation of the house.

Therefore, a house which gets its water supply from a well should have a minimum of half an acre of land around it for proper sewage disposal.

A dwelling served by piped water from a municipal system or district can get by with a third of an acre of ground, the sanitarian added.

One of the biggest headaches facing the health department is that it has no legal authority at present to tell someone he can't build in

an area where the soil is poor for septic drainage.

The health department can tell someone it won't approve his plans for loan purposes, Moore explained, and it has authority over subdivisions through the planning commission, but otherwise it can only recommend, not direct.

Development of Land South Of McAndrews Rd. Discussed

Possible development of land south of McAndrews rd. between Bear creek and Interstate 5 as a Medford park was discussed last week at the Medford parks and recreation commission meeting.

Asa Hanamoto, San Francisco, of Royston, Hanamoto, Mayes and Beck, showed commission members a rough drawing of possible uses for the area. It was explained that the property to the south and north of McAndrews rd. in that area is owned by the state highway department.

Plans for the area south of McAndrews rd. call for picnic areas with a space arranged for baseball, but not for league play.

Hanamoto suggested a continuation of a bridge path

through the area that would connect with a proposed one along Bear creek. He recommended that the entire area be covered with turf.

It was explained that the Crater Lions club has shown interest in developing part of this area.

In concluding his report, Hanamoto commented on the response he had received in the valley while working on the park development. He commended the residents for recognizing the great asset they have with Bear creek and encouraged future development of an integrated trail system that would encircle the city.

"The fact that you have a lot of this natural beauty, dulls one to thinking it is per-

manent," the Californian said. "Now is the time to acquire these lands, even if they can't be developed immediately," he continued. "Much of the land is privately owned and it won't always be this way."

Explains Ticket Plan

In other business Parks and Recreation Director Robert Haworth explained that family ticket sales during the first two weeks for the swimming pools are 5 per cent above last season. He said that the total has already passed last season's total.

Haworth reported that the diving pool construction at Jackson park is on schedule and plans are to have it open to the public by July 15. The decks were poured last week, he explained, and fencing and plastering is all that remains to be done.

A dedication program prior to the opening of the diving pool will be coordinated between the parks and recreation department and Crater Lions club, who contributed part of the money.

Invitation Extended

Jackson County Parks and Recreation Chairman Laurence V. Espey extended an invitation to the group to attend the dedication ceremonies June 29 at Howard Prairie lake.

Haworth announced that the Medford Junior Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a series of weekly dances at the Medford High school tennis courts. The dances, which started Friday, will be from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. with music furnished by high school band members. Proceeds from the dances, to cost 50 cents per person, will go to the band fund.

Haworth explained that the hours of the dance had been approved by the Medford police department since it was 30 minutes after the 11 p.m. curfew. It was explained that in addition to members of the Jaycees, recreation department leaders also will be on hand.

No Preparations Used
It was stressed that no preparations will be used on the courts for dancing.

Dr. Robert DeLorme presided at the commission meeting in the absence of James Sullivan, president. Attending the meeting were Miss June Wheaton, Tod Tibbutt, and Ron Reverman. Due to the small attendance, a report from the park name committee was postponed until next month.

Commissioner members absent were Dr. James Bayliss, John North, Jerry Gastineau and John Kent.

Medford Students Are On Kansas Honor Roll

Two Medford students, Theodore Earl Lawson and George M. Wilson Jr., earned places on the spring semester honor roll of the college of liberal arts and sciences at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kans.

The list includes 52 students who earned all A grades for the semester. Each honoree had a grade-point average of at least 2.26 on a scale of 3 for A and 2 for B.

The Y.M.C.A. Summer Camp is located on the southwest corner of beautiful Diamond Lake . . . an ideal place for swimming, boating, sailing, canoeing and all kinds of outdoor games.



There are still opportunities open for younger boys and girls to enjoy the Y.M.C.A. Day Camp on the Applegate River . . . Phone for details —but you'd better do it NOW!

The Main Lodge at the Y.M.C.A. Diamond Lake Camp is fully equipped to handle 100 eager youngsters, 14 tent and cabin units, with bunks and mattresses for each boy, one centrally located wash house with shower facilities, craft shop, hospital, and fully equipped waterfront.

Register NOW for the YMCA Diamond Lake Summer Camp

STARTING JULY 14



Phone YMCA - 772-6295
For Complete Information

Jorgensen's FIESTA ICE CREAM



Hand-in-hand with everything that means FUN is Jorgensen's luscious FIESTA ICE CREAM, fortified with nutritious NUTRIMIX. And summertime is especially RIGHT for this palate-pleasing treat. Of course, ice cream's popularity knows no season—knows no age limit. Be SURE to keep lots of this FINER, TASTIER ice cream on hand this summer!

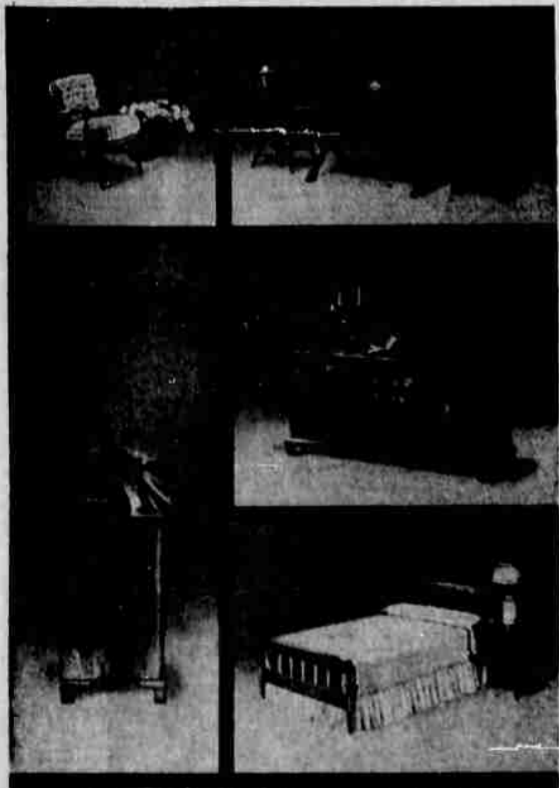
For Fine Dairy Products Ask for "Jorgensen's"



FROM THE HEART OF HISTORIC VERMONT...

Cushman colonial

FOR EVERY ROOM IN YOUR HOME



Cushman colonial
furniture that's fun to live with

At the Colonial House
At Trowbridge Electric, Main at Fir
Open Saturday Till 5—Friday Nite Till 9