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Building lot sizes concern health officials

Local health officials are concerned that some persons are buying or planning to buy building lots outside the city limits that won't meet standards for installing septic tank systems. The current standard enforced by the Nicholas County Board of Health is that a lot must be 15,000 square feet before approval can be given for installing a septic tank system—but new regulations stricter than that are expected to be approved sometime this year. The new standards will be based on

percolation rates (the rate at which the lot to be built upon absorbs water) and the number of bedrooms in the house. The standards will also require enough room in the lot for an alternate system in case the original septic tank system fails or is outlived. Health officials estimate the length of a drain field for a typical three-bedroom house under the new standards will be around 500 feet. That means a lot for a house of that size will have to be large enough to accommodate

two 500-foot drain fields. Soil capability. Much of Nicholas County's soil has been described as a clay blanket over a bed of rock. Water and other liquids absorbed by the soil may sink down until rock is reached and follow the rock to the nearest outlet. This is a condition that contributes to a lot of the city's problems at the sewer plant: water enters the system in wet weather due to the structure of the soil and causes the system to overflow.

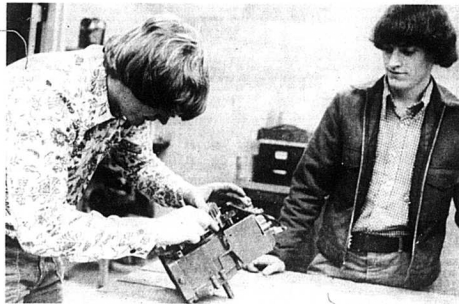
But the WEDCO and local health officials say the problems in the county could be more serious if the new regulations aren't followed and enforced. W. Bert Eyster, WEDCO District Chairman, said last week that many developments following the rock bed soil it contaminates another water source. Eyster and county sanitarian Larry Trussell agreed that to avoid problems in septic tank system approval persons who are planning such systems in their houses should have the lot checked for size and percolation before buying the property. Trussell said that one proposed development in the county is expected to offer lot sizes considerably less than the minimum now imposed. Although the lots might not be described as building lots, he said, there is little doubt that that is their ultimate use. The owner of the development has been contacted by WEDCO and local officials. Trussell said an awareness of the condition although whether or not the lot sizes will be changed is not known now. WEDCO standards. In the absence of a county planning

and zoning board the WEDCO regulations cover structures built outside the jurisdiction of the city's planning board. And while WEDCO has no say in the type of house or its construction and does not issue building permits it still has the final okay on sewage systems. A septic tank system collects waste in an underground tank where it is treated and the liquid discharged into the ground through a drain field. It is the most popular individual sewage system now in use although there are others that have been approved by the state. However, these other systems may cost more than a septic tank system, a factor that has so far kept them from wide-spread use.

But WEDCO, a five-county health district that includes Nicholas (the others are Clark, Scott, Bourbon and Harrison) has the final say on approval of individual sewage systems. And both Eyster and WEDCO plumbing inspector Edgar Pelly say that if septic tank systems are installed on a lot that does not meet standards they will have no choice but to deny approval. That could lead to court action

against the individual landowner but the officials don't want that to happen. Instead, they would rather persons interested in lots check with them or the Nicholas County Health Department. The local health department has a list of surveyors in the county who are approved to perform percolation tests but Trussell said if a person prefers to find their own surveyor it is acceptable provided the surveyor is qualified. Nicholas is the only county in the WEDCO district that does not have county planning or a minimum standard size for rural building lots. The other counties have a five-acre minimum size for rural building lots (except for Harrison, which is two acres) and Trussell said he'd like to see a one-acre minimum here.

Written comments from officials in the five counties are now being accepted on WEDCO's proposed regulations. After these comments are collected a series of public hearings will be held, probably in June or July, before the regulations take effect. However, Eyster said, his office is proceeding with their enforcement now and he anticipates no problems in their passage.



Randy Hunter fiddles with a balky alternator while Jerry Grant waddles and Julie McDonald babysits for children of parents who attended the NLS open house Monday night. More than 100 parents and Nicholas Countians visited the high school, saw classroom demonstrations and performances and heard from school officials. Randy was demonstrating a trouble-shooting method in the Ag Shop while Julie represented the Home Ec Dept. in the babysitting service. — Mercury photo.

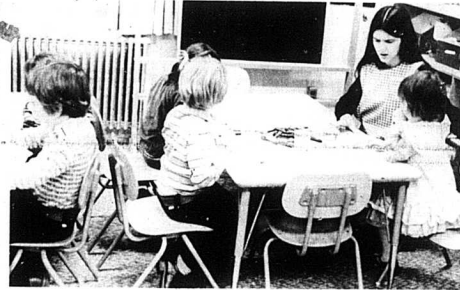
Open house

County buys truck

The Nicholas Fiscal Court voted last Wednesday to grant another raise of 25 cents per hour to an employee at the county quarry and to grant no more raises to county employees until after July 1. Three other quarry workers were granted 25-cent raises at the previous March meeting. The court also approved purchase of a 1967 Euclid rear dump truck for the quarry after County Judge/Executive Reese Smoot declared an emergency. Under an emergency declaration the county can buy the truck without

submitting it to bids. The truck replaces a 1954 Euclid that has been plagued with mechanical problems. The cost of the replacement truck is \$20,000, which was taken from the revenue-sharing account. The truck was purchased from Consolidated Inventories of Lathia Springs, Ga. In other quarry business the court voted not to sell any more Number 9 rock until a sufficient stockpile is amassed. The Nicholas County Board of Education was granted permission to use the county landfill at a fee of \$15 per month.

The court also voted to give three loads of dirt from the landfill to the Carlisle Cement City of Carlisle trucks will be used to transport the dirt. In other business, the court reappointed W. N. Young, Jr. to the county budget commission; Approved an \$800 request from the Nicholas County Soil Conservation District for the district budget; and announced a Proposed Use Hearing for revenue-sharing funds. The hearing will be held April 9 at 7 p.m. at the courthouse.



Urlage resigns post for Ohio position

The Johnson-Mathers Health Care, Inc. board of directors has added the search for a new administrator to the health care complex to its ongoing doctor recruitment program. Ken Urlage, administrator of the complex since June of 1975, submitted his resignation to the board last week and was released from the balance of his two-year contract. Urlage has accepted a position as director of Beechwood Convalescent Center in North College Hill, a suburb of Cincinnati. His duties there begin April 23, a week before the new Nicholas County Hospital is scheduled for occupancy. Urlage, 36, was named administrator of the nursing home and hospital on May 13, 1975. He came to Carlisle from Rosedale Manor, a 200-bed facility in his native Kenton County managed at the time by his father.

In his last position Urlage will be in charge of a facility with 100 skilled care beds and a 100-bed independent living section. Urlage said the Beechwood facility has, in addition to the 100 skilled care beds, a section for retirement which is said to be one of the first in this area. In an interview Monday Urlage said he felt the Beechwood position is "a good opportunity or I wouldn't leave." He noted that through the opening of the new hospital, which has been built on to the existing nursing home, his successor as administrator would not have the problems in logistics and personnel management that existed when the two facilities were separated. Urlage said his main concern in leaving Carlisle was that there was no one immediately available to take over administration of the health care

complex. He said the hospital board indicated last week they would seek an interim administrator who could manage the complex until a permanent manager could be found. He also said he would be willing to work with whomever is selected as his successor during the transition period in order to smooth the change. During Urlage's tenure as administrator the health care complex board completed a community study on hospital needs and decided to build a new hospital, combining it with the existing nursing home. The project is expected to be completed and ready for occupancy by May 1. The health care board of directors, which had recently intensified its search for new doctors to move to Nicholas County, now faces the task of finding a qualified administrator to manage the complex.

News briefly

School to dismiss June 6

The state board of education has allowed the Nicholas County schools three calamity days which will enable school to be dismissed in the system June 6 for the summer vacation. Supt. Don Elder reports that the schools will be in session 175 out of 175 possible days and the granting of the three days by the state makes up the difference. The amended school calendar will

allow for a two-day spring break, on April 12 and 13. Classes will dismiss on April 11 and resume on April 16, giving students and teachers a five-day weekend.

Graduation is scheduled for June 3 at 8 p.m. Speaker and more information on the service will see 65 seniors receive their diplomas, will be announced later.

McBryer here today at 4 p.m.

Terry McBryer, Democratic candidate for his party's nomination for governor in this November's election, will be in Carlisle Thursday, March 29 (today) at 4 p.m. at the courthouse. McBryer is making a bus tour of counties in this area and will leave

Carlisle for Paris where he will attend a cookout, according to his Nicholas County campaign chairman, Reese Smoot. Smoot said the public is invited to meet McBryer at the courthouse and attend the cookout in Paris.



Dancin' shoes

Approximately 175 Nicholas County teenagers danced to the music of "Cythiana" a band from that town at the old army Friday night. The dance was open to students in grades 7-12 and was sponsored by the Carlisle-Nicholas County Recreation Department. — Mercury photo.

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