

Residents back at Bad water cure

"We're not going to cough up 25 per cent without a battle."

That's Tom Evan's blunt reaction, on behalf of Heritage Road homeowners, to paying part of the price for remedial work in the Russell Village subdivision.

And replacing defective wells and septic systems is going to cost a pretty penny.

Gerry McKenna, of the Ministry of Environment, estimates that each combined well-septic system installation will cost up to \$5,000 with some 40 homeowners asked to pay \$1,250 each.

The cost will depend on the depth required to drill to potable water and the backfill necessary to ensure proper functioning of the septic systems.

Mr. Evans is confident that in the wake of a consultant's report recommending the reconstruction of wells and septic systems to proper specifications, Heritage Road residents will soon be relieved of the contaminated water that's been plaguing them for months.

But he pointed out that residents aren't responsible for the problem and shouldn't be asked to pick up any part of the tab.

Environment will finance 75 per cent of reconstruction under a special provincial program. Mr. Evans feels the remaining 25 per cent should come from Chantal Development Corporation or Russell Township.

"The ministry knows we don't want to pay. So does council. I think it would be the honorable thing for Chantal to cover it."

Two test wells drilled in the subdivisions are producing bacteria-free water, but a new problem has surfaced-high concentrations of iron.

One of the wells is hooked into the Michael Tremblay home. The Tremblay family was suffering several weeks ago from a parasitic sickness known as Giardia Lamba which was attributed by Metcalfe's Dr. Don Merrett to water pollution.

The symptoms have disappeared, said Heather Tremblay, but plumbing fixtures are being stained from water produced by the test well.

Mr. McKenna agreed that iron content is high-up to four milligrams per litre — and said that corrective measures may be offered as part of the remedial program.

"Iron in water isn't detrimental to health and it doesn't harm plumbing. But it is esthetically unappealing."

The Environment spokesman said work would begin in the subdivision sometime this spring.

Embrun sewers Down drain?

The Ontario Municipal Board has cautioned Russell Township council against initiating sewer and water projects in Embrun simultaneously.

Funding the two projects at the same time would raise the municipal debt to an unacceptable level — about \$3.4 million — the OMB told council in a letter.

Such a debt would equal 15.6 per cent of the equalized assessment or about \$2,200 per township household. The normal criteria for a municipal debt is eight per cent of the assessment, the letter stated.

Jean-Guy Bourdeau, township administrator, said council will decide soon whether to proceed with both projects or only one of them. Council will confer with provincial authorities before making a decision.

If one is chosen, Mr. Bourdeau said it will undoubtedly be the waterworks. Embrun has been plagued for years with contaminated well water.

The municipal share of the cost for installation of both services would be more than \$2.6 million.

That amount would be repaid by users of the services over several years. Mr. Bourdeau explained.

The province has agreed to provide close to \$4.3 million or 75 per cent of the total estimated cost of the waterworks. It has also agreed to pay more than \$2.6 million or 68 per cent of the sewage collection and treatment system.

But Environment Minister Harry Parrot wants council to decide this month whether it can afford to go ahead with one or both projects. If not, the money will be redirected to other municipalities.

Russell won't pay \$20,500

Russell Township council is refusing to pay a bill of just under \$20,500 handed to it last May by an Ottawa consulting firm.

Council disagrees with the itemized bill and is prepared to let the consultants, J.L. Richards and Associates, go to court over the issue, said Councillor Baird McNeill.

The bill is for a preliminary engineering survey in connection with the water and sewer projects planned for Embrun. Art Fee, a spokesman for Richards, said the firm would not comment publicly.

Richards was hired by the Ministry of Environment to do design work on the Embrun projects. When council assumed control, it hired Richards for survey work. Then council dumped the Ottawa firm in favor of Lecompte, Moller and Associates which will do all the engineering when either project gets the go-ahead.

The switch was made despite a written protest by Richards warning council against introducing new engineers in midstream. Such a move would, cost and management-wise, be "very much against the best interests of taxpayers", the firm argued.

Richards offered to complete design preparation, plans, and specifications, for a fee of \$29,000. Township clerk Jean Guy Bourdeau said no bill has been received from Lecompte, Moller since it took over.

Embrun Knights Coming home

The Knights of Columbus in Embrun are looking at a spring start for construction of a new \$250,000 hall to replace their old building which burned more than a year ago.

Roger Bisailon, grand knight of St. Jacques local 6301, said that soaring interest rates and a land rezoning had delayed the project but that these hurdles were being overcome, making a construction start feasible in the next few months.

He said the new two-storey brick hall would be located on the site of the old building on Forget Street with parking provided on a newly-acquired adjacent lot. The total property is approximately 190 feet across and 100 feet deep. Arson was the cause of the fire which destroyed the old hall in the fall of 1978. Mr. Bisailon said the new hall will be available to other organizations in the community as a meeting place.

"It will be nice to get back in a new home," he said. The 350 knights are currently meeting at the Embrun arena hall.

New bank managers



The face of banking in the Castor area has been changing quickly in recent months, both inside and out. Al Desjardins, 45, left, is the new manager of Russell's recently-opened Bank of Nova Scotia. The Vankleek Hill native, who has 28 years experience in the business, most-recently as assistant manager of the BNS at Bank and Gladstone in Ottawa, replaces Roger Morin, who has moved on to a new assignment in Alexandria. Colin Villeneuve, 31, right, originally from Cornwall, is the manager of the new Imperial Bank of Commerce in Embrun. He has been in the business 11 years, his most recent tenure being assistant-manager in Kingston. (Estelle Yaternick Photos).



59th Wedding Anniversary

Mr. and Mrs. Chester Cherry, of Russell, will celebrate their 59th wedding anniversary March 30th. The long-time Russell couple were married at Mrs. Cherry's childhood (Fader) home at Marvelville. Their son Maynard and family live on the Cherry homestead north of Russell. Daughters are Muriel (Mrs. William McKeown), of Edwards, Frances (Mrs. Clapton Elliott), of Ottawa, and Eleanor (Mrs. Paul Parlee), of Powassan, Ont. Mr. and Mrs. Cherry have 16 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



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