

Stream Pollution

(Continued from Page 5)
law primarily designed to force coal mines to treat acid mine drainage water before it is dumped in the streams. "The frothing and foaming in streams is caused by detergents," he said, and added that "this will continue to be a problem until we have a bio-degradable detergent on the market in quantity. It (detergent) is not generally harmful, but it will cause foaming if present in amounts as small as 1 to 1.5 parts per million. We can't pinpoint fishkill or pollution due to detergent."

The smaller the stream, the higher percent treatment needed. Kuder said after explaining the process of complete sewage treatment. In terms of costs, it would be prohibitive to remove the last 8-10 percent of pollution going into streams, he estimated.

In discussing underground water pollution, Kuder said the Health Dept. would like to abolish all lagoons. "No lagoon can be closed 100 percent and may contaminate the underground water supply for miles around, especially in a limestone area with its underground caves and fissures."

Kuder said that, although stream pollution can be cleared up readily once the source of contamination is removed, underground water, once polluted, may remain so for 50-100 years. In fact, he added, "about half of the private wells in Lancaster County are probably contaminated by the owner's or neighbor's sewage."

He defined pollution as any foreign substance whose presence renders a stream unclean to the extent that the water becomes harmful to the health of people or livestock.

Wayne Maresch, county conservationist, told the audience that "it is not always the other guy (industry); in agriculture we have our own problems."

He stated that between 4 and 20 tons of soil per acre per year is lost from our farms because the fields are "untreated." This soil provides one of the sources of stream pollution, sediment, Maresch said. Silt destroys spawning beds and coats the gills of fish. Much of it (silt) continues downstream and eventually clogs our channels and harbors, the conservationist said.

Maresch was asked what farmers in the Martindale area could do to stop pollution of their streams.

"If there is enough interest in the community, you can meet with landowners and show them how to do something constructively on siltation. The Soil Conservation Service can supply technical assistance, but local action is the ingredient needed to make any such community plan a success," Maresch concluded.

Fry summed up the meeting later by saying that three main points had been made:

1—Factual information on pollution of the Muddy Creek was presented to the public by direct testimony.

2—The action against pollution being taken by the Grace Mine creates a model of good sewage and water handling for other industries to follow.

3—The smallest school district in the area has shown that by taking the initiative to begin a logical plan of community action, the school district can be instrumental in getting the educational facts to the adults in the area, and invoking their interest.

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(Continued from Page 2)

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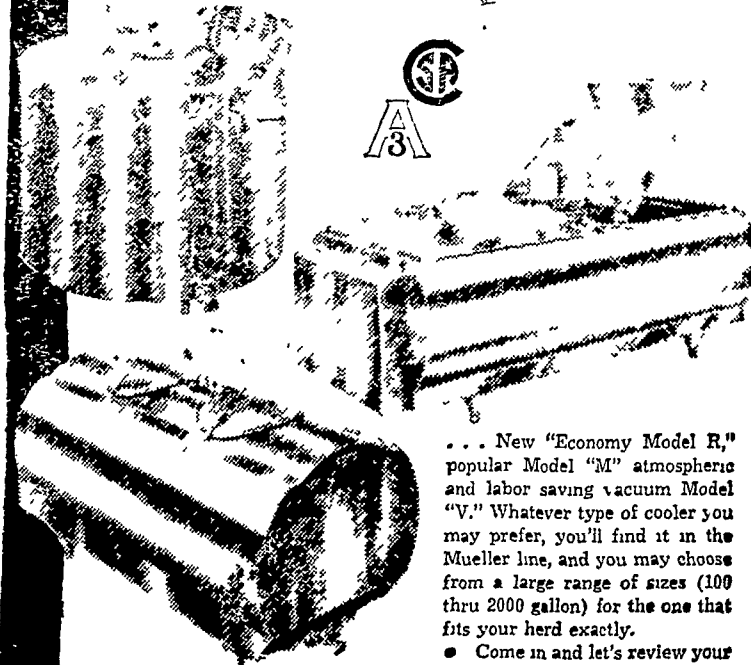
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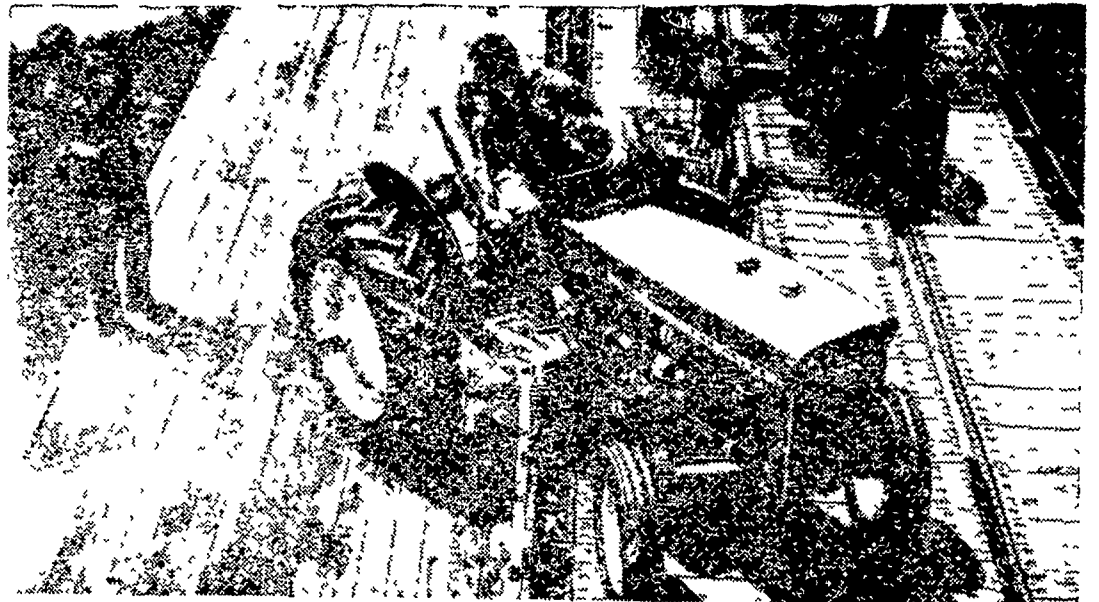
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