

Landfill threatens

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with Lancaster Farming on Thursday evening, Shank noted that contributions to their cause may be mailed to the SOS Committee, P.O. Box 215, Penryn, Pa. 17564. A special checking account for the committee has been established at the Fulton National Bank. The secretary further noted that members of his group have put together a slide program which will be available for public presentation upon request. Estimating that several thousand dollars have already been spent to fight the proposed landfill, Shank commented "this is a never-ending source of expenditures."

The citizens involved in this case got into the battle when Lancaster County Judge Paul Mueller overturned decisions by both Penn and Elizabeth Townships to keep the fill out of their county. The battle will now be heading for a court test at the state level.

According to Shank, the Lancaster County Court of Appeals has already filed its side of the case and the SOS Committee has until Nov. 2 to file its documents. An actual court battle, however, is not expected until early next year.

Although the controversy over the landfill has been simmering for more than a year, it hasn't been until recent weeks that the issue has become heated enough to draw much public attention. According to Shank, this is a battle which may have even deeper implications than the well-publicized dispute last Spring between the Lancaster Area Refuse Authority (LARA) and two dairy farmers. In that incident, the Refuse Authority gave way to public pressure and abandoned its plans to expand their landfill on an adjacent farm.

There are some significant differences between that case and this one at Penryn, however. The case last Spring dealt with eminent domain and an authority within the Lancaster County municipality. In the Penryn case, eminent domain is not involved and the landfill plan is being forwarded by a private concern. What's more, the land in question is no longer owned by a farmer. But it is still being farmed and reportedly producing crops which exceed Lancaster County's average

State Representative Noah Wenger, who played an active role in publicizing and eventually winning the Barley farm versus LARA case last Spring, admitted at a meeting last month that a recently enacted law (HB 111) may not apply in the Penryn controversy since eminent domain is not involved. HB 111 was designed to bridge land acquisitions by landfills and highways under the blanket support of eminent domain.

Wenger, an active proponent for farmland preservation and a farmer himself, was one of several public officials to attend a meeting here last month which was aimed at exposing the community's opposition to the landfill. Others present at that meeting were Ed Simmons from the Department of Environmental Resources, State Senator Clarence Manbeck, and State Representative Nick Moehlmann

Simmons, whose responsibility with DER includes overseeing and directing solid waste management in this geographic area, noted that the original proposal for a landfill on this site came 2½ years ago. Simmons' office is obligated to review applications for a landfill permit, and must grant it if requirements are met. If that runs against the desires of the public, then they in turn have the right to appeal it.

To date, the proposed landfill has not been approved by Simmons' office, and his department is continuing to run tests. "We want more definition on the water table and evidence that the soil will support a spraying field," Simmons acknowledged.



State Senator Clarence Manbeck (standing) recently exclaimed he'll fight a proposed landfill with all high might if pollution problems arise. The proposed site for refuse disposal covers 70 acres of Lancaster County cropland and is across from a housing development. Ed Simmons, solid waste

management director for the Department of Environmental Resources and Rick Gunning, treasurer for the SOS Committee, flank Manbeck. In the right foreground is Jim Bachman, chairman of the SOS group, which is leading the fight to stop the proposed landfill in its tracks.

The land in question is owned by the real estate firm of Martin and Hess. The tract was sold for development and a number of new homes have already been constructed along one side of the road. However, land on the other side of the road did not pass required percolation tests for building lots. R.E. Wright Associates wants to turn the 92-acre site into a landfill.

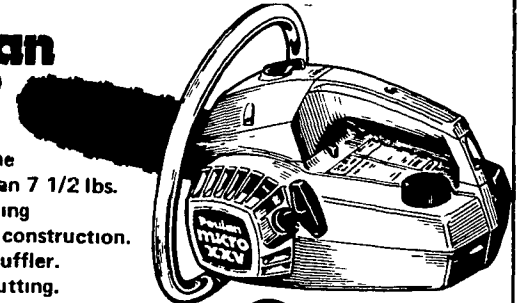
Although a number of tests still need to be made, and the issue hasn't reached its climax, Senator Clarence Manbeck of Lebanon County says he's ready to fight with all his might if the landfill at the Penryn site might contribute to water pollution. Concern over water pollution as well as numerous other considerations has been voiced by growing numbers of concerned citizens.

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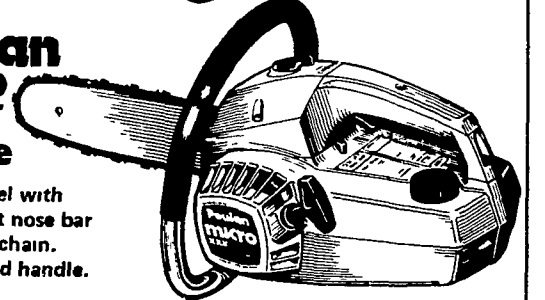
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