

Environmental quality

(Continued from Page D28)

last year produced the first drop since 1974 in gasoline demand, which accounts for 40 per cent of all oil used.

AIR

Up. All across the country last year, millions of Americans were breathing air that was cleaner than it had been in a decade. Also last year, there was relentless pressure on the Environmental Protection Agency to lower its air standards, because many

U.S. policy-and auto-makers claimed that antipollution costs are inflationary.

What are the costs and benefits of air pollution laws? According to the President's Council on Environmental Quality, the U.S. spent \$13 billion in 1978 to clean up the air. But, CEQ added, cleaner air may be saving Americans as much as \$22 billion annually in damages.

WATER

No Change. Many industries and communities are now moving toward, rather than away from, the Clean Water Act's goal of "fishable, swimmable" waters by 1985. Industry is responsible for much of the cleanup progress that has been made.

About 85 percent of the nation's major industrial polluters are complying with the law.

But there are rising problems. Many environmentalists claim that conventional sewage treatment plants use too much energy and don't really get the water clean.

Nearly 800 industrial polluters have failed to meet EPA's 1977 cleanup deadline and fewer than 200 have been taken to court. And every day, vast amounts of urban and agricultural poison enter the nation's water supplies from "nonpoint" sources.

SOIL

No Change. The outlook for America's hard used soil may be better these days. For one thing, erosion in many areas apparently isn't as bad as many experts once feared. For another, there's a good chance that the use of harmful pesticides can be drastically curtailed, due to a strategy called integrated pest management.

IPM could reduce crop losses to pests more effectively than today's pesticides—without harming human health or natural ecosystems.

On the negative side, the massive runoff of fertilizer and pesticides into streams and rivers remains one of the nation's most stubborn

pollution problems. And the conversion of cropland to suburbs continues unabated, the study said.

LIVING SPACE

Down. Even with a lower birthrate, the U.S. population is expanding rapidly (it passed 220 million last year), and the strain on living space is relentless. Despite the suggestions of an urban renaissance in many of the nation's largest cities, the 35-year-old migration to the suburbs continues, accompanied by development in scores of agricultural areas.

Fortunately, some states have passed their own land use laws, and last year Congress passed an Omnibus Parks bill, which designates two million acres as wilderness. But benefits from these efforts will be limited as long as the primary cause of the living-space crunch—population growth—continues.

FORESTS

Same. Last year the U.S. grew more timber than it cut (except in the West). The U.S. Forest Service proposed to set aside more than 15 million additional acres as wilderness, and to open up another 36 million acres to timber and other kinds of development.

While some environmentalists said that was not enough wilderness, developers complained of a lockout. But the USFS's new five-year management plan provides for more public say-so on how forests are run. Most important, the plan gives higher priority to watershed protection, wildlife habitat and recreation.

American forests may

face increased pressure from the energy shortage. Spot shortages of firewood are already showing up in parts of the U.S.

Commenting on the report, Thomas L. Kimball, NWF executive vice president,

warned that the existing "quality of life" is threatened by present trends in Congress. "As we enter the 1980's the overriding question is this: Will we let energy and inflation wipe out our environmental gains?" Kimball said.

Berks 4-H County Council Meets

HAMBURG — The Berks County 4-H County Council's February meeting was a get acquainted night with the older members being introduced to the newer members.

The officers of the council played County Squares, a version of Hollywood Squares. Prizes were given to the winners.

The business part of the meeting included preliminary plans for a pre-teen intercounty exchange and an interstate exchange for teens. Preparations are still underway for 4-H Boscov's Days which will be held on March 21-22 at all three Boscov's stores.

A Teen Recreation Weekend will be on April 18-19 in Montgomery County. Anyone interested in attending should contact the Extension office.

A 4-H slide presentation is now available for use. Anyone can use it; it is an excellent way to inform new members, parents and organizations about the 4-H program.

At a recent 4-H bowling tournament, nine trophies were given for outstanding bowling. They were: mens:

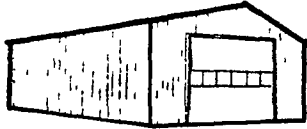
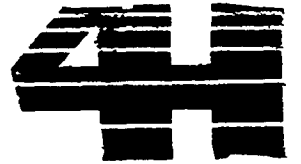
High single, Kevin Satzahn, 182; Runner up, Joe Crisafulli 179; High triple, Joe Crisafulli 492; and Runner up, Scott Miller 461.

Also women's: High single, Darlene Dietrich, 168; Runner up, Debbie Troutman, 157; High triple, Darlene Dietrich, 404; and Runner up, Dorene Hertzog, 403.

Team Champs were: Todd Miller, Scott Miller, Cheryl Adams, and Darlene Dietrich, 1457.

Jayne and Judy Malsbury entered their jams, jellies, and preserves in the 4-H Display at the Farm Show and came home with five premiums. They were guided by their 4-H project book "Make and Eat Jams, Jellies and Preserves."

The next County Council meeting will be held March 20.



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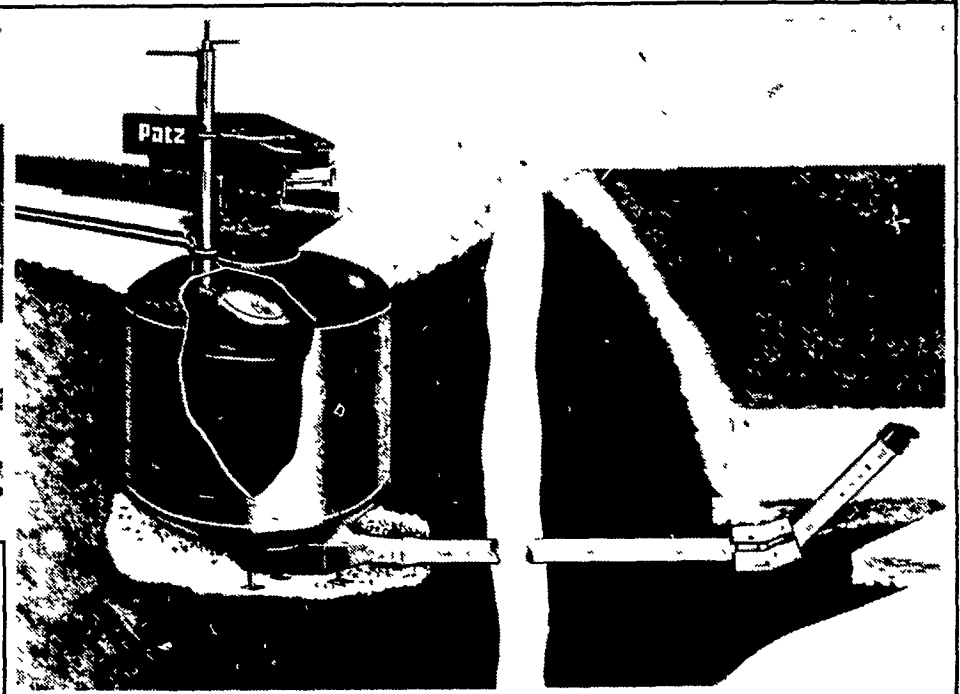
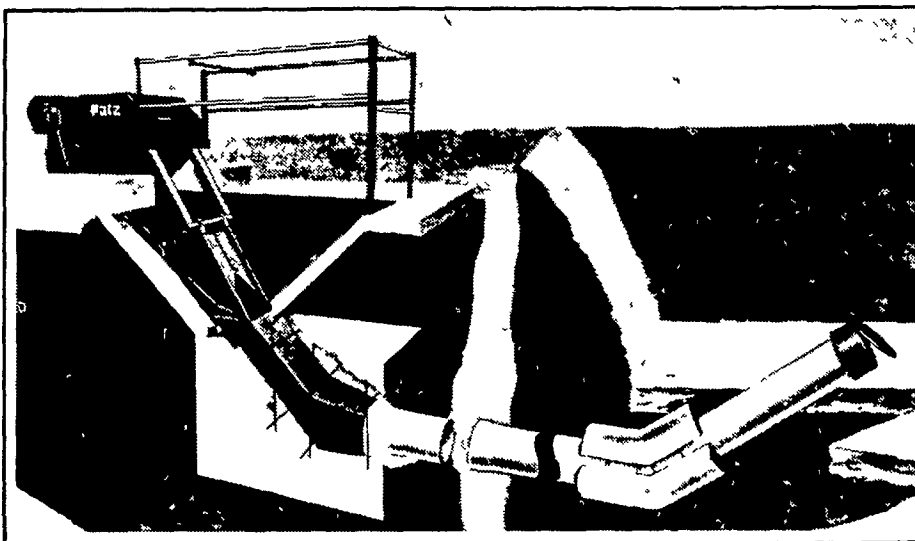
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