

SEWERS

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A moratorium was imposed by the township and DAMA in 2000, after overflows occurred the previous year. It was lifted in 2003, but then reinstated in August by DEP.

"There was a pretty significant overload" on the system, said Mike Brunamonti, chief of DEP's sewage planning section. The presence of the leaks was even more disturbing, he said, since DAMA and the Jackson Township authority submit annual reports designed to anticipate capacity needs.

"We should never have gotten to this point," Brunamonti said.

The on-again, off-again moratorium has wreaked havoc with builders John and Dave Pieczynski, who are developing Heritage Hills, in the Chase section of town. The development was approved for 19 homes, and nine were built after the hookup rate was doubled in 2000, ostensibly to pay for a new pumping station.

But the station was not built, and when the moratorium was reinstated, it postponed construction on the Millers' home. They accompanied Pieczynski to Monday's meeting.

The Millers are grateful that Brian's parents allow them to live at their home until the predicament is resolved. "It's not a bad situation. It's just that we have no space," Karen Miller said, a circumstance that

will worsen once she gives birth.

"We need to get a building permit. That's all we're looking for," John Pieczynski said. If a permit could be granted soon, it would take until May 2005 to complete the home, matching the timeline Berger projected for finishing the work at the pumping station.

Berger suggested doubling from 4 inches to 8 inches the diameter of the pipe running under Route 309 from the pumping station to a larger line feeding into the Dallas authority plant, and installing a system of three pumps that would provide sufficient pressure and backup.

Berger said the 4-inch line, which is 15 years old, would be stressed by pressures generated by new pumps working at capacity. "We're putting an awful high volume of water through," he said.

The system, which serviced 262 homes when it was installed more than a dozen years ago, now has 472 units connected. The total rose quickly and unexpectedly when the Sutton Hills development's 66 homes were connected shortly after the system was built.

Sewage flows by gravity to the station, located next to Hillside Road about 100 yards below the water plant, and is then pumped under pressure to

the DAMA line.

Berger's plan would meet the needs of 650 units, with a maximum future capacity of 1,000 with larger pumps.

Larry Spaciano, DAMA executive director, said the plan was "the last, best offer" sent to Jackson Township. All necessary land and permits have been acquired, he said. "Once we get a signed agreement we're pretty much ready to go."

Mike Bedrin, DEP Regional Director, said once the plan is approved, the issue of new hookups will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The lag time between granting a permit and the actual connection of home that has yet to be built may be taken into consideration, certainly good news for the Millers.

Morgan expressed frustration with the drawn-out negotiations between the two authorities. "You cannot imagine the hoops we've jumped through," he said. "We thought we had an agreement two or three times."

If this plan is approved, the authority hopes to use grant funds and financing to pay for the work. "There should not be any increase" in rates, which are now \$410 per year, Morgan said.

But there is an expense for the Millers. "We already have a mortgage on the house, and we don't have a house," Karen Miller said.

PROJECT

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School faculty or administration will most likely represent the school at the foundation. It's an idea that has been readily accepted by the school.

"The faculty at the school is pretty excited about this idea," said Decker, who said he got the idea of raising money for the foundation from his father.

"Dallas would be the first high school to join. But we hope it's not the last."

Charles Barber

Executive director,
The Luzerne Foundation

The Luzerne Foundation, which came into being in 1994, is a community foundation, meaning that it is not owned or controlled by any one individual. Those who pay to become members of the Millennium Circle are members for life. Members in the circle vote for what area organization they believe needs funds the most.

"Those in the circle become the eyes and ears of the foundation to identify under-served needs in the community," said Charles Barber, executive director.

The foundation's slogan is "The Luzerne Foundation — Here for Good." Thomas and Decker hope to make Dallas the first high school among the ranks of the circle.

"Dallas would be the first high school to join," said Barber. "But we hope it's not the last."

In addition to playing backyard football, Thomas plays basketball, soccer and runs track for the high school team, and plans to attend college upon graduation. Decker enjoys fly fishing and wants to major in engineering.

The tournament will begin around 8 or 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 27, through rain, shine or even snow. "If it snows, then we'll call it the Snow Bowl," said Decker. Refreshments, such as Gatorade and water will be available.

The event is open to boys



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Jeff Decker, left, and Ben Thomas are planning a flag football tournament as their senior project, with proceeds buying Dallas High School a seat at the Luzerne Foundation's table.

Flag Football Tournament

Sat., Nov. 27, 8 a.m.

Dallas High School

Entry fee of \$80 per 8-member team

Proceeds used to buy a Millennium Circle membership in the Luzerne Foundation for Dallas High School

To register, call 417-4049 or 905-0126 by Nov. 20.

and girls ages 14 and older, and also to adults. Those planning to attend should dress for the weather, and are asked to bring both a dark and white-colored shirt to play. T-shirts will be awarded to the winners of the tournament. The entry fee is \$80 per eight-member team.

"We will provide the flags for the games," said Thomas.

"People can also make donations to the foundation at the game, if they don't want to play."

Thomas and Decker both mentioned the possibility of a yard sale if the football tournament doesn't make the \$2,000 goal.

To register, call Thomas at 417-4049 or Decker at 905-0126 by Nov. 20.



POST PHOTO/RON BARTIZEK

Building has halted in the Heritage Hills Estates subdivision in Jackson Township until a moratorium on new sewer connections is lifted.



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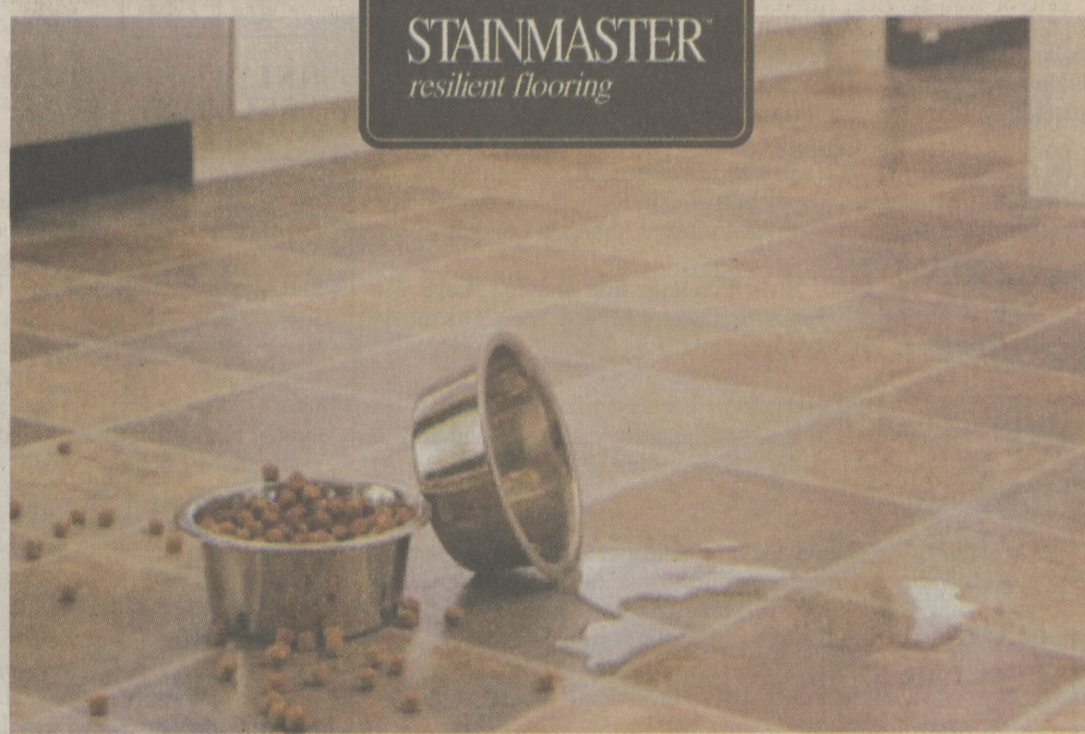
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