

## Industry Making Improvements

# Threat Of Sewer Showdown Eases

The threat of a showdown struggle between a Hoke County industry and Raeford officials over the quality of the firm's sewage discharge, may have eased, as efforts are being made to clean up the problem.

The City of Raeford faces state and federal fines on November 1 of \$10,000 per day if the discharge from the House of Raeford turkey processing plant is not brought within mandated guidelines.

However, industry owner Marvin Johnson told *The News-Journal* Monday that efforts are being made to correct the House of Raeford's discharge problem and meet the guidelines by November 1.

"We're working to make it better. We don't know if we will be as low as they want us to go, but it will be a damnsite better," Johnson said.

Johnson declined to make further comment on the matter, and did not elaborate on the extent of the pre-treatment improvements being made.

The sewer question is pressing, not only because of fines which could be levied by the state, but also because of the issues have an impact on the community.

Raeford's sewage treatment has become a dilemma. Here are some of the reasons:

--State Department Natural Resources and Community Development (NRCD) officials and city engineers have suggested that the turkey plant construct a pre-treatment facility, which Johnson estimated would cost approximately \$250,000.

--Because of the poor market conditions, the firm could not stay

in business and make the sewage improvements requested by the state, Johnson said earlier.

--If the House of Raeford closed, approximately 1,000 workers could be out of jobs.

--Despite the threat to local businesses the closing poses, members of the Hoke County Chamber of Commerce voted last January to support the city in its efforts to clean up the sewage discharge into Rockfish Creek.

--Because the discharge is polluting the creek, NRCD has declared a moratorium on all future industries using the Raeford sewage system.

--Hoke Development Board members claim that at least one industry has been lost here because of the moratorium, and that it is

difficult to attract new prospects to the area without being able to offer sewage disposal.

Raeford has been in violation of federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines since 1977, NRCD Regional Supervisor Dennis Ramsey said.

The city has been making efforts to improve the system and has spent more than \$1 million in state and federal monies to revamp the Raeford treatment facility.

Other local industries have made corrections in their pre-treatment systems and will soon be within the guidelines.

"Now, it's probably going to take close cooperation between the city and industry to work out the remaining problem," Ramsey said.

Prior to the recently completed improvements, the city was discharging approximately twice the

EPA guideline into the creek, Ramsey said.

If the city does not bring the discharge into compliance by November 1, a recommendation will be made to the Environmental Management Commission and fines of up to \$10,000 could be levied against the city.

Those fines would be passed on to any industry which is not in compliance with the pre-treatment guidelines, city officials have said.

Under the present regulations, industries must treat their effluent to a level which enables the city to bring its discharge within federal guidelines.

Council members voted last week to hire an Asheboro engineering firm to develop a pre-treatment program for the city.

That program, which will cost taxpayers \$12,000, will give Rae-

ford strict guide lines for future industries and an enforceable penalty system for violators.

Local taxpayers will have to foot the bill for the state-mandated plan, because of a lack of grant money for the project, NRCD spokesman Jim Sheperd said.

Sheperd said one North Carolina city is receiving assistance with the grant from NRCD officials and will not have to pay for the program.

The help, however, is being provided for Washington because "the state messed up," Sheperd said.

Washington officials were told to provide the wrong information and the timetable on the pre-treatment program was delayed by the state, he said, noting that the delay forced NRCD to help.

## Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather has been cool for the past couple of days, but as this column is being written Monday afternoon the rain is coming down outside and a thunderstorm is passing through the county. According to the weather forecast it should rain on until Tuesday night.

We need the rain, but it may be too late for the soybean crop. Of course, cotton likes dry weather and picking should get in full swing next week, one farmer told me Monday that he had picked 75 bales, but the rain would stop him for a couple of days.

It shouldn't be long before the leaves start to turn and the fall weather will be with us.

A letter arrived this week with a renewed subscription and I have come to the point of looking forward to this letter. The writer lived in Raeford many years ago with her father and mother in a home now moved, that was situated on the lot where the home of Mr. and Mrs. Marion Gatlin now live. The letter should be of interest to many of the older residents of Hoke County.

The letter follows:  
Dear Sam:

It is again time to renew my subscription to *The News-Journal* and enclosed is my check.

I look forward to receiving the *Journal* each week. Although there are many newcomers to Raeford whom I do not know, I retain a keen interest in Raeford, its people, and its welfare.

I hope you and your family are doing nicely.

With kindest personal regards,  
Sincerely  
Lillian F. Moore

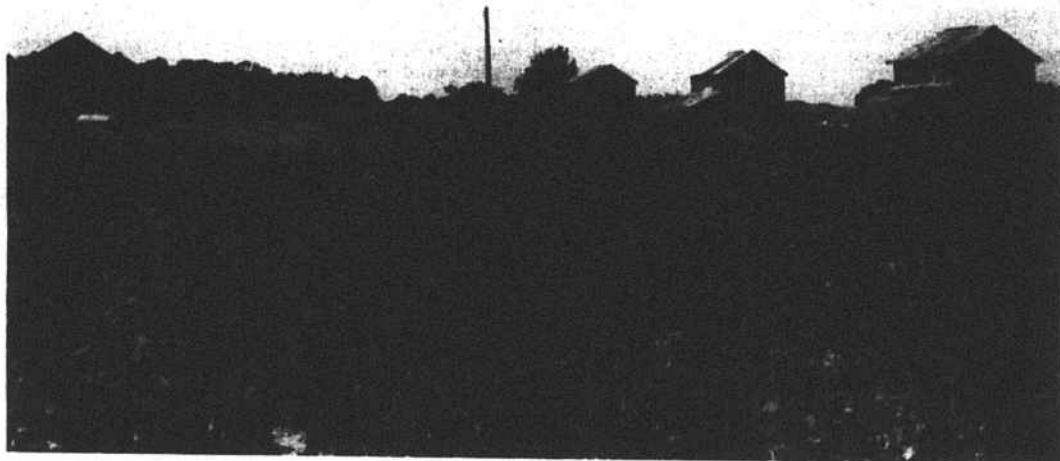
Thanks, Lillian for the nice note. I don't believe you have lost your touch for writing because it is as if the letter had come from the old Zanner manual on writing. I know folks here will be glad to know that you still have an interest in Raeford.

The last Hall of Fame golf tournament was held last week and weekend at Pinehurst. This tournament has been held for the past several years at the Pinehurst Country Club in the famous No. 2 course. Since the beginning this tournament has had problems and it was the same for the last year.

Coming late in the season many of the big name golfers didn't want to compete this year. Then the greens were in bad condition and the word got around and this caused others to pass it by.

Crowds were small, but the ones that attended on Sunday were treated to a three-way battle for the leadership. It was carried over for a "sudden death" finish and ended both the match and the tournament

(See AROUND TOWN, page 16)



PASSING ERA -- These Hoke County old tobacco barns may become just a memory because new drying methods have made them obsolete.

## Child Rape Case Dismissed

A Hoke County man was freed Tuesday morning of a charge of first-degree rape of his 6-year-old daughter when the child failed to reply to questions put by the prosecutor.

Hoke County Superior Court Judge Sam Britt of Lumberton allowed a motion of nonsuit made by the defense for Bobby Louis Green of Rt. 2, Box 496, Raeford.

Replying in almost a whisper to questions put by the prosecutor, Jean Powell, the child, the only witness to testify; said she had been lying on her bed in her parents' trailer when the defendant entered, took her clothes off, got on top of her, and "hurt" her. After that she failed to reply by word or gesture to

questions put repeatedly to her by Miss Powell. One question the prosecutor asked her was how did Green hurt her.

Green had been accused of committing the offense May 11. It was reported to the Hoke County Sheriff's Department after the child was admitted to Cape Fear Valley Hospital for surgery, and Green was arrested the day the alleged offense reportedly occurred. He had been held in Hoke County Jail since then.

Before the girl took the stand, the judge after a hearing with the jury absent ruled that she was competent to testify.

The child was on the witness stand from about 10:10 a.m. til

11:20 a.m.

Green had pleaded not guilty to the charge. He was defended by attorneys Paul Herzog and Orlando Hudson of the State Public Defenders' Office in Fayetteville.

Selection of a jury took from about 3 p.m. to nearly 5 p.m. Monday, with the judge excusing four prospective jurors on request of the prosecutor and nine on request of the defense.

Judge Britt recessed the court till 9:30 a.m. Wednesday at noon Tuesday after sentencing a drug defendant.

### MANSLAUGHTER

The judge on Monday sentenced

(See RAPE, page 16)

## Non-taxpaying Land Over 10% Here

At least 10.4% of the real property in Hoke County is in the hands of governmental, religious or community organizations and has been declared tax exempt.

Real property in the county has been appraised for tax purposes at \$175 million and of that figure more than \$18 million is tax exempt, a recent check of the Hoke County Tax Listings office showed.

Members of the Hoke County Commission are currently mulling an expansion of county holdings and are seeking additional office space because of overcrowding in the sheriff's department.

A committee is studying the feasibility of purchasing the Pilot Building on Main Street and is looking into the acquisition of other alternative sites that could be used for offices, Manager James Martin said.

Martin noted that the body shop for the Old Raeford Motor Com-

pany, which the county purchased in 1980 for \$50,000, is being remodeled to be used for detective offices.

The work is being conducted by sheriff's department and the county has appropriated \$750 for materials.

The move is a temporary one and will only partially ease the crowded conditions in the main sheriff's office, Martin said.

Originally the county bought the body shop for the land and had planned to tear down the structure to make room for a new annex building.

High interest rates and cuts in grand moneys forced the commissioners to rethink the move, Martin said.

The building is now being used for storage, he added.

If the commission finds it is too costly to adapt the Pilot Building to county needs, Martin says other

sites will be recommended as alternatives.

Martin would not speculate on where the sites might be, but noted that property owners with downtown buildings for sale should contact the county.

Wherever the county locates, downtown revitalization will be kept in mind, Martin added.

According to the Tax Listing records, Hoke County now owns 25 properties appraised at \$854,035 for tax exemption purposes.

Property owned by the City of Raeford is valued at more than \$2.7 million, and the county Board of Education tops the list of govern-

ment property at more than \$7.2 million.

Hoke County property owned by the state is valued at only \$816,935, which includes only \$390,000 placed on the McCain Hospital and Prison Center and the Sandhills

Youth Center.

In comparison, the market value placed on Hoke High School is more than \$2 million.

The Raeford Post Office is the only federal property listed in more than \$13 million of government real estate in the county.

The Hoke County Health Department's holdings are valued at \$413,000. Rural fire departments and the rescue squad buildings have a market value of \$257,000. The recreation department property is listed at \$92,000.

According to the Hoke County Chamber of Commerce, whose building is valued at \$27,100, there are 57 churches in the county.

The tax records show that the 57 churches own 141 non-taxable properties valued at \$4.8 million.

County civic organizations, who can also own tax exempt property, have holdings valued at \$258,800.

## County Zoning Plan Mulled

A request for assistance from 27 residents of county subdivision has sparked members of the Hoke County Commission to take steps Monday night towards establishing a countywide zoning ordinance.

Council members voted unanimously to give County Manager James E. Martin the go-ahead to begin developing the ordinance.

Martin will work with planners from the Lumber River Council of Governments (COG) and will begin studying ordinances from other counties in order to develop a plan for Hoke County.

Once the ordinance is established and given a preliminary OK by the commission, public hearings on the matter will be held before the regulations are implemented.

"I think the entire county needs it," Commissioner Daniel H. DeVane said, noting that without proper planning, future haphazard development could threaten the county's living conditions.

Commission members first

approached the zoning issue three years ago and attempted to establish subdivision regulations and rules governing mobile home parks, but backed off when the body got too much "flack" from the public, Commission Chairman John G. Balfour said.

"It was put on a back burner," he added.

Monday's action was initiated following a requests from members of the Chance Subdivision for county assistance in making the area's restrictive covenants binding on outside developers.

The covenants, which were on the original deeds of the subdivision, had expired and a new agreement received the approval of 27

of the area's 34 residents.

However, County Attorney Duncan McFadyen told the group that the restrictions were binding on only those who signed the agreement.

The only way to control development in the surrounding area is through zoning, McFadyen said.

### Courthouse Rehab Aired

In other action during the regular meeting, commission members also voted unanimously to hire two Raleigh architectural firms to develop plans and to act as advisors for the restoration of the Hoke County Courthouse building.

Planning on the project started 10 months ago, and Monday's move puts the county in a position to obtain either federal or state grants for the historically significant structure.

The firms of Dodge and Associates and Building Preservation Consultants will prepare plans and specifications for restoring the building's roofing, dormers, exterior masonry, windows, interior plaster and paint.

All paint used on the exterior of the building will match the colors used in 1913 when the courthouse was constructed.

The two associated firms will charge \$6,800 for their services and will work in conjunction with the North Carolina Department of Archives and History.

A proposal for the same work, which was submitted by a Charlotte firm for a price of \$12,400, was rejected by the commission.

According to their proposal, it should take the Raleigh group a

(See COUNTY, page 16)

## Inside Today



The bee business is buzzing on some Hoke County farms. *The News-Journal* takes a look at some positive aspects of beekeeping and raising honey. Please turn to page 13.