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Despite rate exemption, Winfall wants freedom

Despite assurances that Winfall residents will not have to pay Hertford's impending 15 percent utility increase, unhappy electrical customers are still threatening to seek services elsewhere.

A group of some 30 unhappy Hertford utility consumers and residents of Winfall attended that town's council meeting last week seeking support for switching electric service to Albemarle Electric Cooperative, citing disapproval of Hertford's recent 15 percent increase in utility rates, as well as alleged poor service.

Hertford Mayor and Town Manager Bill Cox said that the Hertford Town Council had never intended the 15 percent increase to affect those utility customers not receiving water and sewer service.

"The reason to not increase Winfall rates is because they're not full utility customers — they do not have the benefit of the town's waste-treatment plant, the town's water system, or any other town services," said Cox.

"Therefore, the council felt that it would not be fair to increase their (Winfall's utility) rates because the extra revenue generated by electric rates pays for other town services that are not available to these customers," he added.

Cox also expressed some displeasure over Hertford utility customers taking problems to the Winfall Town Council. "The council and I feel that the customers involved should have come to the Hertford board if they had complaints," he said, "This is the place to bring them."

But exemption from the 15 percent increase will apparently have no effect on Winfall customers who are petitioning their right to contract with AEMC.

Aside from what some Winfall residents described as "poor service due

to low voltage," a petition has been drawn up which requests release from Hertford lines on the following premises:

- AEMC is the duly franchised electric supplier for the town of Winfall.

- The Winfall Town Council and Mayor desire that Hertford withdraw utility services and facilities from Winfall.

- Hertford pays neither property taxes nor gross receipts taxes to the town of Winfall, while AEMC does.

- Hertford does not qualify as a "secondary supplier" as the term is used in the North Carolina General Statutes defining electric suppliers' rights inside corporate limits of municipalities.

- AEMC has its principal headquarters located within Winfall's corporate limits, a position Winfall residents believe allows for more timely service.

- AEMC has a system of profit sharing which credits consumer-members with revenues above the cooperative's actual yearly expenses.

Although Winfall Mayor David Trueblood affirmed that the Winfall Council would back the citizen petition to switch to AEMC, he was uncertain as to how far the effort would go. "I know they want it (the switch) mighty bad, but whether it will go to court or not, I don't know," he said.

Winfall commissioner Richard Bryant said that he thought the people in Winfall were "sick enough" of Hertford's electric service to take it to court.

"It makes them mad — some people get mad when they just see the Hertford service-truck in Winfall," said Bryant, "Call it town loyalty, call it what you want, but I think we may end up in court."

Bryant, who is an AEMC customer, said he understood the biggest complaint to be low voltage in Winfall, a problem which residents claim interferes with

television pictures, lights, and appliance performance.

He said that the alleged poor service could possibly be proven if meters were installed to monitor the possible voltage drops.

Winfall's town attorney James Singletary, who was directed by the council to prepare and distribute the petitions, said that he would recommend that the town secure a Raleigh attorney, should the matter come to litigation.

"I think they would do better if they hired an attorney who specializes in utility regulations," he said.

Singletary said that the possibility of Winfall customers purchasing electricity directly from Virginia Electric and Power Company had not been brought up.

But Hertford officials seem unwilling to relinquish Winfall customers to AEMC.

Hertford commissioner T. Erie Haste, Jr., said that releasing Winfall's 129 customers would have an effect on wholesale rates.

"We need to keep these people (Winfall customers) so the volume of wholesale electricity will remain consistent and the price lower," said Haste, who estimated that Winfall customers comprised approximately 12 percent of Hertford's electrical consumers. "We cannot afford to lose 12 percent," he said.

Haste also indicated that he felt charges of "poor service" were unfair.

"When the people of Winfall had no electricity years ago, they appealed to the town of Hertford.

"And Hertford bought equipment and had lines run to them (Winfall customers) at the expense of Hertford taxpayers," said Haste, adding "We have been giving those people good service since that time.



Fall fun

Megan Shales (top) and sister Hannah enjoyed unseasonably warm autumn temperatures earlier this week by frolicking in a mound of colorful leaves. The two are daughters of Dr. and Mrs. Paul Shales of Grubb Street, Hertford.

Welfare rolls swell during inflation-racked year

Higher unemployment and inflation rates have resulted in a larger number of families with dependent children applying for public assistance, according to Robert Ward, director of the North Carolina Department of Human Resource's Division of Social Services.

"The average monthly number of

AFDC recipients (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) for fiscal year 1979-80 was 193,502 (statewide) compared to 190,860 for fiscal year 1978-79," said Ward.

"However, the year started in July 1979 with only 188,468 and increased to 199,908 by June of 1980, for an increase of

11,440 recipients," Ward said.

Perquimans County's average number of monthly recipients in fiscal year 1978-79 was 312, with a total of \$241,188 in payments during that year. In fiscal year 1979-80, the average number of monthly recipients increased to 382, with a total of \$317,937 in payments.

Total AFDC payments for 1979-80 amounted to \$146.6 million compared to slightly less than \$135 million the previous year. Ward said that the largest part of the increase was due to a five percent increase in maximum payments approved by the 1979 session of the N.C. General Assembly. The federal govern-

ment's share of the payment is 67.64 percent with the state and counties share at 16.18 each.

North Carolina's AFDC payments still ran 42nd in the nation with a maximum payment of \$210 a month for a family of four.

Ward indicated that the number of

recipients appears to have leveled off with 199,725 North Carolinians receiving assistance in September.

The AFDC program provides financial assistance for children who have been denied the support of either one or both

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Town of Hertford taking steps to improve waste - water system

The situation at Hertford's waste-water treatment plant, cited in violation of state effluent limitations last spring, has improved considerably according to a report from the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Community Development.

W.E. Furr, Jr. of the department's Division of Environmental Management in Washington, N.C., recently reported that operation at the plant appeared to be "much better" following a September inspection.

The plant had been cited as operating

in violation following an earlier inspection in April, when Furr found an excess of fecal coliform and other human waste-related bacteria in the Perquimans River.

While the September inspection indicated that the plant was presently operating in compliance with permit limitations, the report indicated that yearly averages showed the facility to be exceeding the suspended solid limitations.

Furr's evaluation acknowledged, however, that problems existing at the

plant are expected to be corrected with completion of the 201 facilities process, a plan designed to upgrade the waste-water treatment plant.

According to Hertford Mayor and Town Manager Bill Cox, completion of the 201 process will address all existing problems within the water works, notably the infiltration of excess water into the town sewer lines and manholes.

Smoke tests performed last September (as Phase I of the process) indicated that ground and rain water were entering sewer lines through disconnected joints

and deteriorating manholes.

When such excess water gains entry to the plant, the danger of a washout is eminent. Such an occurrence can cause the destruction of the necessary human waste-eating bacteria, and the result is the dumping of water not sufficiently free of wastes into the river.

The 201 process was begun in 1975, and should reach the construction stage sometime in 1982, according to Cox, who said the Environmental Protection

Agency will pay 75 percent of the some \$1 million project, with the state and the town of Hertford dividing the remaining 25 percent equally.

The town council moved last week to proceed with Phase II of the 201 process. Phase II costs will be in the neighborhood of \$35,000, with the town footing approximately \$4,375 of that.

Phase II is expected to address the problem of faulty lines through cleaning, which will rid obstructions and debris such as sand, mud, roots, grease, gravel

and sludge to permit free passage of a television monitoring camera.

The television camera will be used to inspect lines to determine infiltration sources as well as estimated flow rate; crushed, broken, or cracked pipes; root intrusion locations; and misaligned pipes.

All questionable conditions will be video taped, thus allowing engineers to pinpoint trouble spots in the sewage system.

A PRECINCT BY PRECINCT LOOK AT THE MAJOR RACES									
	BELVIDERE	BETHEL	EAST HERTFORD	WEST HERTFORD	NEW HOPE	NICANOR	PARKVILLE	ABSENTEE	TOTAL
U.S. PRESIDENT									
REAGAN-R	82	192	185	170	225	70	252	34	1210
CARTER-D	187	210	366	211	224	48	280	34	1560
ANDERSON-I	3	6	11	12	10	1	14	6	63
GOVERNOR									
HUNT-D	193	319	462	316	385	93	411	47	2106
LAKE-R	66	90	93	71	98	26	129	17	503
LT. GOVERNOR									
GREEN-D	201	291	441	302	328	85	393	42	2090
COBEY-R	46	93	94	68	95	14	118	18	546
U.S. SENATOR									
EAST-R	73	108	113	81	125	27	153	25	705
MORGAN-D	174	281	432	299	305	82	369	38	1980
N.C. HOUSE									
EVANS-D	189	281	458	311	339	77	378	50	2083
JAMES-D	210	299	472	327	361	85	427	49	2230
TUCKER-R	36	76	72	33	72	15	85	12	401
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS									
NOWELL-D	198	258	403	280	321	74	335	47	1916
WARD-D	182	305	434	266	342	69	383	47	2028
WINSLOW-R	96	140	190	152	124	65	241	18	1026

One imprisoned, another waiting in Harris robbery

Two men were convicted for their roles in the August 9 armed robbery of Harris Building Supply in Hertford during the Oct. 29 term of Superior Court in Perquimans County.

Clyde Alexander Leary, who wielded a knife during the robbery, was found guilty of one count of armed robbery and was sentenced to not less than 7 nor more than 14 years imprisonment.

Charles Phillip Bond, who carried a sawed-off shotgun during the robbery, was also found guilty of one count of armed robbery, but has not yet been sentenced.

Both Bond and Leary are expected to testify for the state against suspected "get-away" car driver George Lee Revell, who is scheduled to be tried during the February session of Superior Court, according to Hertford Police Chief

Marshall Merritt.

In the August 9 robbery, \$150 was taken from the cash register of the store, and the wallets of Dale and customer Jan Spruill were taken.

Then Spruill and Dale, as well as business owner Edison "Spec" Harris, were forced into a restroom and the robbers fled.

In another case decided during the Oct. 29 term, Michael Wayne Spivey received a prison sentence of not less than two nor more than five years after a host of charges against him were consolidated.

Spivey had been charged with a break-in and theft at the home of Hertford resident Preston Divers, a break-in and theft at Pitt Hardware in Hertford, as well as breaking into an auto and several other offenses.

He had also escaped from custody

while awaiting trial in District Court.

Conditions of his sentence required that he pay restitution of \$500 to Divers, be evaluated for his condition as an admitted drug addict and receive any and all treatment, and be considered for work or study release.

A marijuana case against Annetta Louise Powers was reduced from a felony to a misdemeanor in exchange for a guilty plea, and Ms. Powers received a six month suspended sentence.

She was also required to pay a \$500 fine plus cost of court.

Just over an ounce of marijuana was discovered in her house trailer in Hertford during a search for items stolen in the Divers break-in.

Francis Gregory Burns, III, of Virginia

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