

# States Must Now Restrict Construction On Need Basis

Eight months ago the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) changed the method for allocating construction grant monies to the states from a basis of population to a basis of "need."

Now EPA, in accordance with amendments to the federal water pollution control law, is requiring the states themselves to conduct "need surveys" among their cities, as a basis for allocating

fiscal year 1975 grant monies for construction of sewage treatment facilities.

The survey will be conducted by staff members from Texas Water Quality Board's twelve district offices, and involves filling out, by city officials, a form prepared by EPA.

Cities in Texas which must supply "need" information include: All over 10,000 population; all over 500 population

which are located within Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA's); and 20 percent of the cities of less than 10,000 and greater than 500 population which are located outside SMSA's. A total of 406 cities will be covered in the survey.

"This is of the greatest importance to the State and to the cities in Texas which will be applying for grant monies for building sewage treatment facilities,"

says Gordon Fulcher, WQB chairman. "The information submitted to EPA will be the basis for allocating grant monies to Texas for that purpose, and members of our Board earnestly ask for prompt and full cooperation by those cities included in the survey," the chairman stressed.

On June 11, TWQB staff people will begin calling on city managers, or others in city gov-

ernment, to obtain information covered in the EPA form. Cities are asked to complete the forms within five to eight working days, says Harry Voigt who is coordinating the project for the Water Quality Board.

Following receipt of the forms, the Water Quality Board staff will be required to review and evaluate each city's report and send them on to the EPA regional office in Dallas with a deadline

of July 13. "This is an extremely short period of time in which to process more than 400 copies of the survey," Voigt said, adding that "it can be done if everything works right."

"Our need for this information is so urgent that the Water Quality Board staff has been instructed to give the project top priority until all information is in and processed," Fulcher emphasized. "The better the infor-

mation we are able to assemble, the better will be the state's percentage of total federal funding available from FY '75 monies.

"Evaluating information from more than 400 cities, many of which have more than one treatment plant, is going to be an undertaking of major proportion, and it can be done only if the cities concerned give us their best cooperation. In view of the importance of the survey to Texas cities and to the state's water pollution abatement program, it would be hard for me to believe that our staff will receive anything but the most willing help on the part of city officials," Fulcher said.

## Periwinkles Are Good Summer Plants

"If you're looking for a flowering plant that thrives in hot summer weather, try Madagascar periwinkle," suggests Everett Janne, landscape horticulturist for the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

Madagascar periwinkle is a tropical perennial but is usually grown as an annual. It will begin flowering while only a few inches tall and continues to grow and bloom until the first heavy frost, points out the Texas A&M University specialist.

In nurseries or garden centers, this plant is just called periwinkle or Vinca rosea. Its correct scientific name is Catharanthus roseus.

"Regardless of its proper name, this is one of the most colorful and reliable summer flowering plants for Texas conditions," contends Janne. It produces an abundance of 1 to 1½ inch-wide, phlox-like flowers that seem to almost cover the glossy, deep green leaves. The flowers can vary in color from pure white to pink or lavender rose. The common variety is usually rose-colored and grows from 18 to 30 inches in height.

Newer dwarf or spreading varieties grow from 8 to 10 inches high and may spread as much as 2 feet. Some of the best dwarf varieties include Coquette and Little Pinkie, both having rosy pink flowers. Bright-Eyes has lustrous white flowers with a red center. These varieties make excellent edgings for flower and shrub borders, according to Janne.

For use as a ground cover as well as in hanging baskets or window boxes, try the trailing or spreading varieties, suggests the horticulturist. Two of the best are Polka Dot, having a white flower with cherry red center, and Rose Carpet, boasting a rose flower with a deep red eye.

Plant periwinkles in full sun or partial shade. They will thrive in almost any soil but will do best if liberal amounts of organic material have been added. The plants will bloom continuously if the soil is not allowed to get dry.

Apply a complete fertilizer when the bed is prepared for planting and make additional applications every four weeks throughout the growing season. In neutral or alkaline soil the foliage may turn yellow due to iron chlorosis. This can be corrected by adding iron chelates or iron sulfate to fertilizer at the rate recommended on the container.

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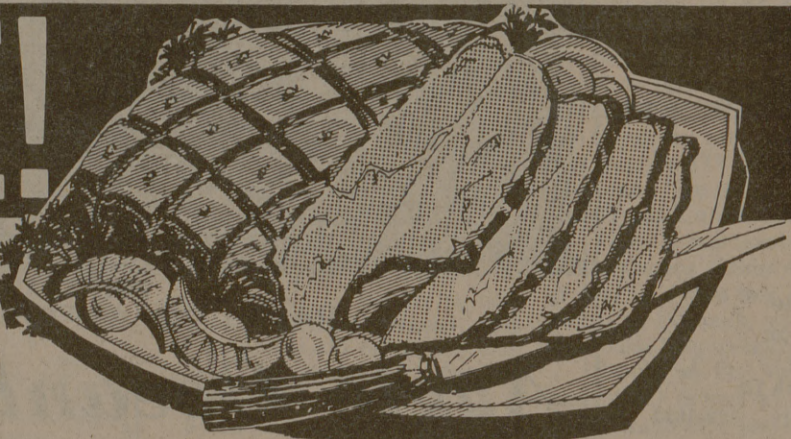
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