

Read Battalion Classifieds \$80,000 awarded for septic research

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7:30
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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has awarded \$80,000 to a Texas Agricultural Experiment Station scientist for the first year of a three-year study which will be administered by the A&M Research Foundation on a problem associated with the growing urban sprawl. Research investigations will determine the accumulation and passage of pollutants in domestic septic tank disposal fields, and evaluate the movement of such pollutants through the subsurface environment from disposal fields.

Project Leader for the investigation is Dr. Kirk W. Brown, TAES assistant professor of soil physics. Assisting him is Dr. Calvin Woods, Texas Engineering Extension Service, professor of civil engineering at A&M. "As the urban sprawl continues to take in more and more land in Texas and across the nation, the problem of pollutants from domestic septic tank disposal fields has become a major concern. Surveys indicate that at this time 25-30 percent of domestic sewage in the U.S. is dis-

posed of in septic tank-septic field systems. Definitive studies are needed to determine the accumulation, movement and degradation of potential ground-water pollutants from the disposal fields," emphasizes Brown. Agricultural scientists have been involved in studies of the physics and chemistry of soils, and can trace the movement and chemistry of these pollutants in the soil. Thus, the project leadership is being directed by Brown. Major project objectives are to

evaluate and analyze pollutants, including organic carbon, ammonia, nitrite, phosphates, nitrate and organic nitrogen, salts and fecal bacteria in disposal fields. The project also will provide a series of test plots available to EPA's National Ground Water Research Program at Ada, Oklahoma, for the study of movement and degradation of organic compounds in the soil. Two septic tank disposal fields, representing two of the three different soils in the study, will be included in the research in the Col-

lege Station area. Brown indicated that large undisturbed blocks of sand, loam, and clay soils will be isolated so the quantity and quality of drainage water can be determined. Results of the project are to be used to develop recommendations for maximum allowable densities of septic tank systems under varied soils and climatological conditions, Brown notes. He will be in charge of field investigations, and Woods will direct laboratory analysis work.



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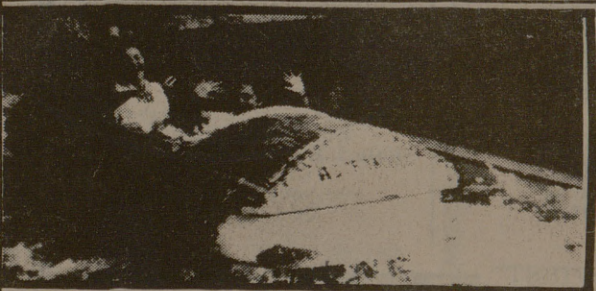
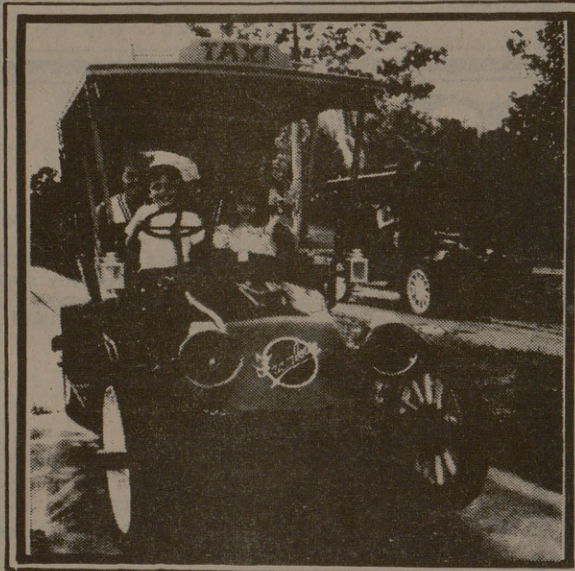
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