

State and Local

CS City Council OKs landfill plan in unanimous vote

By Yvonne DeGraw
Staff Writer

The College Station City Council approved a plan Thursday that should extend the life of the city's landfill by 10 years.

While the vote was unanimous and none of the audience members spoke against the plan, the Council was asked to study recycling and composting methods.

The new plan calls for filling a huge pit rather than individual trenches. This is possible because the clay liner in the newest phase of the 70-acre landfill on Rock Prairie Road is deeper. The pit would be 30 feet deep and trash would be heaped 25 feet above the land's surface. The height of the area fill would be 20 feet more than the height of the trench fills.

The increased height and depth add five years to the life of the landfill. Five more years will be gained by rerouting a drainage ditch and using 14 more acres of floodplain.

These changes must still be submitted to state agencies for approval.

While this extends the life of the landfill to 2006, Dr. Kirk Brown, a soil and crops sciences professor at Texas A&M, told the Council he has reviewed proposed Environmental

Protection Agency regulations that would make municipal landfills more expensive to build. Double clay liners and a pumping system could be among the added requirements.

Brown, a vocal opponent to the site proposed for Bryan's new landfill, said the cost of dumping waste will increase from the current rate of \$8-10 per ton in Texas. Cities on the East Coast currently pay as much as \$55-60 per ton, he said.

Brown asked the city to examine options that would allow citizens to voluntarily separate recyclable materials from their trash.

"People said, 'Nobody is going to sort his garbage,'" he said. "But, it turns out people will once they are educated and know that it's going to save their community money."

Councilman Dick Haddox expressed support for investigating options. Mayor Larry Ringer said the city would look into the issue.

Another group, led by Dr. Greg Shipley, asked the council to consider purchasing a part of Anderson Park. Grace Bible Church has plans to buy 4 1/2 acres that are currently used as soccer fields.

Ringer said the city had considered the purchase, but the price was exorbitant.

SEC files brief citing Pennzoil for violating federal securities law

HOUSTON (AP) — The Securities and Exchange Commission filed a brief Thursday with the Texas Supreme Court saying Pennzoil Co. violated federal securities law in its alleged contract to acquire Getty Oil Co.

Texaco, Inc. is appealing to the state's high court a state court jury's order that it pay \$10.35 billion in damages to Pennzoil for wrongly interfering in Pennzoil's attempted merger with Getty Oil.

The SEC decided to wait until after the Texas 1st Court of Appeals ruled on the case before it submitted any brief, said Eric Summergrad, assistant general counsel for the SEC who worked on the brief.

"We felt it would be useful to see what the intermediary court did," Summergrad said Thursday. "We wanted to see how it focused on the issue."

He said the SEC also is concerned with the impact the Pennzoil-Texaco case will have on similar cases.

The position taken in the brief would support a key point of Texaco's defense in its court dispute with Houston-based Pennzoil, although the SEC stressed it was not siding with Texaco in the case.

At issue was SEC Rule 10b-13, which prohibits anyone making a tender offer for a company's shares from making private purchases of those shares at the same time.

Texaco has argued that while Pennzoil in 1984 had an outstanding tender offer for Getty shares, it also had a private agreement to purchase the shares held by the J. Paul Getty Museum, of Malibu, Calif.

Texaco has contended Pennzoil never had a merger agreement with Getty, and therefore Texaco could not have interfered in the deal. But Texaco argued that even if there had been an agreement, it would have been invalidated by Pennzoil's violation of Rule 10b-13.

White Plains, N.Y.-based Texaco filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection from creditors in April to void a state requirement that it post a \$12 billion security bond, which it termed potentially ruinous, in order to appeal the judgment.

The Texas appeals court, in rejecting Texaco's argument, found that Pennzoil could have obtained an exemption from the rule, but the SEC noted Pennzoil never sought an exemption. In addition, the SEC stated that "based only on the facts established in the court record, it would have been highly unlikely that an exemption would have been granted."

In its statement, the SEC said the brief did not address any other issue in the case, "and takes no position as to the outcome of the case." The commission also stated the brief "does not address Texaco's contention that if the alleged contract violated Rule 10b-13, Texaco cannot be held liable for interfering with the contract."

Texaco, in a statement issued from its White Plains, N.Y. headquarters, said it was "extremely pleased" with the brief.

Pennzoil officials said Thursday they were confident that the judgment will be upheld by the courts.

2 A&M professors warn riders to take safety precautions when bicycling

By Jeannette Nicholson
Reporter

Before they hop on their bicycles again, students interested in riding these two-wheeled wonders should take time out for some sound and proper precautions — both for themselves and for their bikes.

"Cycling is a good way to improve cardiovascular fitness," says Dr. Mary Ann Heussner, a health education specialist with the Texas A&M Agricultural Extension Service. "But it's also an easy way to get hurt if you aren't physically or mentally prepared."

Dr. J. Richard Coast, an A&M assistant professor of physical education, agrees with her. "It's both a good program for aerobic conditioning, but it's also good for people who for some reason or another can't run ... if they've got knee, ankle or hip problems."

Bicycling is a good program of aerobic conditioning, Coast says.

Depending on the person, benefits can be gained by getting the heart rate up around 140 beats to 150 beats per minute and by going between 13 mph to 17 mph, he says. Also, depending upon one's speed, a person can burn 300 calories per hour and up while going 8 mph, or 1000 calories per hour going 20 mph.

Other factors play a part also, such as body weight and wind resistance.

Heussner says bicycling is like any other form of exercise in that stretching and a proper cool-down period are essential.

"You should stretch out before and after each ride to increase your flexibility and avoid muscle and tendon pulls," she says.

A beginning bicyclist should start with a 20 to 30 minute ride a minimum of three to four times a week, Coast says. If planning to tour or race, the rider should work up to 10-mile-a-day rides, he adds.

Both professors agree the most important piece of safety equipment a rider can have is a helmet — a hard helmet, which should fit snugly and always be worn. Coast says a good one will cost about \$30 to \$40 and is really a sound investment. He says he's convinced his helmet has saved his life more than once.

Clothing should be designed for both coolness and practicality. Shorts are now designed to be

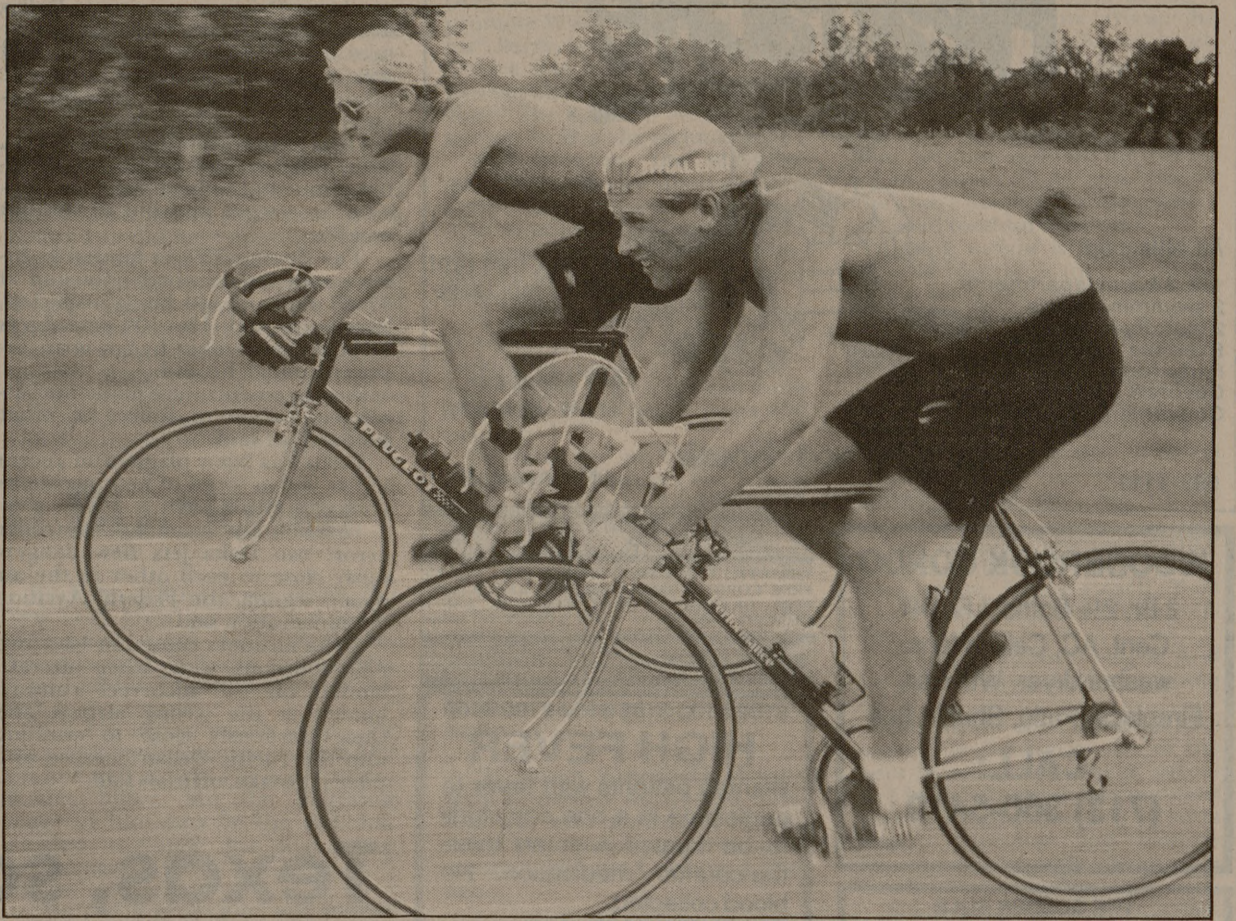


Photo by Robert W. Rizzo

Tony Cornett, a senior journalism major, pulls ahead of his roommate, Jay Larson, also a senior.

They are training for a 100-mile event at the end of August called "hotter than hell."

more aerodynamic with a pad in the seat for comfort on long rides and with tinier stitches for durability, he says. He recommends a sleeved shirt for sun protection and proper shoes — cleated for racing and non-cleated for touring. Gloves are optional, he says, but they do absorb shock and protect the hands in case of a fall.

Heussner and Coast both say the bike also should be in proper riding condition. The bike should be "tuned up" at least once a year, the chain should be kept oiled, the brakes should stop evenly and the tires should be checked every couple of weeks for wear and tear, Coast says.

"I don't think you can stress riding smart enough though," Coast said. "On the body, it's ex-

tremely safe, but you always run the risk of getting hit by a car.

"A lot more bicyclists get hurt than runners in traumatic-type injuries. At least once or twice a week on campus some cyclist gets hit by a car. I can't stress being cautious enough ... obey the traffic laws, ride on the right side of the road, signal when you turn and stop when you're supposed to stop.

"If the cyclist will do predictable things, then the person driving the car will know where to look for him."

Heussner adds, "Bicyclists are also more difficult to see, especially at night. Because of this, cyclists need to have their bikes equipped with proper reflectors and lights."

In Texas, bicycles are considered vehicles, Coast says, and are therefore susceptible to the same moving violations, such as running a red light or failing to stop at a stop sign. The University Police penalty for such a violation is \$4 with a ten-day late fee of \$5. Unlike motor vehicle violations, in which a student can get three tickets before being blocked from registration, only one outstanding bicycle violation is needed to be blocked, a UPD employee said.

Cycling can be an enjoyable way to get out and get exercise, but people must make sure that both the rider and the bike are in good condition, and the rider must follow the rules of the road, Heussner says.

Taxes still will be less for Texans than for most

AUSTIN (AP) — Texans will be carving out more of their income for the tax man, thanks to a record \$5.7 billion tax increase, but they'll still be paying less than the national average.

The Texas tax man will be bringing higher taxes for clothing, automobiles, cigarettes and hotel rooms, and brand new taxes on private club memberships, pest control services and yard work, among other items.

Come Sept. 1, the state tax bill on an average \$12,500 car will go up \$125. And Texans will pay \$60 more for a \$6,000 car.

The state sales tax goes up three-quarters of a cent in October, but the motor vehicle sales tax goes up a full penny a month earlier. New license and occupational taxes for doctors, dentists and engineers go into effect Sept. 1, but lawyers don't have to pay them until January.

The new taxes are included in the new tax laws

passed earlier this week as the Legislature came within hours of meeting a midnight deadline to adjourn a special session devoted to forging a new budget for the next two fiscal years.

If the total tax burden were split equally among every man, woman and child in Texas, the bill would be \$730 a person, up from \$667 last year. The national average is \$973.

While most Texans will be worrying about higher taxes, commercial anglers on the Texas Gulf Coast may be delaying late September expeditions until early October to take advantage of a benefit of the new bill, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram reported.

After Oct. 1, any ice they buy will be tax exempt.

In some cases, prudent buyers may need a scorecard on the effective dates to try to avoid the new taxes.

For other big-ticket items such as new cars, major advertising campaigns to remind potential buyers of the tax increases are certain.

Gene Fondren, president of the Texas Automobile Dealers Association, said, "I certainly expect that dealers will be publicizing the fact that vehicles bought before Sept. 1 are subject to a lower tax."

The timing of the increase, just before new models come out and prices on old ones go down, will most certainly make the theme of car dealers' August advertising campaigns quite predictable.

The new 6-cents-per-dollar sales tax rate — up to 8 cents in some large cities — will make the Texas sales tax among the highest in the nation.

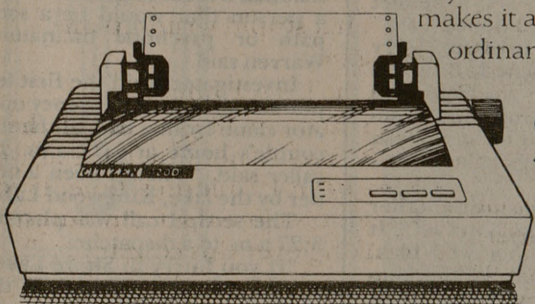
But with no corporate or personal income tax, Texas taxpayers will remain among the nation's least burdened, even with the huge tax increase.

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