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## "Sewer Fee May Add To City's Headaches"

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Backdrop

# Sewer Fee May Add To City's Headaches

City officials may get enough jolts when collection of the new sewer service fee begins in July to make them forget the snarls during the first few weeks of collecting the garbage fee (or as it's called, "city services fee") last year.

Last July, hundreds of telephone calls jammed City Hall lines with complaints about excess charges.

The Memphis Light, Gas & Water Division sent a \$6 garbage fee statement for three lights on a parking lot for county employes, and a bill for \$34 went to Chisca Fence Co. for an electric sign.

Adjustments for businesses were common, with vest-pocket groceries frequently billed as if they had the garbage of a supermarket.

LG&W has a little more time for setting up the sewer service fee on its computers. The garbage fee was approved by the City Council on June 11, and was added to bills after July 1, 1968. But it may turn out the sewer fee approved Tuesday has a few complications. For homeowners, the fee will range from \$1 to \$6.

One of the problems may stem from the fact that the fee for each homeowner, business and industry will have to be computed each month since the fee is based on the amount of water used and may fluctuate from month to month.

The garbage fee is a standard fee with the rates staying the same each month in different categories. For example, all homeowners pay a \$2.50 fee each month.

The City Council based the sewer service charge on water meter readings, with the assumption that the water which



Charles Blackburn

—Staff Photo

goes into a home or business will eventually come out through the sewers.

But the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department says nearly 2,000 homes aren't on the sewer lines, having their own septic tanks or other ways of disposing of waste water.

"We may have some trouble finding these. . . If they're not hooked on to the sewer, they'll have to notify us," said Public Works Director Charles Blackburn.

The ordinance allows businesses or industries to install their own meters for measuring sewer flows out.

But who is to read them? Mr. Blackburn says LG&W will probably have to read them.

But, he says, the public works division will probably have to read the meters of those who get water from private wells but dump sewage into the city's sewers. "I think this is going to be quite an

administrative problem for us," he said.

Another potential problem lies outside the city, where users of sewers which eventually are part of the city's system already pay fees.

Mr. Blackburn said these county residents won't have to pay both the old and the new fee. But contracts with utility districts will have to be renegotiated.

HENRY K. BUCKNER JR., a state Highway Department attorney who conducted a hearing on the Overton Park expressway here Monday, had a bad moment when he introduced the first of several aides from the Highway Department he'd brought along to make a presentation.

The aide, there a moment before, was gone. Another assistant, looking out over the crowd of opponents of the highway's route and licking his own lips nervously, said privately the missing aide had probably gone out for a drink.

The aide didn't return while the five-hour, 45-minute hearing was in progress.

IT'S A LONG way from the tobacco-spattered brass spittoons adorning most courtrooms 50 years ago to the protocol in effect today.

Criminal Court Judge Arthur C. Faquin Jr. requires every man who might be expected to have a coat at his command to wear it when he enters the courtroom.

This applies especially to court attaches, law officers and reporters. If they come into the courtroom in their shirtsleeves, Judge Faquin politely directs them to repair the breach of etiquette, forth-

with. He keeps in his office a coat to be lent to the coatless if emergency requires.

SEVERAL PERSONS got a bit upset when Mayor Henry Loeb announced last week that the Sheraton hotel chain will build a 200-room motel at Memphis International Airport.

The mayor neglected to inform the Airport Commission or the airport management that he was making the announcement.

Negotiations had been under way for nearly a year, and had been considered rather sensitive.

The airport management didn't want to do anything to disturb Sheraton's officials and had hoped that the project wouldn't be announced until the contract was approved by the City Council. The Council is expected to consider the contract next Tuesday.

FORMER MEMPHIS newsman John Means, now a press aide to Representative Dan Kuykendall (R-Tenn.), is combining his new duties with a moonlighting job on a Washington newspaper.

Some eyebrows were raised when it was reported that he had applied for a job described as "assistant editor" with the Washington Post. Was he planning to leave Mr. Kuykendall's staff?

No, Mr. Means said. Despite the title, the part-time job is actually a copy-reading position two nights a week on the newspaper's copy desk. He formerly was a reporter with The Commercial Appeal.

REPRESENTATIVE Kuykendall won't benefit financially in a GOP primary fight from the Republican's \$100-a-plate blowout at the Sheraton

Peabody Tuesday got in some political the same.

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I thank you for your contribution in this outstanding

The "outstanding" featuring a speech Oklahoma football Wilkinson, reportedly planned by Mr. Kuykendall

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