



DIGEST

Around and About

THE LATEST count shows the County work force shrank by 5,444 during the past year—from 82,888 on Dec. 31, 1975, to 77,444 last Dec. 31. Permanent employees dropped 4,137 (to 69,791), temporaries by 901 (to 6,353), and recurrents by 406 (to 1,300). The count does not include 2,125 federally-paid CETA workers, whose number changed little during the year.

THE BOARD of Supervisors (Feb. 15) voted its intention to place on the June 1978 ballot an amendment repealing Section 47 of the County Charter, which requires County pay to "at least equal" private industry pay for similar work. Supervisor James Hayes, a proponent of repeal, said that under a collective bargaining system "the prevailing wage clause distorts the wage negotiations with County employees before they even start."

THE COUNTY grand jury is urging the Board of Supervisors to undertake an "aggressive policy" of informing the public that welfare programs are mandated by state and federal laws, and if local taxpayers want relief from welfare costs, they must aim their fire at Sacramento and Washington, not at the Hall of Administration.

A NEW PUSH TO SAVE ENERGY

A RENEWED CAMPAIGN to cut use of natural gas, fuel oil, and electricity in all County buildings picked up momentum this week under prodding from the Board of Supervisors.

The mechanical department, at Board order (Feb. 1), is altering the heating and air conditioning systems, removing unneeded lighting fixtures, and working with the building services department to reduce nighttime lighting in empty offices.

The County launched an earlier energy-saving campaign in late 1973 during the Arab oil embargo. By March 1974 that effort, which also included reduced escalator and elevator service and turning off Civic Center fountains, had cut County energy use by 36 percent. Gradually, however, these cutbacks were eased until by November 1976 energy consumption was only 16 percent below the 1973 pre-conservation level.

The Board of Supervisors, in ordering the renewed campaign, noted

that recent Eastern blizzards had exposed the vulnerability of U.S. fuel supplies and, further, that each 1 percent the County reduces its energy consumption means a budget saving of \$250,000 per year.

The present conservation program involves:

- *Turning off all air conditioning when a building is not open to the public; that is, on weekends and from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. weekdays for most buildings, but not including hospitals, jails, and other 24-hour operations.*

- *"Detuning" the thermostat-controlled heating and air conditioning in most buildings. A home-owner can easily save energy by raising or lowering his thermostat. But large County buildings have twin-purpose ducts containing both hot-water pipes for heating and chilled-water pipes for air conditioning. Fans blow over radiator coils from these pipes, creating hot and cold air. Thermostats merely determine the mix of hot and cold air to control*

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An Invitation for Ideas

THE BOARD of Supervisors has ordered a vigorous effort to avoid waste of all energy sources, including natural gas, fuel oil, and electricity. The chief administrative office will welcome suggestions from individual employees on specific places in County buildings where such savings may be possible. Just write your suggestion on a separate paper and send it to the DIGEST, attaching the form below.

I am attaching a suggestion for energy-saving.

Name

Job title

Department

Work phone

Return to: COUNTY DIGEST, Room 526, Hall of Administration

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A New Watchdog

THE BOARD of Supervisors has approved creating a new County department to ride herd on the nearly 10,000 private institutions that the County licenses and inspects in their care of dependent children and adults.

The foster homes, day-care homes, boarding homes, skilled-nursing homes, and general-relief hotels involved have a total capacity of 103,000 beds. Charges have been aired during the past two years that some of the institutions have inferior medical, nursing, sanitary, and food services.

Under the Board action (Jan. 4), the new department will take over the inspecting and licensing of the institutions—a job now split among 293 employees in the departments of health services, PSS, adoptions, probation, and public guardian.

The County is waiting for formal approval from the state health department and federal HEW department (which finance some of the care programs) before activating the new department. CAO Harry Hufford said it will be staffed by shifting present County employees so that its cost can be absorbed within the present County budget.

Letters

To THE DIGEST:

More than 600 County employees with varying degrees of drinking problems have come to our Occupational Health Service over the past two years, and we have been able to help them with counseling and association with community groups like Alcoholics Anonymous.

We want all employees to know this help is available. In many cases it can avert loss of jobs, family breakups, and even the loss of life itself, which is the ultimate payoff of continued alcohol abuse.

The state-funded employee alcoholism program run by Occupational Health Service (a division of the personnel department) aims at early identification and prevention of alcoholism as well as rehabilitating the employee who already has a severe alcohol problem.

We encourage supervisors to refer possible problem cases to our OHS counselors and psychologists. Discipline alone has not proved an

effective means of improving job performance, particularly in serious cases.

For further information and referral for yourself or someone who needs help with a drinking problem, call 974-2361. Or visit the employee alcoholism program office in room 580, Hall of Records, 320 West Temple street.

HERB KAPLAN

Chief deputy director, personnel

ENERGY SAVING

(Continued from page 1)

room temperatures; meanwhile, the supply of hot and cold water in the pipes remains constant. To achieve savings, the mechanical department is raising the temperature of the chilled water in the pipes and lowering the hot water temperature. The result will be that responses to the thermostats' "messages" will be slower and more limited. Rooms will heat or cool less rapidly, and County employees will encounter more variation in office temperatures.

"This makes no difference in mild weather, such as we're having now," mechanical director Mathew Jacobs said. "But in a summer hot spell we may find that the air conditioning system can not bring room temperatures much lower than 78 degrees, no matter what the thermostat setting is."

• *Eliminating excess lights.* The Board of Supervisors (Feb. 25, 1975) adopted federal standards of adequate lighting. These range from 15 foot-candles in corridors to a high of 120 foot-candles in drafting rooms; a desk in a general office is supposed to have 70 foot-candles. The mechanical department is visiting County offices with light meters to make sure lighting does not exceed federal standards.

"We will not achieve full energy conservation overnight in the 1,400 County buildings," Jacobs said. "Making the mechanical changeovers will take many man-hours. And we've got to push training and new work habits among our staff, the building custodians, and many other employees."

The Board order of Feb. 1 directed all department heads to cooperate with the mechanical department in reducing energy consumption.

Chief Houts Retiring

RICHARD HOUTS, a 33-year veteran of the County fire department and its chief since 1969, will retire March 31.

Other departing longtimers announced by the board of retirement, include:

With 42 years service—Fred Gehring, assistant director, Museum of Natural History.

With 35 to 40 years service—Ben Matthews, fire department; Robert Miller, communications; Robert Bartlett, County clerk; Russell Lacey, Jr., and Herbert Jones, probation; Elvyn Holt and Wilbert White, district attorney; Elaine De Boynton and Wilfred Hazen, health services; and Ludwig Freiseis, Shigeo Takayama, and Joseph Meltz, flood control.

With 30 to 35 years service:

HEALTH SERVICES—Ethel Kelley, Mary Gahwolf, Novella Johnson, Joseph Messina, Jack Milburn, Walter Wing, Barbara Blackwood, Edward Bowen, Dolores Howard, Toyoliko Shiraishi, Malcolm Eldridge.

PROBATION—Robert Corrigan, Daniel Rodriguez, Rufus Durr, Joffre Roberts, Henry Warren, Raymond Brown, Gerald Stapleton, Ivan Smith.

ROAD—Harry Aubrey, Leo Fraijo, Olen Kinzie, William Meister, Carl Morton, Malcolm Stanford, William West, William Beuer, Laurence Houle, Harry Parker, John Twilley.

FIRE—Paul Major, Ronald Gunnette, Robert Scottini, Floyd Bumgardner.

PARKS—Durward Bynam, Clifford Brown, Cecil Edmondson, Robert Bruce.

DPSS—Lanette Merriwether, Gladys Butler, Herman Daugh, Clara Kern.

MECHANICAL—Charles Dagner, Jose Nonaca, Cleo Swayne.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS—Albert Johnson and Gilbert Johnson, flood control; Donald Crouse and Leland Watts, assessor; Robert Hyche, building services; Joseph Kennedy, regional planning; Carl Shaw, municipal court; Sebastian Genovese and George Weber, superior court; George Pipkin and Robert Wolf, sheriff; Harry Hutchinson, personnel; Donald Sterlin, County clerk; Wilford Clark and Edward Janoski, beaches.

County of Los Angeles

DIGEST

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