

EVENTS AND TRENDS PROPELLING ORLANDO-LAND INTO THE FUTURE. A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY JOHN P. O'MEARA

# LOOKOUT



## Industry

# The Price of Clean Water

*Cleaning the Creek to sustain the industrial giants*

**T**HERE SEEMS LITTLE question that if Western Electric had its druthers construction would've already begun on its proposed 500,000 sq. ft. integrated circuit manufacturing plant.

But they don't. Western Electric needs sewage capacity of 4 million gallons per day, and federal regulations aimed at protecting Lake Tohopekaliga precluded their getting it.

Up until late October, the hangup was somewhere in the intergovernmental snarl of red tape. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was insisting that Orlando and Orange County stop dumping treated effluent into Shingle Creek, claiming it was killing Lake Toho. Local officials balked, saying they needed more time, and the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation (DER) spent a lot of its time just trying to keep the peace.

Finally, the central issues have been resolved, and by Nov. 22, the floodgates of Shingle Creek will be open to Western

Electric. At least until 1984.

After that, the effluent will have to pour into carefully regulated percolation ponds to filter naturally into the aquifer. And by 1988, the county will have to come up with a permanent system of disposing with the effluent.



Maury Carter lists the Taft Ranch.

*'We have 7,000 acres of land.'*

The most plausible scents to be land spreading. While the land spread technique is expensive in that it would require the purchase of some 4,000 acres, County Administrator James Harris told *Orlando-land* that it could entitle Orange County to up to 85% in federal grants.

Until the grants became available, the county could lease large tracts.

"To get upwards of 4,000 acres of good land, you may have to purchase considerably more," he said.

And to date, the most obvious arena for land spreading seems to be the sprawling Taft Ranch enveloping the airport to the South and East.

"We have 7,000 acres of land, approximately 4,000 of which could be suitable for land spreading," said Taft Ranch broker *Maury Carter*, of Maury Carter Assoc. "We have talked to the county about it, but so far there are no commitments either way."

Western Electric has an option on a 350-acre parcel in Orlando Central Park, contingent on sewer availability and the extension of the John Young Parkway down to the property.

"That is already in our budget," says Orange County Commissioner *Allen Arthur*. "The construction of (the 1½-mile road) will carry over two budget years. It's going to run about \$4-5 million, but the state's putting up about half of that. It will be open by the time the plant is open."

For the past five months, Western Electric has been left standing first on one foot and then the other. And even now, the giant manufacturer awaits the final signing of the consent decree freeing the necessary sewer capacity.

"For now, we're simply a very interested bystander," said *Carole Howard*, public relations representative. "We are very disappointed that this thing's taking so long."



County Administrator Jim Harris discusses land spreading:

*'To get 4,000 acres of good land, you may have to purchase considerably more.'*