TIDINGS FROM THE STAT

VIRGINIA CORRELATES WITH D.C. PROGRAM

Virginia's Air Pollut[ion] Control Board has plans [to] dovetail with Wash[ington], D.C. ideas--aimed [at] lowering dirt, fu[mes] in the capital city's air. The D.C. plan is drast[ic] [WN,Feb7'72p7], aime[d] car-driving commuters--and so is Virginia's. It too suggests much hi[gher] parking fees to discourage suburbanites driving to work in the District. It also calls for increasing the number of express lanes for buses on freeways into Washington.

MINNESOTA

Snowmobile damage to the environment has been confirmed by a Minnesota study. Lowering of soil temperatures and postponment of the spring thaw where snowmobiles trafficked heavily were reported by a researcher working for the Dept. of Natural Resources.

Soil under the snow compacted by snowmobiles was as much as 15 degrees colder than normal. The spring thaw in such areas lagged 10 days to 2 weeks behind areas that had no snowmobile traffic.

NEW YORK

New York's [A]ssembly will consid[er] a bill banning any oil or gas dr[il]ling in coastal waters controlled by the state (currently anything within a 3-mile limit). Oil discharges into these waters would also be illegal; those responsible would be liable, negligence or no. Civil penalties would be imposed, and equipment could be seized by the attorney general until the penalty judgments are paid.

Talk of federal approval for oil exploration in the Atlantic has caused concern in New York and other coastal states. The proposed law would make coastal waters a marine sanctuary. If Maine and New York are successful in a suit now awaiting U.S. Supreme Court action, that sanctuary could be extended as far as 80 miles off shore.

MISSOURI

The state will have to prove industrial emissions actually are pollutants if a new Missouri proposal passes. Initially the bill gave air control authorities power over all emissions. Industrial lobbyists balked. They wanted companies presumed innocent til proven guilty, as with people.

To get a floor vote, backers agreed, but in return they got an increase [in] fines to $5,000.

COLORADO

Colorado's air board is considering tightening restrictions on waste burning devices. Home incinerators would be banned immediately in cities of 2,000 or more, on Jan. 1, 1974, for populations of 500 or more. Permits would be required for farm units, with some types made illegal after Jan. 1, [19]75.

COLORADO

Colorado legislators are debating a bill to tighten state control of cloud seeding activities. A 10-man panel would be created to review requests for licenses to modify the weather. Such licenses are granted by the natural resources director.

In committee testimony, one witness said new technology could increase the Colorado River flow by as much as 2-million acre-feet yearly.

MICHIGAN

DDT tests of people who eat fish are being conducted by the Michigan Public Health Department. 100 volunteers from an area on the southern Lake Michigan shore will be asked for hair and blood samples. They will also be quizzed about their work, diet and health habits.

Fish from that area show high DDT and PCB levels. The department hopes to learn how much of those chemicals and mercury are passed on.

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