

Today's garbage could be tomorrow's energy source

One man's garbage may be another man's energy source. Or so believes Verne Traudt, UNL utilities manager.

Traudt has been studying conversion of solid waste into steam for heating and power generation on his own for the past five years and the Nebraska State Energy Office this summer awarded him a \$4,785 research grant to broaden those horizons.

This is no pie in the sky idea. Traudt has seen such boilers in operation in three states and has monitored their use in Europe and Japan.

Application on the local level could tap a valuable alternative energy source. As an example, Traudt notes, there is an equivalent amount of energy in the solid waste output of Lincoln to heat and air condition all 150 buildings at the university year around.

This could not only cut energy costs in the future, he says, but would also save space now used as a sanitary land fill and the maintenance costs for keeping it up. Salvage of metals, estimated at 38 tons per day in the city, would also save 75 percent in energy consumption, Traudt points out.

Cost effectiveness of solid waste conversion is the main stumbling block today. Even with the dramatic increase in energy

prices in recent years, solid waste energy production is still not competitive, because of the high initial investment and the operating costs involved in converting the boilers or purchasing new boilers to burn the material. This may not always be the case, Traudt contends and says an investigation at this time may reap benefits later on.

In the course of his study, Traudt is gathering background data on solid waste conversion methods for both processed and nonprocessed material.

Energy conversion efficiency is slightly better with processed material, Traudt said, but noted that burning of non-processed solid waste for fuel has been done throughout Europe and Japan for the past 20 to 25 years and is now being done in this country. Operating expenses are also reduced with nonprocessed wastes, although initial costs for specialized incinerator-boilers may range somewhat higher.

Two University mechanical engineering professors — Keith N. Newhouse and James W. Harper — are acting as consultants on the project and Thomas Smith, an engineering student from West Point, is helping gather research data.

Fair, 'Sour Mash' on NETV

For the 12th consecutive year, the Nebraska Educational Television Network will offer coverage of the Nebraska State Fair.

Nightly State Fair coverage of the State Fair, including exhibits, horse shows, tractor pulls and youth activities, will begin Sept. 3.

Two new features have been added to this year's coverage—a salute of the Future Farmers of America, a 90-minute program airing Sept. 10 at 9 p.m.; and the highlights from the tractor pull competition, on Saturday, Sept. 9, at 8 p.m.

NETV also will offer live coverage of the State Fair horse shows.

"Sour Mash," a Nebraska-based swing/country group, will perform in a two-part special program this week on the Nebraska ETV Network.

"Sour Mash, Set One" will be broadcast Tuesday, September 5, at 8 p.m. and repeats Friday, September 8, at 8 p.m. "Sour Mash, Set Two" will air on Wednesday, September 6 at 8 p.m. and again on Sunday, September 10, at 6:30 p.m.

The two-part concert, taped at Omaha's Howard Street Tavern, includes such selections as "Mack the Knife," "I Will Always Love You," "Walkin' the Floor Over You" and "Crazy."



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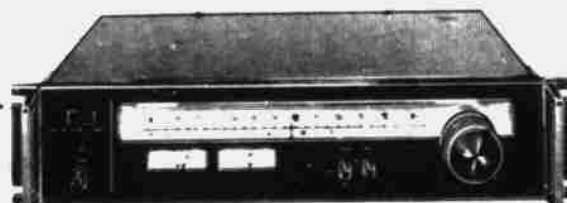


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