

As a result of the torrential rains from tropical storm "Eloise" which occurred in the late summer of 1975, sewage and silt flowed into the upper portions of the Patuxent River and eventually reached the Tri-County area of Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties. The pollution was so serious that it forced the closing of the oyster beds in the lower portion of the river and put several hundred persons out of work at the start of the oyster harvesting season.

The Patuxent is a beautiful and productive waterway and a vital part of the economy and of the attractiveness of the entire Southern Maryland area.

In the wake of Tropical Storms "Agnes", which occurred in June of 1972, and "Eloise", quantities of raw sewage or inadequately treated wastewater flushed downstream into the Chesapeake Bay after a number of sewage facilities were flooded out in the Susquehanna basin in New York and Pennsylvania. Consequently, soft-shell clam harvesting was halted in the Bay because of high bacteria counts.

The shutdowns caused economic hardships to watermen, seafood packers and employees of seafood processors.

It is imperative that some solution be found to the problem of excessive pollution in State waters for the protection of the citizens of this State.

When flood waters begin to rise, sewage pumping stations located in the flood plain are threatened and the electric motors which drive the pumps sometimes are removed before they are destroyed or damaged by inundation. These motors can be protected and kept in operation by perhaps putting them in waterproof housings of some type.

Entire sewage treatment plants are not so easily waterproofed, but dikes or berms could be constructed around them so that flood waters could be held out.

It is firmly believed that it would be less expensive, more technically sound, and just as effective to make the facilities floodproof instead of embarking on a program to place all or some sewage facilities above the flood plain.

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission has placed top priority on developing a program to floodproof water and sewage facilities in the basin. The Commission is made up of representatives of Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York and the Federal Government.

One of the current, active possibilities to alleviate the present unsatisfactory conditions would be a moratorium on further sewer hookups in those areas of the State where sewage facilities are presently