

**PUBLIC COMMENTOR 226 - MARTIN COORPENDER, SEPTEMBER 24, 1996**

177

Thank You, Madam Mayor. My name is Martin Coopender. It used to be c double o-r hyphen p-e-n-d-e-r, and no relation to the Coors family. I'm not a lawyer, a doctor, an indian chief or running for political office. I could be part indian. My grandmother was 50 percent Watcheto indian out of the Arkansas area. I am a retired engineer. Seven years with division of highways for the state of California on this freeway up to Santa Rosa. 13 years with the department of agriculture as a construction inspector covering sewer and water systems from the Oregon line to Ventura. I've worked in and around every sewer system built in the coastal area. The little town of Guerneville – and that sewer system they have, they're about to lose 3 and a half million dollars if they don't get everybody hooked up to it.

The City of Occidental is about to have theirs torn all apart. Graton, Forestville, Hopland, Cloverdale, and Healdsburg. Practically all of them are county serviced sewer systems. They stink to high heaven. This system that you have in Santa Rosa is one of the finest systems I've ever seen. If allowed to do what it does, it would function better than anything anywhere in the country.

This mess going through so many years with this system is beyond reason. The reason the federal government's not into this system is because it's too big for them for the money that they put out. The federal government only puts money out to small towns and small communities. That's how these systems get built across the country.

There's a little system up in Rio Del, a carbon plant. Real small. It turns out drinkable water. I've drincken the water out of that plant. It pumps right into the eel river. Every system in the damn country dumps into a river. I don't know what you people are screaming about. There's no way of getting around it. If it don't dump in the river it goes in the ocean. There's no system anywhere -- you want to look at a good system, go to Tucson and Phoenix. They have rivers running down there now that never run this time of the year. And it's all wastewater. 200,000 gallons a day go into that sand river. There's wildlife there. There's trees there. Everything is really growing. They are putting that into a system of dams that's going to eventually go down into an aquifer.

The City of Colorado has a small system that is turning out drinking water. The Michigan Peninsula has a system that was first discovered by going through marshlands with their wastewater and coming out on the other end with better plants and better fish and better wildlife than anywhere in the world. You're fighting a dead battle here. You got to get off of your butts and get this system built now.

**Mayor Wright:**

Thanks, Mr. Coopender. Natasha followed by Karen Kibler followed by Kit March Mariah.