

## BATON ROUGE / REGION

# Tax notices being mailed to 150,000 property owners in EBR

About 150,000 East Baton Rouge Parish property owners will be receiving tax notices in the next few days, according to Steve Blount, director of the sheriff's tax office.

Blount, whose office was mailing out the notices today, said a total of \$101,556,866 in property tax payments are due in by Dec. 31. Blount said that is \$2,358,232 less than last year's figures.

The decrease is largely attributable to the reduction in the parishwide Parish Prison expansion millage — 8 mills last year, but only 4.62 mills this year. The Metropolitan Council was able to reduce the millage because the overall cost of the prison expansion project was less than expected.

The millage at the reduced rate will bring in \$4,887,541 — \$3,896,638 less than last year's figures. This is the last year that particular tax will be collected.

This will be the first year a parishwide 1.57-mill tax

dedicated to the assessor's salary and expense fund will be collected. That tax is projected to bring in \$1,660,917.

Most millages were increased slightly earlier this year to enable the various taxing bodies to take in the same amount they took in last year despite declining assessed property values.

The adjustments were made prior to the completion of this year's tax rolls, and Blount's calculations show the millage adjustments produced mixed results. While parishwide millages will bring in more money than last year, several municipal and special district millages will bring in less despite the adjustments.

The 8-mill parishwide library tax, for example, is now an 8.34-mill tax. Last year, it brought in \$8,786,109; this year, it is projected to bring in \$8,822,965.

In all, parishwide millages collected for the city-parish,

School Board, sheriff, assessor and recreation board increased from last year's \$2.76 mills to \$3.74 mills this year, according to Blount's figures.

The overall net assessed value of all land and improvements in East Baton Rouge Parish dropped from last year's \$1,098,222,250 to \$1,057,809,450 this year, according to the assessor's annual figures. The comparable figure for 1986 was \$1,108,866,690.

The parish's total net assessed valuation excludes the \$42,384,600 assessed value of homestead-exempted property. Blount noted homeowners who pay no property taxes because of the \$75,000 homestead exemption will not receive a property tax notice.

Property owners with mortgages on their property and whose tax payments are held in escrow need to send copies of their tax bills to the mortgage holder, he said. Property

owners who have not paid their bills by Dec. 31 will see a penalty of 1.25 percent per month added to their bills, he said.

The taxes can be paid by by mailing a check to the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Tax Office, P.O. Box 70, Baton Rouge 70821. Checks should be payable to the East Baton Rouge sheriff and a copy of the tax bill should be included in the envelope, Blount said.

Under taxes paid to city-parish government, the parish and special taxing district millages on the rolls last year are expected to bring in \$3,153,397 less than last year's figures. The School Board will take in \$908,507 less in property tax revenue than last year. The sheriff can expect \$32,868 more than last year. The East Baton Rouge Parish Recreation and Park Commission can expect \$48,767 more than last year.

The Pontchartrain Levee District and Baker can expect less property tax revenue than was due last year, while Zachary can expect more.

## Special unit aims to halt armed robbers

By Steve Wheeler/  
State Times writer

A special city police unit aimed at catching armed robbers during the upcoming holiday season has hit the streets to keep an eye on convenience stores, service stations and other places likely to be hit by robbers.

Along with good cheer, the Christmas season usually brings an increase in crimes against property and people, Police Chief Wayne Rogillio said.

Rogillio has ordered the special armed robbery detail to stake out businesses that stay open late at night or on a 24-hour basis.

"We've got extra people out," he said. He added the detail consists of officers normally assigned to daytime duty or desk jobs so regular patrol duties will not be diminished.

The stakeout detail, which was successful at stopping some armed robberies in progress last year, will target areas of the city where robberies have been reported, he said.

"Our business picks up a lot in December," the chief said. "We're just trying to prepare."

Rogillio said the officers have been trained in how to handle situations when they spot an armed robbery in progress. Generally, he said, the officers should allow the robbery to conclude, then arrest the robber after he or she exits the business.

"If we rush in, the guy's liable to shoot the clerk," Rogillio said. "We'd rather get them outside the store if possible."

Rogillio wouldn't say how many officers are assigned to the special stakeout unit, nor would he specify what areas of the city will be targeted for surveillance.



A Rollins Environmental Services official discusses the waste disposal company with state Sen. Kip Holden

## Hayden

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admission," Landry said.

Silva reported that he saw Hayden three times prior to the murder, including the day Hayden was released from Greenwell Springs.

"I felt that Franko was psychotic and in need of hospitalization. The patient's father felt that he would like to try to help him on an outpatient basis," Silva said.

Hymel said he will evaluate Hayden again in May.

If convicted as charged, Hayden would face a mandatory sentence of life in prison.

## McHugh extends job application deadline 1 week

Mayor-President-elect Tom Ed McHugh has extended the deadline for submitting applications for jobs in the new administration by one week — to Dec. 8 — and any applications that come in after that won't be considered.

Initially, McHugh had wanted all applications by Dec. 1 and said he hoped to have all selections made by Dec. 15. Transition chief Hank Henagan said Tuesday, however, that those initial deadlines have turned out to be unrealistic.

Henagan said Tuesday that he expects all selections to be made prior to Jan. 2, when McHugh takes office. If any department head positions are left undecided by the time McHugh takes office, the new administration might have to start off with some interim department heads, Henagan said.

Resumes, clearly marked as such on the envelopes containing them, are to be submitted to Mayor-President-elect Tom Ed McHugh, P.O. Box 1471, Baton Rouge 70821.

## Hearing officer, lawyers tour Rollins facility

While 25 citizens picketed outside a waste disposal plant in Baton Rouge Tuesday, lawyers representing intervenors in the Rollins Environmental Services permit application hearing and the hearing officer in the case were given a tour.

About 25 members of Citizens for Good Government, a group opposed to the permit and intervenors in the hearing process, carried signs and chanted slogans denouncing the hazardous waste disposal company, claiming it pollutes the environment and damages the health of nearby residents.

Rollins Environmental Services is applying for permanent authority to operate five landfills currently authorized under an interim permit, a permit to build landfills in two new tracts of land at its site on Scenic Highway and permission to build two new incinerators at its plant.

When hearing officer E. Ronald "Skip" Mills called for the tour earlier this month, he told Rollins officials that he wanted an overview of the plant site and what the company is doing. Mills said he did not want a "glossy PR tour" of

the plant.

Rollins plant manager Tom Bramlette gathered the group of attorneys in the company's tiny conference room to give a brief overview of the plant operation before the tour began.

Although Rollins officials had planned on the mini-lecture lasting only about 25 minutes, it went on for nearly an hour and a half, once attorneys for the intervenors began asking technical questions about the operation.

Mills told Bramlette, "I want to see what your facility is so your application makes a little more sense to me personally."

The tour was the first time John Sheppard, an assistant attorney general for the state, had seen the inside of the plant. In 1986, Sheppard represented the state in prosecuting Rollins for alleged hazardous waste violations.

Other attorneys attending the tour included former district attorney Oesie Brown, who was representing Christians for Good Government, and state Rep. Kip Holden.

The lawyers questioned the safety of the water table under the 350-acre waste disposal

plant and the extent of groundwater contamination under the site.

The group toured the incinerator and got a fire-filled view of the afterburner chamber, which adjoins the giant revolving steel incinerator kiln, when Bramlette opened one of several small iron doors on the chamber.

Although many residents around the plant complain of odors and fumes escaping from the plant, the incinerator and surrounding area were nearly odor-free during the tour.

The group also toured the wastewater treatment facility and landfill cells at the site.

Mills has said he wants one more tour of the facility before the hearing process is ended. The second tour is to be a technical one, he said.

The hearing resumes Dec. 12 when Mills will hear arguments on motions to have Rollins' attorney, Warren Byrd, recused from the case on the grounds that his participation would violate legal ethics.

Byrd formerly represented the state of Louisiana and DEQ in two separate hearings against Rollins. The Baton Rouge attorney maintains that he got Ethics Commission approval before accepting the job.

## GSU decision is criticized by Lambert

Capitol News Bureau

Public Service Commissioner Louis Lambert said Gulf States Utilities Co.'s decision to reject a Public Service Commission rate order draws the utility closer to bankruptcy as well as risks much higher rates for utility customers.

Lambert said electricity customer's rates could double if a court accepts GSU's position that the entire costs of the River Bend nuclear plant should be placed into the rate base.

The utility company decided Monday to seek court relief rather than accept a PSC order to hold off a rate increase for another year as well as remove \$1.4 billion of the \$4.5 billion River Bend nuclear plant costs from the rate base.

"If the court accepts GSU's position that the entire River Bend nuclear plant be declared prudent and placed into the rate base, the GSU rate increase plan if approved by the courts would result in the following: residential rates will go up by 50 percent; commercial rates will go up by 50 percent; industrial rates will go up 50 percent," said Lambert.

He said the effect would be an increase in GSU's rates from 6.8 cents per kilowatt hour to 11 cents.

"That's about a 55 percent increase," said Lambert.

Lambert said GSU's action also sends a message to heavy industry that cogeneration looks more economically feasible. By cogeneration, industry produces its own electricity in a process in which fuel is used for production of steam as well.

Lambert said cogeneration also will mean more of a burden on residential and commercial customers to pay for the nuclear plant as industrial customers leave the system.

"If GSU had accepted the PSC plan, it would have given the economy a chance to heal itself and the consumers a 'breather,'" said Lambert.

He said the action also draws GSU closer to financial insolvency as demand for electricity decreases with high rates as consumers and business look to locate to areas serviced by more economical electric generation systems.

## New office aims to improve state workers' morale

Capitol News Bureau

The administration of Gov. Buddy Roemer has created a new office aimed at improving the morale, productivity and overall management of the state work force.

Commissioner of Administration Dennis Sims said the two-person Office of Personnel Management won't conflict with the state Civil Service Commission which, under the Louisiana Constitution, sets rules for hiring, firing and paying most state workers.

Sims said civil service officials participated in a month-long study that suggested the new office, which he said will help unify personnel efforts now splintered among several state agencies.

For instance, personnel directors from each department will form "an advisory board to direct policy and coordinate efforts to better manage our people," he said.

That group, along with the Roemer administration, could propose comprehensive policy changes to the Civil Service Commission rather than rely on individual, piecemeal efforts to solve personnel problems, Sims said.

The "study committee" will concentrate on improving worker morale, increasing productivity and ensuring that personnel laws and rules are followed, Sims said.

## BR TOMORROW

CONCERT — 8 p.m. LSU School of Music Recital Hall. The Collegium Musicum will perform.

LECTURE ON "THE FIVE WOUNDS OF LATIN AMERICA" — 7:30 p.m. Atchafalaya Room, LSU Union. Erik Ritter von Kuehnt-Ledding, longtime European correspondent for the National Review, to speak.

## Bush

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said this morning that Bush has no intention of stepping aside.

"Some of the people don't have all the 'ev's,'" Marabella said.

In a letter to Guste Tuesday, Bush asked for the opportunity to address a special investigative task force examining possible wrongdoing by the district attorney. The letter said the task force needs more information about a series of burglaries in the district attorney's office that may have tainted certain evidence the task force considered.

Saying "it is time to move forward," Riddick said Guste could go to court as soon as Friday to win the right to convene the grand jury investigation.

Guste had set a Tuesday deadline for his request that Bush step aside or face a

court hearing to order him to step aside so Guste can proceed with his investigation. State law allows the attorney general to prosecute in a specific jurisdiction only when the district attorney has been removed from the case.

Guste is investigating how Bush spent money from special investigative accounts and how certain office purchases were made.

Bush's attorneys — Marabella, Sam D'Amico and Cyrus Greco — asked Guste Tuesday to allow a meeting with the special investigative task force formed by Guste for the investigation.

"There is no cause for Mr. Bush to recuse himself (remove himself legally from the case)," the letter said.

The letter also said Bush had promised the right to "explain any

misunderstandings or present any additional information" to the task force "before any decision was reached."

Bush's letter specifically mentioned that the task force may be interested in how burglaries in his office may have affected the evidence examined in the investigation.

A city police officer, Dwayne Gorard, was arrested in June and charged with burglarizing Bush's office, District Judge Frank Sale's office and the sheriff's office.

Investigators have said that money and other valuables were stolen.

Marabella said this morning that Bush wants the opportunity to explain how the burglaries might cast doubt on some of the evidence the task force received.

"That's a significant factor that needs to be explained," Marabella said.

Riddick said Bush has been given sufficient time to respond to the request and that Guste plans to file suit by Friday afternoon or on Monday.

The attorney general will have to show the court there is reason to present evidence to a grand jury, Riddick said.

For the past seven months, Guste's office has looked into the operations of Bush's office.

Bush has admitted keeping no written record of expenditures from an investigative account he kept in a safe deposit box. Guste also is examining certain purchasing practices, including the acquisition of cars from an auto dealership employing Bush's daughter as a salesperson.

## Release

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driveway, apparently to take the car again.

Marchand warned him not to approach.

Marchand said Williams walked up the driveway, his left hand in his jacket pocket, his right swinging aggressively in the air. She remembered him saying, "Bitch, I will kill you before I see you with that car."

Marchand drew a .38-caliber pistol

from her purse. She said she shouted at him not to come any closer. Williams contended his march. When he got to within 10 feet, Marchand fired once, striking her former lover in the head.

Angelou said many months of beatings and abuse prevented Marchand, then 28 years old, from making a rational assessment of the situation.

Marchand's brother had testified

previously that Williams had once pulled a gun on him. One of her two sons, a 13-year-old, testified that he and his 10-year-old brother plotted to kill Williams to save their mother from his beatings.

Before he let Marchand go, Powder reminded her that the killing was unnecessary. The judge said had Marchand called the police that day, Williams might have been the one in

jail, not her.

Ponder said Marchand "overreacted" and caused suffering for herself, her family and her children.

He noted that the victim's family and the probation office had recommended probation for Marchand, who had never been arrested before and never even was cited for a traffic violation.

The maximum sentence for manslaughter is 21 years in prison.

## Hospital

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Following a national trend, the state is trying to get away from depending on large long-term institutions for all patients. It is moving toward using state hospitals for acute care and community-based programs, such as group homes or supervised apartments, for outpatient care, Ramsey said.

Large institutions such as Southeast don't cover the state because Medicaid does not cover long-term psychiatric care for anyone over 65. Those eligible for Medicaid would be totally covered in a general hospital and partially covered in a community-based program, he said.