



A2

# SACRAMENTO HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

July 17, 1981

Members of the City Council  
City of Sacramento  
Sacramento, CA

Re: Emergency Housing Repair Needs

HONORABLE MEMBERS IN SESSION:

A recent Sacramento Union news article described the plight of a Sacramento woman who had an application filed with the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency for rehabilitation assistance but who also had been on a SHRA waiting list with other City applicants who required rehabilitation loan assistance. The emergency nature of Ms. Stutheit's needs was not known to the Agency until the week of the news article.

The City of Sacramento does not have any emergency repair program that can, within a matter of hours, respond to a citizen's request for assistance and subsequently make the necessary repairs. However, the Agency will very shortly be appearing before you with a set of policy recommendations regarding its rehabilitation program which will, among other things, include a recommendation that the City provide an "Emergency Repair Program" to correct immediately hazardous housing conditions for our low-income, senior, and handicapped homeowners. Examples of conditions eligible for this proposed program include correction of hazardous electrical wiring and systems, broken sewage facilities, broken furnaces, inoperative water heaters, and the repair of leaking roofs.

This program is proposed to respond to a request for assistance within 48 hours and have the capacity to contact a contractor to make the repairs as soon as possible thereafter. This service would be provided as a grant to those eligible applicants.

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CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
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## SACRAMENTO HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Members of the City Council

City of Sacramento

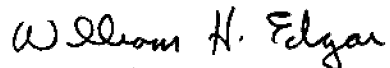
July 17, 1981

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Other necessary major repairs such as termite damage could be funded under a low-interest SNAP amortized loan or deferred loan in targeted areas.

With respect to Ms. Stutheit's case, I would also like to commend our private citizenry and local business people for coming to her assistance. It is very encouraging that there are so many concerned citizens who are willing to help one another. The Agency is proceeding to assist Ms. Stutheit.

Sincerely,



WILLIAM H. EDGAR  
Interim Executive Director

WE:MH:gw

July 17, 1981

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City of Sacramento  
Sacramento, CA

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*Sample of  
Edgar's letter  
to C.C.*

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City of Sacramento  
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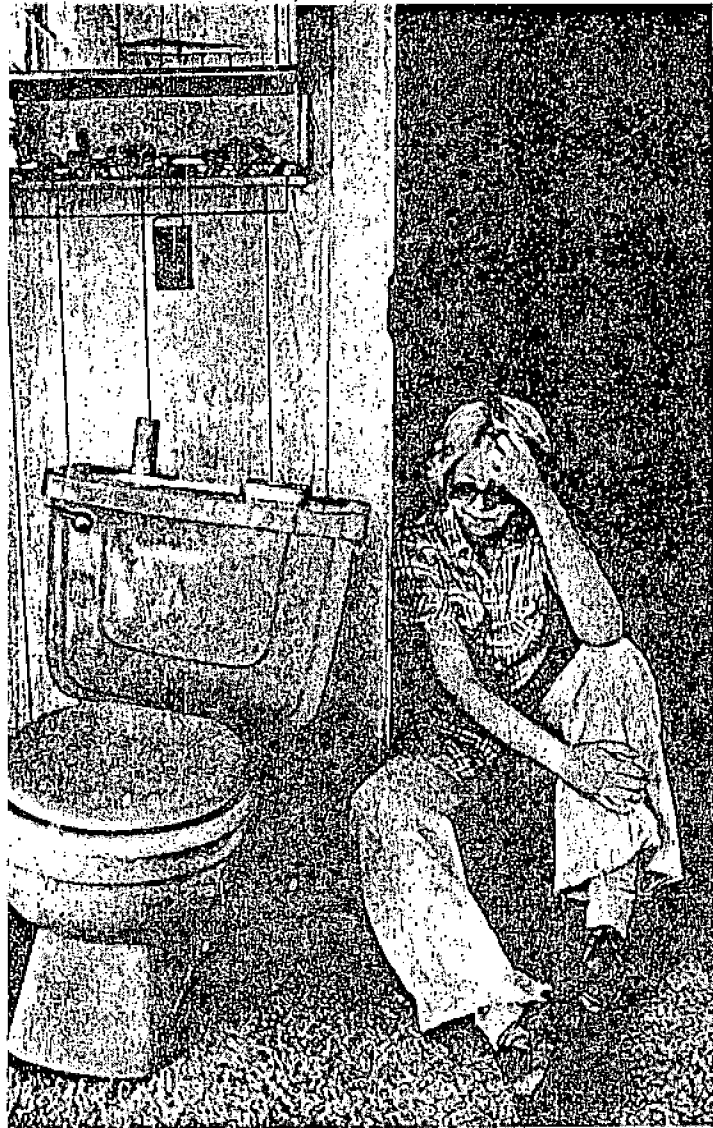
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WILLIAM H. EDGAR  
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# A cry issues from the privy



Staff Photo by Jerry Rainbolt

Penny Stutheit, who is legally blind and survives on a \$300-per-month income, contemplates the problem posed by a toilet which is sinking through the rotting wood of her bathroom floor. Stutheit's attempts to get the problem taken care of have been unsuccessful.

By MICHAEL OTTEN  
SACRAMENTO UNION STAFF WRITER

Penny Stutheit's toilet is slowly sinking through the floor, and she's crying out for help.

Not only is she legally blind, she has only \$300 a month to survive on. The house payment takes \$175 of that.

Only the water pipe keeps the listing toilet from dropping through the rotten floor.

"I almost fell off the stool one day," said Stutheit. "You have to sit on it sideways. And it leaks."

She said that since March 21 she has tried to no avail to right the toilet situation through the Sacramento Neighborhood Assistance Program.

"Penny Stutheit seems to be a little impatient," said Peter Dejea, supervisor of the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency's SNAP. "That's what it boils down to, I guess."

He said she was seventh on the list of stacked-up projects in the busy office and "it will be three months before we can get work done on it, even if I get going on it right now."

Stutheit said she was surprised and disheartened by what she was told in April — that there were 40 cases ahead of her. By May 25 she was sixth on the list and was told "it would take a week to get to me."

Dejea said it was only Monday that he found out she was visually handicapped and that the toilet was disappearing through the floor of the one-bedroom, one-bath home on 44th Street.

Stutheit has glaucoma and her vision is 20/800.

"With my (quarter-inch thick) glasses, I just barely make it," she said.

She said she purchased the home about a year ago from an older couple for \$17,500 in a neighborhood where some residences have iron bars on the windows to prevent burglaries.

The termite report showed \$9,380 worth of work needed to be done. A foundation was needed because the front of the house is resting on bricks and bare ground.

The home also needs electrical work, more ventilation, weather stripping, window repairs, a stove, flooring, painting and several other items.

"Every once in a while I can smell gas," said Stutheit. She said she had a hot plate until recently when it and an electrical outlet burned out.

"The water heater I think is good," said Stutheit, knocking on wood, when asked if there was anything right about her home.

She said that for the last two months she has been looking for work since losing her \$640-a-month job with an answering service that had been a training program for the handicapped.

Dejea said Stutheit should apply for emergency help through the Fruitridge Neighborhood Center.

Stutheit explained that she had so applied. She was told that her home wasn't within the proper boundaries and that the center was short of funds.

She said she got similar answers from an Oak Park community group, the Sacramento Area Economic Opportunity Council, the welfare department and the state Office of Economic Opportunity.

"We are really bogged down here. We actually aren't equipped to handle emergency-type situations," explained Dejea, head of the city home-repair program.

A2

DATE 7/20/81 TO Lorraine Magana FROM Glory Wicklund  
SHRA- Rehab Division  
444-9210

Re: Bill Edgar's request for presentations to be made  
to business persons and individuals who came to the aid  
of Penny Stutheit - attached is the newspaper articles.  
B. Edgar would like to know the presentation time and date.

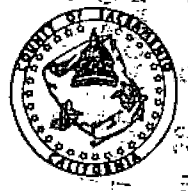
Thanks

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gw



SACRAMENTO  
HOUSING  
AND  
DEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY



JUL 20 2 13 PM '81

# Sinking toilet draws aid

By MICHAEL OTTEN  
SACRAMENTO UNION STAFF WRITER

The woman with the sinking toilet who faces bureaucratic red tape received offers of help Thursday from business firms and fellow Sacramentans.

"I am just totally floored," said Penny Stutheit, who is legally blind and has \$300 a month in unemployment income to live on.

She said she has tried to no avail since March to get help through the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency's Neighborhood Assistance Program.

Program officials explained they were short-handed, bogged down with a backlog of cases and not equipped to handle emergencies.

Stutheit, who lost her job two months ago, said she couldn't find any other agency able to help, either.

After a report on her plight appeared Thursday in The Sacramento Union, the SHRA sent an inspector to her dilapidated one-bedroom, one-bath home.

"I couldn't believe it," she said.

She said technician Charles Smith inspected her home and told her "it needs a lot of work. The kitchen and the bathroom will have to be replaced."

Stutheit said she was told "it will still take two to three months because of the paperwork to start the project. It would depend on how quick the loan committee can work on it."

Meanwhile, Jack Pearson of Sacramento offered her a gas stove so she could cook her meals. Her hot plate had burned up because of a faulty electrical outlet.

She said a friend, Colette Bailhache, helped her pick up the stove. She said she still needs help in installing it.

Rick Lathe of Harold's Plumbing offered to donate materials to repair the sinking toilet. Several other businesses and residents offered labor and supplies for some of the emergency problems.

"I'm not in the habit of giving things away," said another businessman who asked not to be named. "But this situation sort of got to me. I'm not a rich man or anything like that, but I'll be able to put in the plumbing for free and my son can do carpentry work."

He said he didn't want to pay for a city permit "for something that should have been taken care of in the first place, anyway."

Joe Hertl of Auburn offered the services of a work crew from the Telephone Pioneers of America.

"Geez, there are sure a lot of really neat people," said Stutheit.

She had purchased the 44th Street home about a year ago and uses \$175 of her unemployment check to make the house payments.

A termite report showed \$9,380 worth of work needs to be done, including putting in a foundation.