

Johnson, Clowers and RGDC chosen for MAPS canal, river design

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Assistant City Manager, Jim Thompson, who heads up MAPS for the city, said it was too early to set definite timetables, but said he hoped to have the river drainage study completed within six to nine months of signing the contracts. He anticipated that the canal construction bids would hit the street sometime by late this summer.

First licenses revoked for non-payment of child support

From the
State Department of
Health and Human Services

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Paula Wood,
administrator
Child Support Enforcement

■(LAWTON) Oklahoma's first license revocations for failure to pay child support were made Friday in Lawton when five parents lost their driver licenses for not supporting their children.

In separate hearings at the Great Plains Child Support Office in Lawton, an administrative law judge issued driver license revocation orders against Richard Alt, Michael Baldwin and Todd Tillotson, all of Lawton; Gary Frizzell, Stillwater; and Timothy Huff, Sapulpa.

Paula Wood, administrator of Child Support Enforcement Division, Department of Human Services, said these were the first revocations made under a new law approved by the last Legislature and which went into effect Nov. 1.

"In November, we sent letters to more than 36,000 parents who were not paying monthly, court-ordered child support and informed them they were facing loss of driver license, professional license and any license issued by the state," Wood said.

"We are in the process of serving more than 250 non-paying parents with legal documents advising them of a date at which to appear before a judge to show cause why their license should not be revoked," Wood said.

She said CSED collections since the license revocation law went into effect have increased by \$1.4 million.

"These are cases in which the noncustodial parent had not made a payment in the previous 60 days. Not all of the increase is attributable to the license revocation law, but it has had a large impact," said Wood.

Oklahoma's Legislature has aided in child support enforcement efforts by providing stronger enforcement tools, including the remedy of revoking licenses. Another of these new enforcement tools allows district attorneys to file felony charges against a non-paying parent instead of civil charges.

"There have been several large past-due child support collections in recent months after our child support offices referred cases to the criminal divisions of local district attorney offices," Wood said.

Use of criminal charges has resulted in arrests, prosecutions, convictions and sentences of up to four years for parents who fail to provide support for their children.

Other parents facing criminal charges decided to pay past due support. Payments received by CSED offices include Stillwater, a \$20,000 payment; Tulsa, a \$16,000 payment; Norman, an \$11,000 payment and a \$29,000 payment; Wewoka, a \$2,500 payment; Sayre, payments of \$3,000, \$2,500 and \$1,100.

"We will continue to refer cases to the criminal division of the district attorney's offices and to request courts revoke licenses for those parents who fail to support their children," Wood said.

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Some parts of welfare reform legislation before Congress may help collection of child support even more, especially if employers are required to report the hiring of any new employee and financial institutions are required to provide account information to the state," Wood said. In fiscal year 1995, Oklahoma collected more than \$69.9 million in child support with a monthly average caseload of more than 129,000 cases.