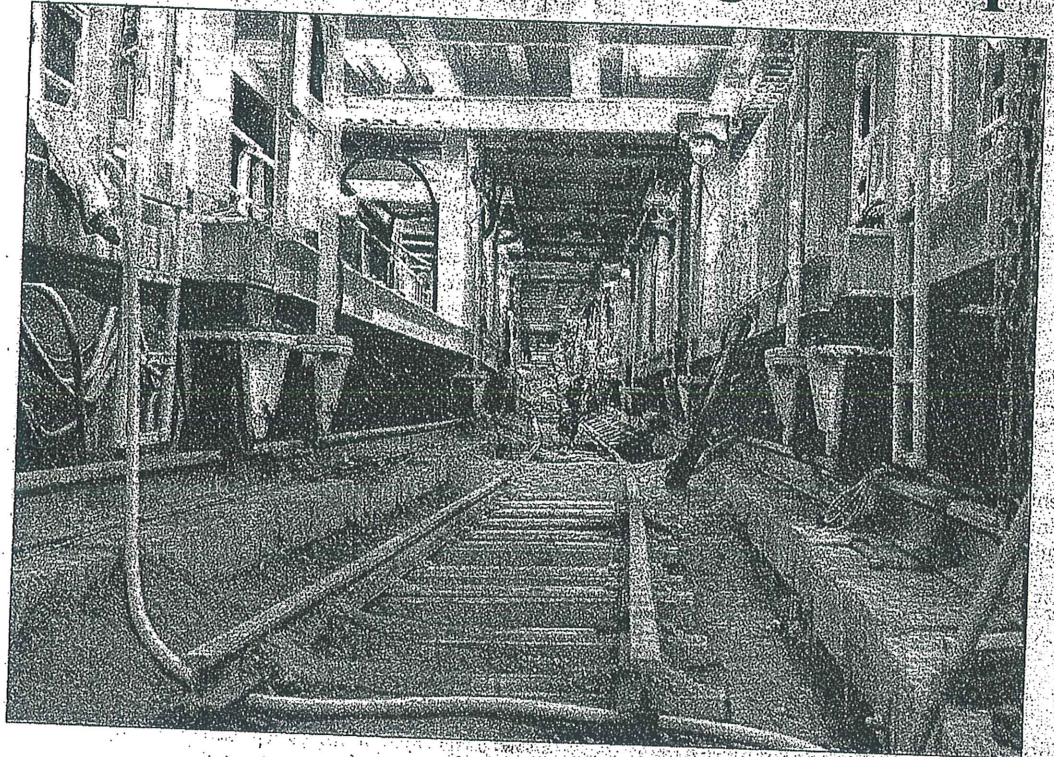


# Euclid Creek Tunnel goes deep



LYNNISCHAY / THE PLAIN DEALER

Danny Smith of McNally-Kiewit walks inside the first section of the Euclid Creek Tunnel 200 feet below ground. The tunnel will eventually stretch about three miles and contain storm and sanitary sewer wastewater that now flows into the environment during rainstorms.

## It's a big job, keeping untreated sewage from Lake Erie

HARLAN SPECTOR  
*Plain Dealer Reporter*

One of the largest tunnel-boring machines in the United States has chewed up about 200 feet of shale so far, hundreds of feet below ground near the Lake Erie shore, in an environmental cleanup journey that will take it many miles.

The cutting machine was idle on Thursday, which allowed the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District to herd visitors into a steel

cage and lower them by crane down a giant mining shaft to show off the beginnings of the \$198 million Euclid Creek Tunnel.

The project is the first of a network of tunnels to prevent untreated sewage from flowing into the lake and other waterways during rainstorms. It's part of a federally mandated \$3 billion cleanup plan.

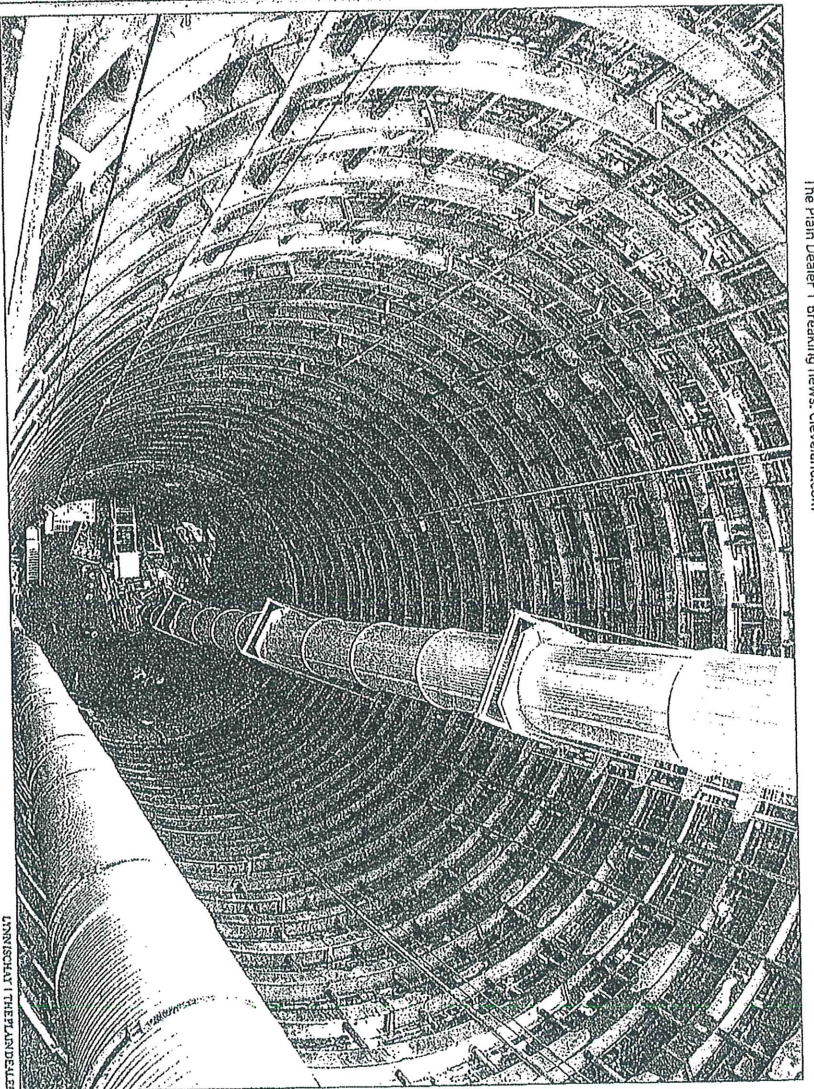
The boring started in August south of Interstate 90 near East 140th Street. Already the cutting machine has deposited by conveyor belt

a multistory mountain of crushed rock, which will eventually become road material for the extension of Transportation Boulevard in Garfield Heights.

The air down below was warmer than outside. The steel-framed underground apparatus behind the cutter head is two stories high and as long as a football field. The cutter's 52 steel disks — each weighing 260 pounds — carve a swath bigger than a subway tunnel.

SEE TUNNEL | A6





A view looking down an access shaft, along Interstate 90 near East 140th Street, leading to the Euclid Creek Tunnel, 200 feet below.

## TUNNEL

FROM A1

**The big job is progressing**

The cutting is followed by the placement of pre-cast concrete panels, each a foot thick, on the tunnel walls. At full production, the boring machine will cut through about 60 feet of earth per day. It will reach Lake Erie in three months, tunnel under the lake and finish at Nottingham Road and St. Clair Avenue in 2015.

Then crews will have to get the 1,500-ton machine out through a 50-foot shaft near the busy inter-

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section. It won't be easy. Assembling a crane big enough to lift the machine out of the hole will require 30 truckloads, said Doug Gabriel, construction program

manager.

"We still have to work out the logistics on how to dismantle the machine and get it out of the ground," he said.

When complete, the three-mile tunnel will hold more than 60 million gallons of wastewater from storm and sanitary sewers, until it can be pumped out and treated.

The sewer district's 1 million customers will shoulder the cost of the Euclid Creek and related infrastructure improvements, through annual rate increases of 10 to 13 percent through the next four years, said district spokeswoman Jennifer Blasing.

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