

R.R. Calif Water Crisis

Water Bond

Issue Wins in

Santa Clara

6/21/77

Homeowners in Santa Clara county will pay higher water bills — up, at least, \$1.20 a month — to finance a \$56 million revenue bond to build a massive water importation system.

Voters approved Measure H, as the bond issue was called, by a slim margin in Tuesday's special election.

It was the first time in recent years that tight-fisted voters approved a measure with a big price tag. Many political observers believe that passage of the high-priced water measure was due, in part, to the drought.

The measure, which needed a simple majority, was approved by a 5902-vote margin, with only 20.8 per cent of the county's 518,653 registered voters deciding the issue. The final tally was 56,429, yes; 50,257, no.

The system will enable the county to import 47.3 million gallons of federal water through a network of pipelines across Pache-co Pass from the San Luis reservoir near Los Banos.

The \$56 million in bonds will pay for in-county plumbing and treatment plants that will be connected to the estimated \$200 million federal San Felipe project.

It will be early 1984 before the first drops of water reach the Santa Clara valley.

Opponents charge that the imported water will open the rural south county to a flood of new subdivisions.