

AIDS report to go to every house in city

by Alec Harris
Staff Writer

Calling AIDS "the biggest single health threat facing the country today," Rockville's mayor and council members voted 4-1 this week to distribute a copy of the Surgeon General's Report on AIDS to every home in the city.

Rockville could be the first jurisdiction in the United States to distribute the report, which contains frank information about how to avoid exposure

to the fatal disease. The report also cautions against overreacting to the threat of AIDS.

"Unreasonable fear can be as crippling as the disease itself," states Surgeon General C. Everett Koop in the report.

Councilman Steve Abrams, who proposed distributing the reports, said it would be "clearly preventive and educational." He added, "It would broaden our understanding of the disease, as

well as transmit the correct information."

Rockville has the third highest rate of AIDS in Montgomery County, as well as the county's second highest number of deaths from the disease.

Councilman Peter Hartogensis, the only member of the mayor and council to vote against the distribution, said the 36-page pamphlet should be available upon request, but should not be

Continued on page 10

Rockville's War on AIDS

Rockville Mayor Steven Van Grack and the city council, along with a few other elected officials in the metropolitan area, have joined the war on AIDS. By voting to distribute information from the Surgeon General's Report on AIDS, the mayor and council are appropriately applying the resources of local government to educate Rockville's residents about the most serious public-health problem of our time.

Rockville's initiative in this area should be picked up by the rest of Montgomery County. The county's health department has the expertise, and the county government's newsletter, *The Montgomery Monthly*, could be used to communicate AIDS information to tens of thousands of residents. The tools are there. Let's use them.

DAVE ROBBINS

The writer is a candidate for city council in Rockville, Rockville