

Wood proposes scrutiny of Lane spraying practices

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

The frequent use of pesticides in Lane County and the potential danger they pose for Lane County residents have prompted Lane County Commissioner Bob Wood to propose the establishment of a county-wide Pesticide Review Board.

Wood, making his proposal at the Wednesday meeting of the county commissioners, explained that such a review board could monitor pesticide use, provide educational programs for pesticide users and test the accumulation of pesticides in the tissue of meat producing animals.

"We've missed opportunities in the past to apply the money available to study the pesticides used in the county," Wood said. The board, if approved, would be operated solely on county re-

venues with no outside financial help.

The board, Wood said, could monitor and analyze those pesticides and herbicides now being used and work more "aggressively" to minimize the need to use herbicides in certain areas.

"I don't wish for this to be a witch-hunting venture," Wood explained. "I'm concerned that we minimize the convenience-type spraying in the county."

Nearly eight people at the meeting spoke on the proposal. Several of the speakers were concerned over the economic impact of discontinuing the use of pesticides and herbicides would have on local agriculture.

"I think that we need to ask ourselves if we need a county control office," one Springfield woman said. "The state and federal agen-

cies should be used to do this, not another county office. We've paid for them and its our responsibility to use them to solve our problems."

Another speaker, who praised the proposal, called for the study of the long-range health effects that extensive herbicide and pesticide use may have. "We've got to concern ourselves with the children who will soon be adults," he said. "The Department of Environmental Quality is hampered by a limited budget and staff and can't look into this very effectively."

Wood, explaining that a county-level agency could do a better job of controlling the use of pesticides and herbicides, pointed out that the board would be made up of people from all occupations and all economic groups.

"I don't want to set this up and then let it be someone's emotional outlet," he said.

Archie's still mad

There is still no morale problem at the Lane County Courthouse. At least that's the way County Commissioner Archie Weinstein sees it.

While opening the regular Wednesday meeting of the County Commissioners, Weinstein said much of the "problem" lies in the news media's slanted coverage of the board's proceedings.

While several spectators waited their turn at the microphone Wednesday morning to discuss Commissioner Bob Wood's proposed county Pesticide Review Board, Weinstein, noting the presence of the local news media, took an opportunity to chide its members for allegedly deficient news coverage.

"I'm just not going to comment on their views," Weinstein said, motioning to the members of the press. "Some of them slant their news coverage of these meetings and say that the commissioners aren't doing a good job."

Two weeks ago, at a similar meeting, Weinstein took the opportunity to point out that no morale problem existed within the ranks of commissioners. Much of the problem was the department heads' and not the commissioners', he told Commissioner Jerry Rust.

"I don't know why they are slanting the news about the commissioners," Weinstein said. "All I know is that when someone says there is a morale problem, they smear it all over the front page."

"They try to tell us that the commissioners aren't doing a very good job, but I say that we're doing one hell of a good job here. We've put in long hours and we've worked hard for the people of Lane County, so when they say the commissioners aren't doing anything we just don't pay any attention to them."

The Plague hits woman in Coos Bay

PORTLAND, (AP) — The Oregon Health Division says it is investigating a suspected case of the plague on the Oregon coast.

It would be the first known case of the plague in the state's coastal region.

The plague is an infection caused by a specific bacteria and usually is transmitted by fleas that contract the infection from rodents.

The patient, a woman from the Coos Bay area, was treated for pneumonia last July at Coos Bay Hospital. However, laboratory tests were compatible with three different diagnosis of the same patient. The three diseases were Legionnaire's disease, pneumonic plague, and parrot fever.

The plague was once known as the "Black Death" and was responsible for decimating the populations of Europe in the 1600s.

The woman had a temperature of 105 degrees and was given antibiotics. She recovered without complications, the health division said.

Lab samples were sent to the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta and to other laboratories in New York, Colorado and Oregon. The results of those tests indicate that a plague organism caused the ailment.

Results on an additional confirming test should be available by Friday, the health division said.

There have been 16 cases of plague in the United States this year, two of them fatal. Most instances of the plague occur in New Mexico, Arizona and California.

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