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Graphic by Jim Payne

A goldsmith and a former aircraft engineer may seem an unlikely pair to solve the microwave radiation problem, but they say they'll do it with a screen called....

Pulsar

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

Eugene residents who are afraid they have been exposed to dangerous microwave radiation from the mysterious radio wave discovered several months ago might find their safety in a tiny box.

At least that's what Michael Racine thinks.

Racine, a Los Angeles artist and goldsmith, says he and a former Hughes Aircraft engineer might have found a way to protect citizens around the world from the harmful effects of microwave radiation exposure. It's all in a small box that can be worn on an ordinary belt.

The box, called a Pulsar screen, which Racine describes as a personalized ornament no bigger than a pack of cigarettes, isn't magical. It's what's inside that offers the protection.

Inside the box, which can be styled like jewelry, Racine says, is a series of composition crystals spaced in such a way to form a protective screen around the wearer that wards off the dangerous radiation.

What's more, he says, if the wearer has been exposed to microwave radiation and then wears a Pulsar screen, the effects of the radiation won't further deteriorate the body.

Racine began working on the Pulsar screen after he met George Yao, a former National Aeronautics and Science Administration (NASA) scientist and Hughes Aircraft engineer, who discovered the pulsar method of radiation protection several years ago.

Yao, who is on the lecture circuit to promote his discovery and to warn people about the effects of microwave radiation, began building the Pulsar screens for NASA. The screens were originally designed to repolarize the mechanical devices inside NASA's spacecrafts, Racine says.

Racine and Yao have been gathering information on microwave radiation exposure for more than a year. They became interested in the Eugene area two months ago when the Eugene Register-Guard reported the existence of a mysterious radio wave in and above the city.

The radio signal, which was described by experts as a pulsing 4.75 megahertz wave, was first discovered last October and was traced by the federal Environmental Protectional Agency (EPA) to a Naval communications operation near Dixon, Calif.

Nearly 25 Eugene residents expressed symptoms similar to radiation poisoning when interviewed by Marshall Van Ert, an industrial hygienist with the University's Health Science department. The EPA, however, claimed the signal posed no health problems to the population.

(Continued on Page 3A)

Windmills figure in BPA plans for 1980s

Wind power as an energy source — via giant windmills — could be practical in the Northwest within the next five years, according to scientists at Oregon State University (OSU).

Research funded at OSU for the last three years by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), has led that agency to plan both demonstration and commercial tests of the aerogenerators (windmills) by the early 1980s.

Nearly 12 sites in Oregon, Washington and Nevada have winds strong and steady enough to make them good wind power locations, said Robert Baker of the department of atmospheric sciences at OSU.

He expects others to be found among the 60 areas where wind readings are being monitored now, with a $66,000 grant from the BPA.

BPA Administrator Sterling Munro said in March the Northwest wind sites would be recommended to the federal Department of Energy (DOE) as potential locations for "a demonstration project using the Boeing Company's Mod-2 wind turbine."

The turbine generator is over 200 feet tall, with blades 300 feet in diameter. The giant windmill is being designed and built at a cost of $10 million.

Munro said the DOE is "in the process of putting together a plan to demonstrate the commercial feasibility of wind generator farms," or windmill clusters.

Under a three phase plan, the first machines will be part of an accelerated research and demonstration program in 1980. The second phase is the establishment of windmill farms using 10 or 15 machines each, with 300 generators operating by 1981-82.

Phase three of the plan proceeds to full-scale commercial testing of an additional 1,000 windmills, scheduled to be installed after 1983.

The Northwest has some of the best wind power sites yet identified in the U.S., Baker said, and is also far ahead in its site evaluation research.

Environmental impact from wind generators is minimal, he emphasized. Though "visual pollution" could be a concern, Baker said most sites, such as eastern Oregon locations, would not present such a problem.