

# Amity Foundation nabs energy grant

**\$9,875 slated for AF projects, technology office funded too**

By CATHERINE SIEGNER  
Of the Emerald

Over \$28,000 in federal energy conservation grants have been targeted for Lane County projects through the state Department of Energy.

The Amity Foundation, a Eugene aquaculture (fish-rearing) and wastewater treatment facility, received \$9,875 for five separate projects. After the money arrives in November, Amity has seven months to complete the projects. "We specialize in integrated solar aquaculture," said Amity's acting director John Splane, who says a port project will involve a test solar greenhouse in Dexter. It will be used to grow vegetables and will be warmed by solar-heated wastewater in 800 to 900 gallon containers.

Amity raises fish as part of its greywater treatment process. Wastewater from all house uses except the toilet is treated by a recirculating sand trickle filter.

This 3-square-foot sand filter removes contaminants from the water through a natural biological process. The water is repumped through the sand at least three times (over a two week) period.

"We monitor the water quality to see how many contaminants are left," Splane said. "After two weeks, it should be pretty clean."

The water is then used in Amity's fish-rearing tanks. Several different species are grown in this manner, including the Israeli carp, bluegills, blueheads, Oscars (a common aquarium fish), and the tropical tilapia.

"Tilapia grow rapidly in the warm water," Splane said. "They taste something like yellow perch, and are raised world-wide. The Oscars are also a good food fish."

Splane said residents of the Northwest are not familiar with the culinary delights of warm-water

fish because they are accustomed to cold-water trout and salmon.

Amity will also publish a handbook on recirculating aquaculture systems, conduct workshops and public tours of its process and hook up a windmill to the fish-rearing facilities with its grant money.

"The windmill will run an air compressor which will aerate the fish tanks," Splane said.

Amity encourages interested persons to join one of its weekly tours to learn more about aquaculture. Call 484-7171 for more information.

An energy conservation grant was also awarded to Lane County's Office of Appropriate Technology (OAT). \$8,850 will fund OAT's composting garbage project on Seavey Loop Rd.

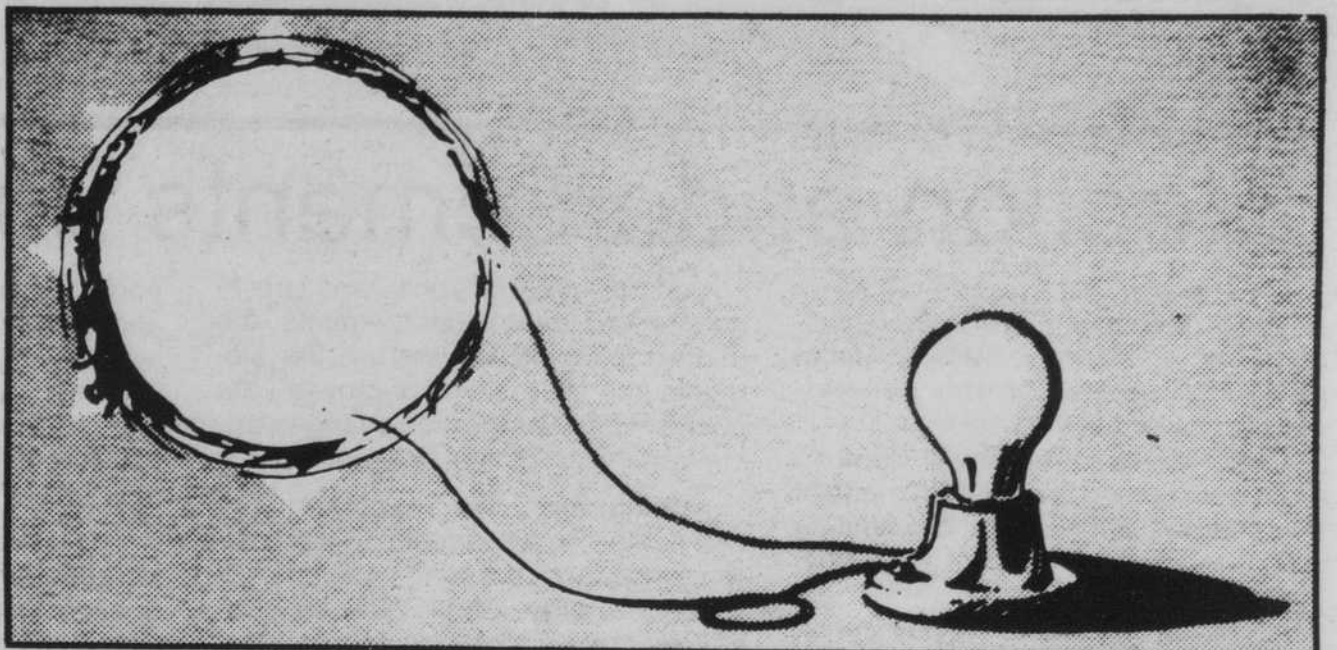
"The grant is to set up a pilot project to recycle commercial compostable wastes, such as that from landscaping businesses or restaurants," said Bill Mackie, conservation specialist for the Energy Dept. "OAT intends to have this material available to the general public for soil amendments."

Soil amendments would include mulching material for gardens or other uses. OAT expects to acquire 14 tons of organic material each week for the project.

OAT Director Sam Sadler said the material improves the water retention capabilities of the soil. "The composted material supports microbial life in the soil as well."

Mackie of the energy department said these grants are valuable to the community, and suggests other groups apply for them.

"We would like to encourage other OAT and energy offices to form around the state because the Department of Energy can't get around to all areas."



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