



catherine siegner

of environmental concern

On Wednesday, November 29, the Lane County Commissioners will consider a proposed ordinance that would regulate the transportation of radioactive material in and through the county.

If adopted, Lane County will join New York City; New London, Conn.; Shaker Heights, Ohio; Carteret Borough and Union County in New Jersey, and 38 cities and towns in Vermont in banning or

restricting such shipments.

Why the sudden concern? The federal government has been trying to find a permanent nuclear waste storage site since the 1950s. In the meantime, waste has been piling up in enormous quantities all over the country.

The Hanford Nuclear Reservation in eastern Washington is one site being considered as a permanent dump. Since April, four truck loads of waste per day have been shipped through Oregon on the way to Hanford.

If Hanford becomes a major nuclear waste repository, most of the waste from California and the southwestern United States will travel through Lane County either on Southern Pacific tracks or on Interstate-5—directly through population centers.

Past derailings and truck accidents have dramatically illustrated the inability of local, state or federal officials to cope with evacuation or decontamination. Who has jurisdiction and who is financially responsible for such accidents has been unclear.

In response to these problems, Clergy and Laity Concerned has submitted the ordinance to the commissioners. Based on the New York City law, the proposed ordinance would require a Certificate of Emergency Transport for all shipments of radioactive materials (except those used for medical or research purposes) by truck or rail in or through Lane County.

The permits would be granted by the county health officer only for reasons of national security or emergency. Economic considerations alone would not be sufficient to override the health and safety dangers posed by transportation of radioactive materials.

If a permit is granted, the applicant must obtain a bond to cover the costs of cleanup, decontamination and immediate and re-

sidual health costs arising from radiation exposure. The general administrator, with advice from the Departments of Public Safety and Environmental Management, would determine the amount of the bond.

The general administrator, with the Department of Environmental Management, would also develop rules and procedures to be used in the event of an accident involving radiation release in Lane County. The rules would be presented to

the county commissioners for their consideration within 30 days from the date the ordinance is enacted.

Fines of up to \$1000 would be levied for each occurrence of an ordinance violation.

The proposed ordinance would help to protect the health and property of Lane County residents from the dangers of radioactive contamination. Its adoption is already overdue.

Interest rates rise; escalating costs still afflict housing

By LORRAINE NELSON
Of the Emerald

Increasing interest rates on mortgage loans could slow down the escalating cost of homes, but because the demand for houses has fallen only slightly and construction costs are still rising, prices will continue to increase.

That seems to be the conclusion of some Eugene-area appraisers and mortgage lenders.

Interest rates on loans for homes and construction of homes and commercial buildings have increased, area mortgage lenders report, in response to recent changes in the economy by Carter to tighten the money supply.

Many banks in the state are now charging 10.25 percent rates on home loans, according to Dan Dinges, vice president of the First National Bank of Oregon, one of the largest banks in the state. First National's rates jumped from 10 percent to 10.25 percent on Nov. 7, the first increase since last August.

Interest rates in general are under upward pressure, Dinges reports.

Ed Whitelaw, University economics professor and economic consultant for the city of Eugene, says that various economic analysts predict interest rates will continue to rise through the first or second quarter of 1979, and that the highest interest rates of all time may be on the way.

However, Whitelaw says that many analysts feel the impact of the high interest rates will not be as great as it was during the 1973-74 recession.

While Whitelaw maintains that the number of new houses and dwelling units constructed in the area will probably decrease, area lenders report that demand for home loans has dropped only "a little" in the last couple of weeks.

"It takes longer to sell the larger (over \$80,000) homes," says appraiser John Gault. "They seem to hold on for two to four months. Last spring they were sold after two weeks or 30 days."

Appraiser Ron Alford says "anytime you have an increase in rates, you will have a slack in demand because some people won't qualify for loans."

Many banks require that a potential home-buyer's salary be four times the monthly payment he or she would have to make on a loan.

A check with multiple listings last week shows that the average market price of a three-bedroom home in the Eugene-Springfield area is about \$59,478.

Payments for an 80 percent (20 percent downpayment), 30-year loan on such a house would be \$426.39 a month, plus a down payment of \$11,896, plus a 1.5 percent loan fee, (which many banks are charging,) of \$714.00.

Payments for a 90 percent, 30-year loan of the same house would be \$479.68 a month, plus a down payment of \$5,950 and a loan fee of \$803.

Appraiser Chris Bell says it is becoming more difficult to put housing deals together because fewer people are eligible for loans.

He says housing prices increased about 2 percent per month between January and June and he predicts that the rate will now decrease to .5 percent or lower.

He says prices will continue to rise because the cost of building materials will continue to increase and because the demand for new lots outweighs the supply of them.

Blizzard buries Seattle

SEATTLE (AP) — Unprepared Seattle, a city used to rain, found itself digging out from up to 7 inches of snow Sunday. The snow was blamed for over 100 traffic accidents and power failures that affected 22,000 customers at one point.

The storm brewed overnight on the heels of another that produced blizzard conditions in Montana and brought snow and cold to the Upper Midwest. Those areas were told to brace for more of the

same.

The Olympic Peninsula of Washington state, site of a rain forest and seldom host to snow in the lowland areas, had 1 foot of snow. Three hunters were missing there, the search for them hampered because of high winds. Rescuers fought 30 mph winds and drifts of 3-4 feet in eastern Washington, which is used to winter snow, in search of two other hunters unaccounted for.

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Pipe Smoking Contest



Win a Beautiful Prize. Hand carved pipes and a supply of Sir Walter Raleigh Aromatic Pipe Tobacco, now on display in the EMU main display case through Wednesday.

Set a world record. Beat the Guinness pipe smoking duration record of 253 minutes, 28 seconds set by Yrjo Pentikainen in Kuopio, Finland, March 15-16, 1968.

Men and women 18 and older may enter. The contest will be held on Friday, December 1, 1978 at 12:30 p.m. in the EMU Ballroom.

Look for details in next week's Emerald.

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