

# Students live, learn in environment halls

By STEVE HOOKS  
Of the Emerald

Something's brewing in the campus residence halls.

In the name of environmental awareness, about 260 residents of the Walton Complex have enlisted in an experimental living program called — appropriately enough — Environmental Awareness Halls.

Students enrolled in the program participate in environmentally related projects and field trips.

The feedback has been overwhelming, resident adviser Mark Mastin says.

**'I think it's neat to have seminars close to where I live'**

Douglass Hall originally was intended to be the only environmental dorm, accommodating 65 students. But over 300 students applied to participate in the program.

Even after adding Adams, Sweetser and Clark halls to the program, some students still had to be turned away, he says.

One of the projects on the burner is a solar-heated still to produce alcohol — for fuel, not consumption.

Mastin says a solar greenhouse also is in the works.

The environmental awareness dorm is part of the University housing office's new "special interest halls" program.

"We wish to maintain a broad spectrum of activities and hope to incorporate faculty members and other organizations, such as the Sierra Club, the Outdoor Program and the Survival Center into the program," Mastin says.

Hiking trips, ski trips and bicycling trips as well as slide shows and lectures are on the drawing board, Mastin says.

The first scheduled activity will be a day hike in the Cascades on Oct. 10 and will be led by geomorphologist Lars Sorenson.

"I haven't had that much experience in the outdoors," says Wendy Reimann, resident adviser of Sweetser Hall, "but I'm hoping to learn and I hope

other people are willing also."

Reimann says she is impressed with the interest the residents have in the proposed projects and outings, and says she is optimistic that future programs would be successful and that residents would work well together.

Sweetser resident John Wood, a fine and applied arts major, said he chose an environmental dorm because he thought the political consciousness of the residents would be more compatible with his.

Wood, who has a degree in sociology, attended Huxley College of Environmental Studies in Bellingham, Wash., and has been active in environmental and social groups such as the Trojan Decommissioning Alliance (an anti-nuclear group) and United Farm Workers.

"I think it's neat to have seminars close to where I live," Wood says, adding that he likes being educated and educating others on the environment.

Wood says he doesn't have the resources to do many outdoor activities by himself and that he hoped living in an environmental dorm would make those activities more accessible.

Claudia Rednall, a Sweetser Hall resident, says she wants to observe nature rather than just study it from a textbook and to learn more about outdoor survival and conservation. The recreation and park management major from Hong Kong says she wants to learn to identify the shrubbery of the Northwest.

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Marjory Ramey, assistant director of housing, says the environmental hall program still is in the experimental stage but adds she is optimistic about its success.

She says professors of related subjects would advise future projects. Response from residence hall students will determine the program's direction, she says.



Photo by Bob Baker

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