

# Survey results cloud official smog index

By Brooks Dareff  
Of the Emerald

When they scan the air for pollutants, Lane County residents and the Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority don't always see eye to eye, according to the results of a survey conducted by the LRAPA at the Lane County Fair last month.

The informal survey's purpose was to assist LRAPA in better understanding how Lane County residents feel about local air quality, says LRAPA spokesperson Marty Douglass.

"Though the survey results are not absolutely conclusive, they will give us an indication of how people view local air quality, what they think are the major polluters, and what should be done in controlling local air pollution," Douglass says.

While field burning was identified most frequently by the 192 people who completed the questionnaire as the worst cause of local air pollution, Douglass rates it fifth in a list of six headed by industry, woodstoves (winter), and road dust (summer).

Industry was last on the list of major pollutants cited by survey respondents. After field burning came woodstoves, automobiles, slash burning and industry.

Douglass was not surprised by the respective high (in terms of pollution) and low statuses granted by respondents to field burning and industry. Field burning has been "a very visible issue" for the past fifteen years, he says, while industry was "keyed on earlier" and is incorrectly perceived by the public as a "diminishing pollutant."

The primary source of industry air pollution in Lane County is the Weyerheuser wood products mill in Springfield, Douglass says.

However, Douglass was "pleasantly surprised" to find woodstoves high on the survey results. LRAPA has been talking publicly about woodstove pollution and the survey indicates their education efforts have not gone up in smoke, and that "our message has been received," he says.

The message also has been received in Salem, where the 1983 legislature passed House Bill 2235, which requires all new woodstoves sold after July 1, 1986 to meet emission standards. The regulation will not apply to the emission levels generated by the wood that is burned in a stove, but it "represents the first concrete step toward controlling woodstove residential heating," he says.

The cities of San Francisco, Boulder, Co. and Missoula, Mt., have similar statutes, but HB 2235 may be the first statewide woodstove emissions law.

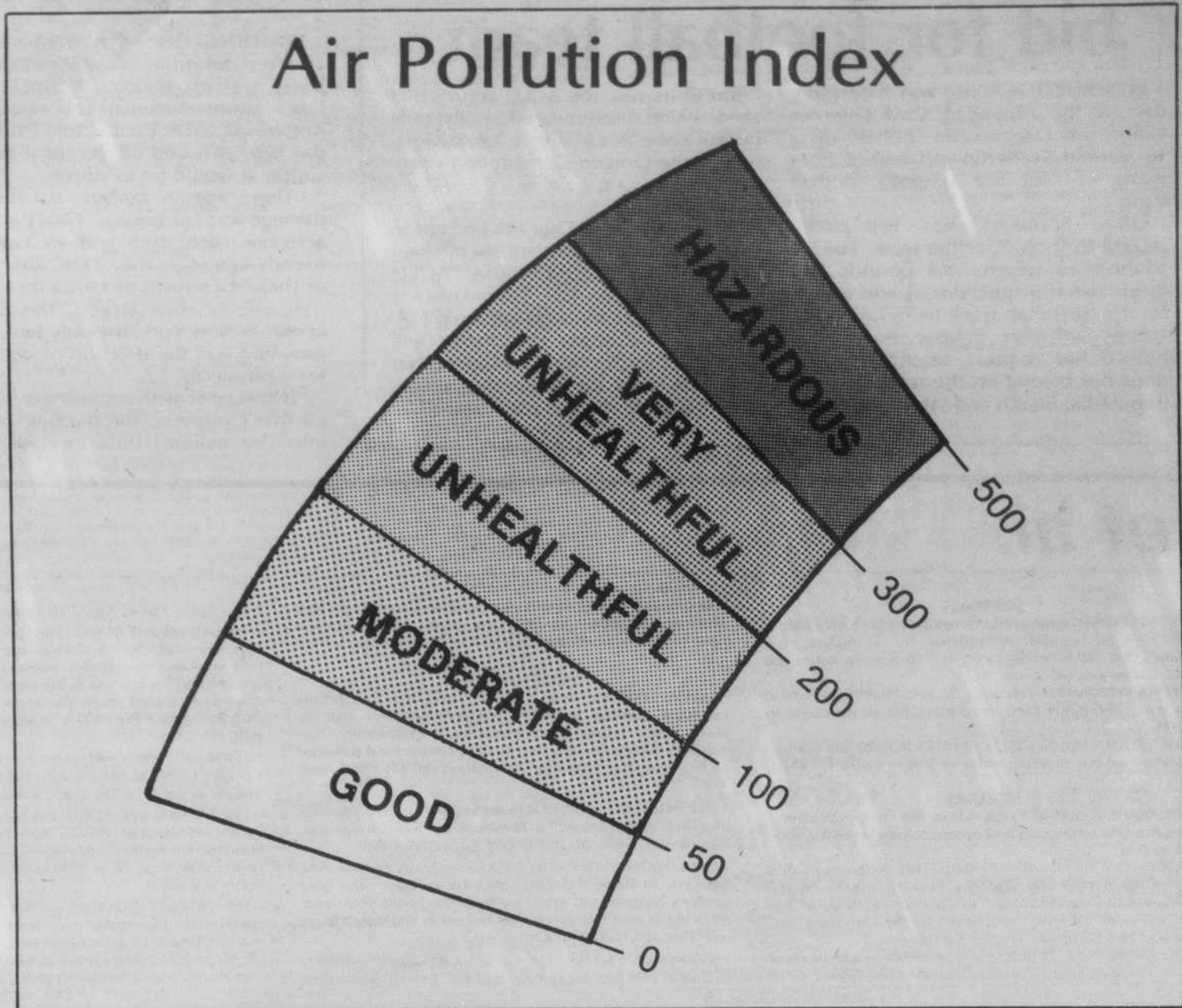
LRAPA is not presently lobbying for any new statewide legislation affecting air pollution, Douglass says. Noticeably absent from the list of six major pollutants were automobiles, though he says the LRAPA does not disregard them as major pollutants. In fact, the carbon monoxide emitted by automobiles is the most dangerous of the three types of air pollutants designated by LRAPA.

Automobiles simply do not come under the jurisdiction of the LRAPA because county levels of carbon monoxide and the second pollutant type, ozone — also caused mainly by automobile emissions in concert with high summer temperatures — "are not out of whack with federal standards." Automobile pollution in Lane County is regulated by the Department of Environmental Quality in Portland.

The third pollutant type, particulate matter, is in LRAPA's arena, and is caused by smoke, dust and any kind of burning. Woodstoves generate both carbon dioxide and particulate matter, and are therefore under the LRAPA's jurisdiction.

Particulate matter causes the most irritating health effects, such as burning in the eyes and throat, he says.

## Air Pollution Index



Survey respondents thought more controls should be placed on several of the generators of all three pollutant types — on slash burning, field burning, woodstoves, automobiles, and industry, in that order — and that current controls should be maintained on backyard burning and road dust. Few responding thought less control should be placed on any sources.

Local air pollution control was identified as preferable to state control by a wide margin.

By way of general evaluation of local air quality, of the 192 people completing the questionnaire, 44 percent described local air quality as "fair," 32 percent said it is "good," three percent said "very good," and eight percent said it is "very poor."

According to LRAPA's "Air Pollution Index," printed Monday through Friday on page two of the Register-Guard, there were no "unhealthful" days this summer, while there were two last winter. The Air Pollution Index categories are "good," "moderate," "unhealthful," "very unhealthful," and "hazardous." LRAPA forecasts a daily index number and a pollutant for Eugene, Portland and Medford.

Cooler weather and higher winds contributed toward improving air quality this summer, primarily because summer's major pollutant type is ozone, which is increased by higher temperatures.

## Burning days begin

The backyard burning season begins in Lane County October 1.

Under Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority regulations, burning of yard clippings, leaves, tree trimmings and other "domestic waste" material is permitted on designated burning days through June 15, 1984. However, a city ordinance prohibits burning of such material year-round for residents living inside the Eugene city limits.

Residents wishing to burn backyard material should obtain a permit from their local fire district, and telephone 342-1919 for the burning advisory on the day they wish to burn. Residents living outside of an established fire district can obtain a burning permit by calling the Lane County Department of Public Works at 687-3881.

Open burning of backyard material is permitted in Lane County through the fall, winter and spring months, on days when weather conditions are favorable to the dispersion of smoke. Burning is generally prohibited on days of stagnant air in the valley.

## A dark and stormy night

The sight of this hanging Carson canine cartoon caricature went unnoticed to most passersby Monday morning. For the beagle-eyed, however, the image evoked feelings of anger directed at the doer of this dastardly deed, obviously an avid member of the Red Baron Disarmament Committee.

Along with with the "Dead Kennedys" symbol in the window and the purloined "Mill Valley" city limits sign, this poor pooch is no doubt intended to brighten the lives of other dorm residents. Wait until the SPCA catches on.

A source who asked to remain anonymous, shrugged the incident off as "not meaning peanuts."

Photo by Jim Goodwin

