

EWEB plant smokes city

By Douglas Pyle
Of the Emerald

Eugene's largest woodstove spewed dense smoke out of its stack for several hours Tuesday, turning both the setting sun and certain east-Eugene eyes a deep red.

The unusually heavy smoke resulted from the burning of wet wood chips and barkdust in the Eugene Water and Electric Board's steam plant furnaces.

The wet fuel was delivered by Rexius Forest By-Products from sawmills in Pope and Talbot, according to Ed Burgess, EWEB steam plant supervisor. When burned Tuesday, the wet batch of chips created smoke emissions that were "way out of reason," not to mention way over required density levels, Burgess said.

Representatives of Rexius were unavailable for comment as of press time.

The white smoke drifted south from the EWEB steam plant near Franklin Boulevard and Hilyard Street Tuesday afternoon, hovering over the University neighborhood and even dipping down to street level at some places. It was especially heavy at 13th Avenue and Hilyard Street, near Sacred Heart Hospital, where it created a haze and a sweet odor like burnt leaves.

The Eugene Fire Department said the smoke inspired several calls inquiring about fires and about what was wrong at

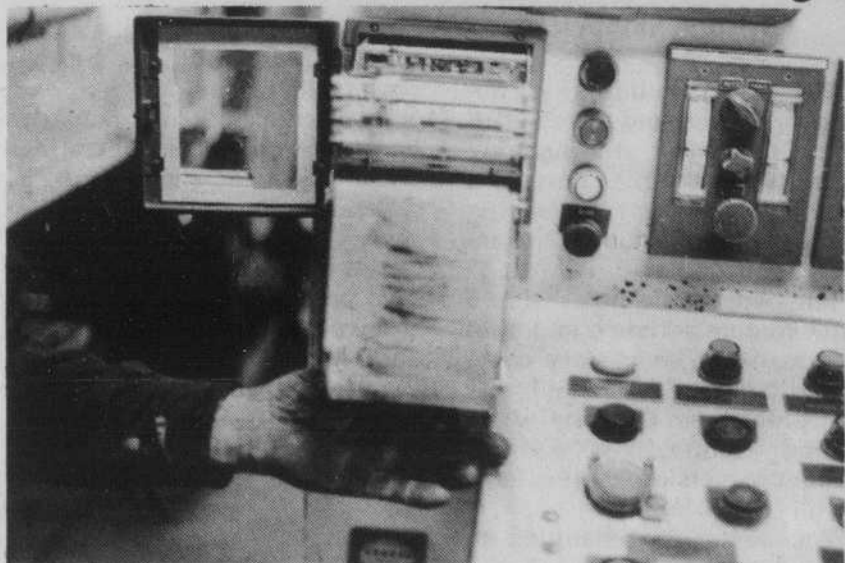


Photo by Jim Moore

A graph monitored at EWEB's plant indicated the burning of wet fuel in their east-Eugene wood-fired power plant.

EWEB.

What was wrong was enough to bring Burgess back to the plant to clear things up at about 6:00 p.m., after having gone home from his regular shift earlier Tuesday. "It's been quite a while since this bad a deal happened here," he said.

The "deal" amounted to about three hours of dense smoke that rated 100 percent in opacity, which refers to the amount of light that can pass through the smoke column. The maximum opacity level allowed for the plant is 40 percent, Burgess said.

The plant had a similar problem last winter, but Burgess said he cannot remember how

long it has been since smoke was as heavy for as long as it was Tuesday.

Also, the single fuel silo feeding directly to the furnaces already had been filled with wet fuel, further complicating matters. Burgess said this would require using that fuel as well, but the amount of smoke could be kept under the 40 percent limit by mixing it with dry fuel from the stock pile.

The burning of wet fuel required no cut-off of service. The problem amounted to a temporarily excessive emission of particulates and other pollutants, because the wet fuel would not burn as completely as dry fuel, Burgess said.



Butte to Butte run offered a lot of dough

With the sun baking down on their plastic wrapper, these competitors in the 11th annual Butte to Butte run loafed their way through the 10-kilometer course with an extra slice of bread trailing close behind.

Pre-race favorites and defending cham-

pions, Julie Brown and Greg Hitchcock won their respective divisions and left with \$1,000 each in prize money. Hitchcock set a new record for the course, finishing in 29 minutes 14 seconds.

Photo by Michael Clapp

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