

Long-awaited asbestos removal underway

By Jolayne Houtz
Of the Emerald

An asbestos removal project on the east wing of the 20-year-old Science I building began Monday with the erection of a two-layer plastic "cocoon" to keep the air as clean as possible, according to Muriel Jackson, Assistant for Administration.

The project is scheduled to be completed in 21 days, according to the contract, at a cost of \$107,720. Jackson says additional fees include an architect's fee for surveying the project. The State Board of Higher Education allocated \$150,000 for the project.

Jackson explained that because of the potentially hazardous nature of the product being removed, the CBB Construction Co. erected the cocoon to "contain any material that might be dislodged from beams that are coated with a substance that is about 85 percent asbestos."

When the actual removal process starts, the asbestos coating will be saturated with wetting solutions and water and removed in chunks, so that the "possibility of free-floating material will be relatively remote," according to Jackson.

But not all the asbestos can be contained in this way, so a special filtering process will suck the air out of the cocoon, through filters which will remove all asbestos particles and blow out clean air, according to Eric Schabtach, director of the University Electron Microscope Facility. The facility is conducting air quality testing in conjunction with the Environmental Health Service.

The project was initiated last spring when 259 students and faculty petitioned the University to do something about the asbestos coating which had been flaking off as birds and weather weakened the cement holding the asbestos in place.

"University air samplings at the time said the airborne asbestos was not a health threat, but we wished to be responsive," Jackson says.

Sharp asbestos fibers can lodge in a person's lungs, causing various health problems including asbestosis, a lung-disabling disease caused by scarring of the lung tissue, and lung cancer.

University Office of Environmental Health and Safety

Manager Ed Bailey says, "We felt levels were unacceptable, and asbestos was losing its capacity as a fire retardant."

Bailey, who is also health physicist for the office, further stated that the project moved slowly at first. "But when Dan Williams (Vice President for Administration) took office, he's been receptive since day one."

"It's the potential for danger that we're concerned about, and any amount of asbestos exposure is considered to present an increased risk," Bailey says.

The governmental standard for airborne asbestos is .5 fibers per centimeter of air sampling, but Bailey says the standard for the University project is .03 fibers per centimeter.

Eventually, the interior asbestos will also be removed, but "the largest percentage of asbestos was on the exterior of the building, and it could not be done simultaneously," Jackson says.

A plan is in progress at the Physical Plant to identify other asbestos locations on campus. When the current project on the Science I building is completed, "then it will be determined what is the appropriate course of action (regarding the other buildings)," Jackson says.

The University's personnel office has developed plans for employees who do not wish to work in the wing during the removal portion of the three-week project. Options include taking vacation time to being assigned to work in another office during that period.

If monitoring tests at any time during the project show that airborne asbestos levels inside the east wing have exceeded acceptable standards, all employees in the wing would report to the personnel office for reassignment.

"The Science Library is open during the regular hours, and though we're a little short-staffed, it's business as usual," says library head Isabel Stirling.

"It hasn't been as inconvenient as I'd thought it would be," says Sharron Anderson, secretary for the Technical Science Administration.

"They're supposed to seal the windows inside and out, but right now only the inside is sealed with duct tape, and there's no protection if one window should break," Anderson says.

The windows will be resealed as soon as the plastic

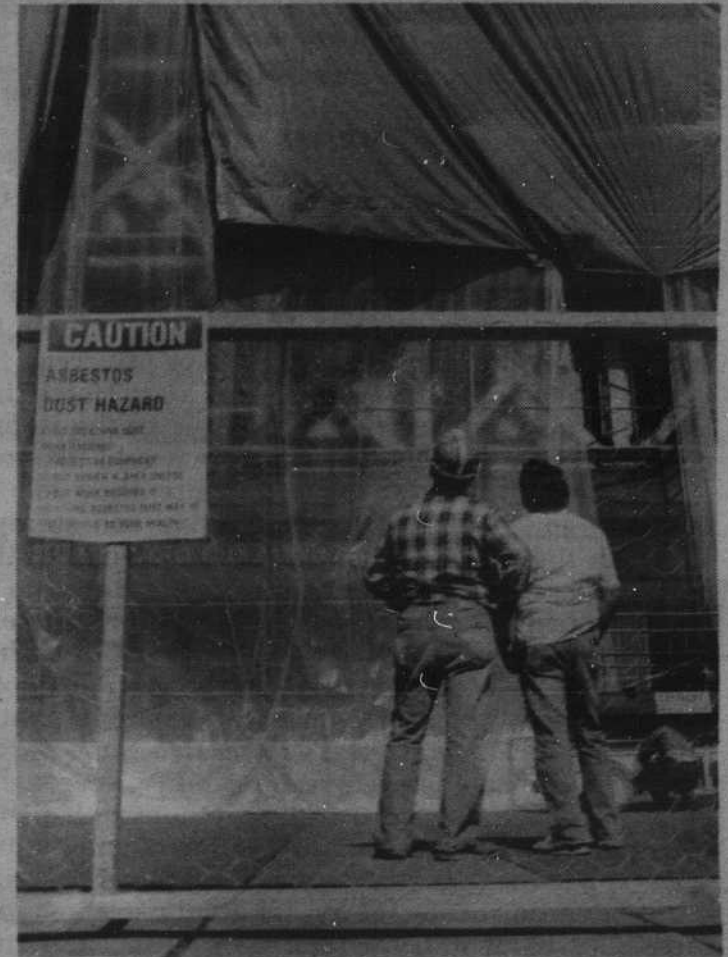


Photo by Michael Clapp

During asbestos removal at the Science I building, students should use east and west side doors to move from one portion of the building to another.

cocoon is in place, according to Schabtach, and "the project is being handled probably better than it's ever been handled before."

"The bottom line is keeping people safe and healthy, and we want to be as sure as possible that no one gets exposed to high levels of asbestos," Schabtach says.

Secretary hopefuls square off

By Paul Ertelt
Of the Emerald

Former newscaster, Don Clark, and state Rep. Donna Zajonc, R-Salem, Tuesday recommended actions to invalidate voter registration by homeless new arrivals to the Rajneeshpuram commune and prevent the Rajneeshes from "taking over" Wasco County. But state Rep. Barbara Roberts, D-Portland, said that the best way to beat the Rajneeshes is at the polls.

The three candidates for secretary of state made their remarks at a press conference and debate held by the Eugene Rotary Club in the Black Angus Restaurant.

Clark and Zajonc said the secretary of state's office should challenge every newly registered voter in Wasco County and investigate any possible violation of Oregon election law by the Rajneeshes.

The commune leaders may have violated a state law prohibiting the use of "undue influence" to persuade people to register and vote. Zajonc said undue influence includes giving money or "anything of value."

"I believe room and board is something of value," she said.

Clark said the Rajneeshes present a "clear and present danger" to the citizens of Oregon and have made clear their intentions to control politics in Wasco County and throughout the state.

"(The Rajneeshes) say by the year 2000 there will be no Oregon," he said. "They say there will only be a Rajneeshpuram."

Oregon's constitution prohibits the establishment of a residence for the purpose of

voting while a person is receiving state relief, Zajonc said. She said she has asked the attorney general to investigate whether the newcomers are receiving any state aid and if their registrations should be disqualified.

Clark said that the large number of measures on the general election ballot this year indicates voters' lack of confidence in state government and a desire to take things into their own hands. He said he supported Ballot Measure 2, which would limit property tax, because it is the only option left for Oregon taxpayers.

But Roberts said the measure would devastate the state's education system and take away its infrastructure, thus sending the wrong message about Oregon's ability to rise above the recent economic downturn.

"This is a meat ax approach to government," she said. "We want to show the rest of the nation we're getting back on our feet and are going to be healthy again."

Roberts said that her 19 years in public service makes her the most experienced and best qualified to be secretary of state. Zajonc has only spent six years in the Legislature and Clark has never been elected to public office, she said.

Zajonc insisted that issues and not qualifications were the key to the race. She said she supports voting by mail, open primaries and a 20-day voter registration cutoff to prevent voter fraud. Roberts voted against all three.

Clark said that Roberts' and Zajonc's experience in the Legislature should count against them. "The 1983 Legislature took more time to accomplish less than any legislature in the history of Oregon."

Humanities center funded

By Michael Doke
Of the Emerald

Citing an effort to make the University a more important force in the community, officials announced Tuesday a \$210,000 grant for the school's Center for the Humanities.

The three-year National Endowment for the Humanities grant, including \$190,000 in outright funds along with additional NEH matching funds of \$20,000 on gifts raised by the University, will provide a \$230,000 budget for a humanities outreach program at the University.

"One of the things the University has been trying to do lately is bring its message to the public — what it is we do and its significance," Pres. Paul Olum said at a news conference announcing the award.

The public outreach program provided by the grant will give the University a "traveling show," bringing the humanities to the rest of Oregon through a series of public lectures, Olum said.

The award will provide funding for the annual Fall Convocation activities and will provide for wider distribution of Inquiry, the University's research journal.

The NEH grant will also provide funding to continue the three-year-old University

Forum lecture series in downtown Eugene. The series features speakers from the University, including a lecture by Olum called "The History of the Manhattan Project," in November and a lecture by English Prof. Thelma Greenfield called "Soul for Sale: The Legend of Faust in Western Culture" in October. The Greenfield address will be presented in conjunction with the Eugene Opera's production of Gounod's "Faust."

Continued on Page 7



Paul Olum