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Kristi Strother gets help from Tanya Tiffany after her 1985 Nissan died in front of Columbia Wednesday afternoon. Strother made her final payment on the pickup earlier in the day.

Photo by Mark Ylen

## University

# OSPIRG focuses on waste issues

New OSPIRG projects emphasize waste reduction

By Brian Bloch  
Emerald Associate Editor

Turning its primary focus away from toxic waste issues, Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG) is kicking off the year with new emphasis on waste reduction and recycling projects among a host of other environmental pursuits.

The group will again be soliciting student involvement to generate and initiate environmental and consumer projects including toxic and waste reduction, recycling, pesticides, toy safety, hunger and homelessness, and the continuation of the group's consumer hotline.

Students interested in OSPIRG or who wish to become involved in the group's projects can attend a general interest meeting Wednesday, Oct. 11 at 7 p.m. in the EMU Forum Room.

"By becoming involved with OSPIRG, students can be real sources of social and political change," said Dalene Lovie, OSPIRG chapter chairwoman.

Stephanie Haver, solid waste and recycling project leader, said the group will continue a recycling project begun last year in local apartment buildings. The pilot project targets tenants for recycling education and survey information on practical methods of separating recyclable materials.

This year, the surveys will be distributed state-wide in hopes of generating broader interest in recycling and creating simpler methods of collecting the

materials.

"Almost everyone I know wants to recycle, but most just don't know how to do it," said Justin McKenna, OSPIRG chapter vice chairman. "If you can make it easy and get people educated, they'll do it."

The waste reduction and recycling project group will also be working on banning the use of polystyrene foam in Eugene and lobbying for stricter laws defining environmentally sound packaging.

Although it is placing a stronger emphasis on state and local waste reduction and recycling projects this year, the group will be pursuing other environmental and consumer issues as well.

OSPIRG will tackle clean air issues as it pushes for tighter national auto emission standards in the Federal Clean Air Act and lobbies local legislators to press for higher state emission standards. It also will advocate action to control production-related air pollution and elimination of carcinogens.

"We're one of only a few organizations across the country working on the issue of air toxics," said OSPIRG staff member Maureen Kirk.

In addition, the group will press for a reduction in the use of toxins in corporate manufacturing and energy production by advocating the replacement of toxic chemicals with non-toxic substitutes, improvement of plant operations to reduce toxin use, and redesigning equipment that uses and produces toxic chemicals.

The group is coming off of a landmark legislative victory

with the passage of the Oregon Toxics Use Reduction Act after a two-year OSPIRG campaign for the act.

OSPIRG will also co-sponsor Fast For World Harvest and various activities during Hunger Week, Nov. 13-17. Ellen Kiebertz, hunger project leader, said the group will also address the homeless problem and the needs of local homeless individuals.

"I'd like to see the group move away from just hunger, but working on hunger and homelessness together," Kiebertz said.

Toy safety will also be a continuing issue for the group this year. OSPIRG members will be surveying toy stores and departments, testing toys for projectiles, solid construction and small parts that can cause choking. The group will then release a report in December illustrating the findings of those tests and issuing recommendations to consumer agencies.

OSPIRG will tackle consumer issues with its Consumer Issues Hotline making its yearly re-opening Wednesday. The hotline is a student-volunteer-staffed service for University students who need advice on issues concerning landlord-tenant rights, door to door sales tactics, toy safety, new and used car lemon laws, and other consumer issues. The hotline number is 686-HELP.

"Overall, OSPIRG is concerned about corporate accountability and responsibility, whether it's products or waste," said Norine McCellhany, consumer hotline project leader. "That's what we're all about."

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