

State AIDS cases up 25 percent

PORTLAND (AP) — The number of new AIDS cases reported in Oregon last year jumped 25 percent to 220, health officials say.

Steve Modesitt of the Oregon Health Division said that since 1981, when the state first began tracking instances of acquired immune deficiency syndrome, 697 cases and 398 deaths have been reported in the state.

He said 176 AIDS cases were reported in 1988.

"These cases continue to be people who were infected in the early 1980s," Modesitt said Friday, adding the increase in 1989 was "within the projected range."

He said state and national projections of the number of new AIDS cases have been fairly accurate, partly because of the long incubation period before symptoms appear. It can take a decade for the AIDS infection to cause symptoms, Modesitt said.

However, he said the overall rate of increase has showed signs of slowing down, which doctors believe may be due to better drugs like AZT and a change in sexual behavior due to increased awareness of the dangers of infection.

Modesitt said 117 AIDS deaths were reported in 1989 alone. The increase in AIDS

Commission recommends activism

was mirrored by an increase in other sexually transmitted diseases, including syphilis, he said.

Modesitt said 92 percent of the cases reported in 1989 were among whites, with 2 percent among blacks, 3 percent among Hispanics, and 2 percent among Asians and Native Americans.

Meanwhile, members of a national commission studying AIDS recommended Friday that all levels of government start taking activist roles in the battle against the disease.

The three-member working group, chaired by Ramsey County, Minn., Commissioner Diane Ahrens, is a subcommittee of the 15-member national

commission. The commission was created by Congress to advise lawmakers and President Bush on the development of coordinated public policy on AIDS.

In a letter to Bush dated Dec. 5, the commission estimated that AIDS could claim nearly 200,000 lives over the next four years and by 1991 will be among the top 10 leading causes of death in the United States.

AIDS disables the immune system, opening the way for infections that eventually claim the lives of victims. Experts say the disease is most often transmitted through sexual contact and sharing of dirty needles by intravenous drug users.

Congress plan calls for giant redwood logging

(AP) — A portion of Oregon's last remaining giant redwood trees is to be sold and logged under the Pacific Northwest timber compromise approved last year by Congress.

Environmentalists have objected to the Siskiyou National Forest's 147-acre Grapevine sale near the Oregon-California border.

"We think it is an outrage for the Forest Service to consider logging these last few redwoods in Oregon," said John Dewitt, director of the Save-the-Redwoods League in San Francisco. "This is a great tragedy for a state as progressive and beautiful as Oregon."

"This again is one more thing that demonstrates that the Forest Service is not protecting old growth, if they believe they have to log Oregon's only ancient redwoods," said Wendell Wood, spokesman in Eugene for the Oregon Natural Resources Council.

Dewitt and Wood have written letters of protest to U.S. Forest Service officials and to Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., urging them to halt the logging of redwoods in Oregon.



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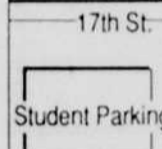
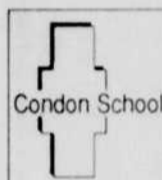
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