

Man hit with acid

SEATTLE (AP) — A man who stopped to help a stranded motorist instead was sprayed with acid that left his eye swollen shut, turned his face gray and burned holes in his clothing.

"I won't stop to help anymore. It's a sad state of affairs that there are these bizarre people out there," said Gary P. Sexton, who believes the incident was a set-up rather than a panicked reaction from a frightened driver.

Sexton, 45, a Boeing Co. plumber, was hospitalized at Harborview Medical Center and was to meet with a plastic surgeon to see whether he'll need skin grafts.

Sexton was driving home from work about 11:45 p.m. Saturday when he spotted a Ford Bronco or Chevy Blazer stalled on a lightly traveled street in West Seattle.

The stranger in the other car had his hood up and emergency flashers on, Sexton said Monday. Sexton slowed, rolled down his window and coasted alongside the other driver's window.

Before he could speak, Sexton said, "I looked right at him and all of a sudden the hose

nozzle came up and right out the window, like a fire extinguisher. I tilted my head down and away when he hit me" with a high-powered spray.

"It hit two-thirds of the left side of my face; the top of my head is all shot, turned a different color, gray, now," he said. Part of his left eye was burned but will probably heal, he said.

"It just disintegrated the coat I had on my back, just melted it. It just destroyed the inside of my truck, the dashboard and all the plastic in the seat," Sexton said.

"I got the hell out of there, drove all the way home. I didn't want to get out of the truck when he sprayed me, I was there all by myself."

Sexton's girlfriend, Pam Young, said Sexton "came in the front door screaming, like he was on fire." Holes had begun to burn through his clothing, she said.

Police were analyzing Sexton's damaged nylon lunch bag and shirt to determine what was sprayed at him. Sexton said the material smelled like battery acid.

Police were investigating but had no suspects in the case.

Geothermal well found in desert

BURNS (AP) — A Texas oil company has confirmed an underground geothermal reservoir beneath the Alvord Desert in southeastern Oregon but plans more tests before it commits to building a plant to harness that energy.

Anadarko Petroleum Corp. drilled a 1,479-foot test well at the north end of the Pueblo Valley in October and, in a 22-hour flow test, measured the water's temperature at 305 degrees Fahrenheit, said Patrick Smith, the corporation's division land manager in Santa Rosa, Calif.

"We have more reservoir tests to run, hopefully this year," he said.

It was the first geothermal resource flow test of a well on public lands in the Northwest, according to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

"They kept this pretty quiet because it was in the discovery stage," said Joshua Warburton, BLM district manager in Burns. "They've pretty much made up their minds what they've got."

"This discovery has added further confirming evidence to an already impressive body of encouraging scientific data," said Eric Hoffman, acting chief of BLM's Division of Mineral Resources for Oregon.

The BLM claims potential geothermal energy resources near the Alvord Desert may be significant and the agency cites a 1978 U.S. Geological Survey estimate that the area has a potential of 90 megawatts of geothermal energy for a 30-year period.

That compares with a potential 280 megawatts for the entire Basin and Range Province of the Western United States, according to the

Geological Survey.

Both Warburton and Smith said an electrical generating plant in the Pueblo Valley would employ only a handful of technicians after construction and would not be a significant intrusion on the desert.

The water would be pumped back into the ground after its heat was utilized, Warburton said.

The latest test well was 4½ inches in diameter and comparatively shallow. Anadarko reported in November it had achieved an average flow of about 11,000 barrels of water per day, or 320 gallons per minute.

BLM spokesman Jack Feuer said that could make geothermal development attractive because of the savings in drilling costs.

Warburton said the Anadarko well was capped after the test ended.

Hoffman said Oregon pioneered the direct use of geothermal resources for heat. However, the state "has not yet tapped its huge potential for electric power generation," he said.

He called the Anadarko discovery "highly important," but said it "only scratched the surface of the Pacific Northwest's geothermal potential."

Oregon and Washington have identified accessible geothermal resources equivalent to 41.04 billion barrels of oil, according to the BLM.

That compares to total proven oil reserves in the U.S. of only 24.48 billion barrels. Total annual U.S. energy consumption is 13.5 billion barrels.



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