

Stalking law gives more power to police, victims

By Rebecca Merritt
Oregon Daily Emerald

Thanks to a new state law, Eugene police officials are no longer helpless when responding to stalking complaints.

"The passage of this law has given us a tool which is long overdue," said Tim Birr, public information officer for the Department of Public Safety. "The Oregon Legislature has accomplished an incredible feat."

Birr and local leaders of women support groups emphasized the importance of the new law at a Tuesday morning news conference. The law, effective Sept. 1, makes stalking a crime, prohibiting

people from deliberately alarming or coercing another person with repeated and unwanted contact without legitimate purpose, said Erin Collier, a representative of Sexual Assault Support Services of Lane County.

Stalking is a Class A misdemeanor and a Class C felony if the suspect has a prior conviction for stalking, or violates a police or court protective order.

"The law recognizes that repeated, ongoing harassment causes more harm than a one time incident — it in fact amounts to terrorism," said Judith Armatta, legal counsel for Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence.

Before this new law, Birr said stalking

victims received limited help from police officers. Police could make information reports of stalking complaints, but virtually nothing could be done to stop the accused offenders.

Since the law's passage Birr said the police department has dealt with two stalking offenders. The department is also aware of a number of situations where women were being stalked prior to the new law but have not had any problems with their stalkers during the past month.

About 25 percent of the calls to the Sexual Assault Support Services crisis line during September have been from people who were stalked or were interested in learning more about the stalking law,

Collier said.

Nadia Telsey, national self-defense consultant, said people who are stalked should call the police to get a restraining order against the stalker. People also need to maximize their safety by getting a free inspection of their home from the police, using a post office box, not putting an address or phone number on checks, and putting a second phone in a locked room, she said.

Those who think they are being stalked should let friends and family know what is happening for assistance and assurance. Women should also be aware of self defense classes and weapons such as cayenne pepper spray, Telsey said.

**SPELL
IT OUT
1-800
O-P-E-R
A-T-O-R**

There's no lower price for a collect callSM

For long distance calls from public phones. You don't have to be an Economics major to see that AT&T's new 1 800-OPERATOR service is lower priced than anyone else's standard operator service rates for long distance collect calls. Use it from any phone on or off campus. When you call, just spell it out.
Dial 1 800-OPERATOR (1 800 673-7286).



Pending tariff effectiveness. © 1993 AT&T

Forest rally scheduled for today

Opponents of President Bill Clinton's forest plan will voice their opinions this morning at a public rally in front of the Federal Building.

The rally, beginning at 10 a.m., was organized to encourage citizens to attend a public hearing with U.S. Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Jeff Lyons regarding the forest plan. The hearing is scheduled for this afternoon from 1 to 4 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem.

Representatives from the Audubon Society, Forest Conservation Council, Native Forest Council, Sierra Club and Western Ancient Forests Campaign will speak at the Eugene rally.

"We need to show that the environmental community is not going to be silent on the issue," said Mike Purcell, a member of Western Ancient Forests Campaign.

An Ancient Forest Activists rally is also scheduled for noon today at the state fairgrounds in Salem.



**C.J. and the Salon
Welcomes
U. of O.
CALL 345-7132
Tiffany
Tyna Jane
1425 Oak Street**

Rhythm

Reviews

**Coming Friday
in the Emerald**