

# Oregon Daily Emerald

An independent newspaper



## Ready to shine

Junior Zack Freiter is healthy and ready to step into a starting role on the defensive line. **PAGE 7**

## New ground

A University groundbreaking ceremony celebrated the construction of new apartments. **PAGE 4**

WEATHER  
TODAY



high 55, low 41

SINCE 1900 UNIVERSITY OF OREGON EUGENE, OREGON

# Natural gas and fuel prices to remain high

## Conservation methods to decrease your bill

**1. Furnace ducts:** As much as 25 percent of heat can be lost as a result of leaks in the duct. By having the ducts sealed, you can increase the efficiency of your furnace.

**2. Lower Temperature:** Turn down the heat at night or when you leave the house. By setting the temperature 10 degrees lower at times of little usage, you can lower your heating bill five to 10 percent a month.

**3. Storm Windows:** You can buy inexpensive plastic storm window kits that you install inside the windows and that insulate well. Also, seal air leaks around doors and windows to eliminate drafts.

**4. Resource-efficient appliances:** The largest or second-largest energy users in houses are water heaters. Make sure the temperature is set to 120 degrees or lower.

■ Decreased oil supply and high oil prices are partly responsible for high gas prices

By Lindsay Buchele  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Oregon's gas prices have finally leveled off.

However, the \$1.79 Oregonians are currently paying for a gallon of regular gas is still 23 cents above the national average, something that's not likely to change, according to Department of Energy economist Jacob Bournazian.

"The only thing to bring down prices [of gas] is to lower the price of crude oil," he said.

National crude oil prices skyrocketed in 1999 and have stayed up through the year to date. The high prices are largely due to the demand for oil exceeding the supply being put out by oil companies, Bournazian said.

"In 1997 and 1998, we had a huge glut of crude oil," he said.

Then, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries cut back production. Instead of producing the 65.5 million gallons a day that were in demand, oil companies were only producing 64 million gallons

per day, Bournazian said.

A steady decrease in supply from OPEC pushed prices up and caused stock prices to decline.

Bournazian said the breakdown of taxes and costs shows how prices became so high in Oregon:

- West Texas Intermediate, one of the nation's leading providers of crude oil, is currently charging \$32.73 per barrel of gas.

- There are approximately 42 gallons in a barrel, which makes the price 81 cents per gallon.

- The federal gas tax is 18 cents per gallon, and the Oregon gas tax is 24 cents per gallon.

- It costs about 45 cents per gallon to process crude oil, and Oregon transports and stores the gas for about 5 cents a gallon.

- After adding all the costs, a gallon of gas costs about \$1.73 per gallon, and then gas stations add their costs to the final pump price.

"If gas stations were charging anything less than \$1.79, they would be losing a lot of money," Bournazian said.

Prices are high for the entire country, but Oregon prices are even higher. **Turn to Gas prices, page 5**

“The only thing to bring down prices [of gas] is to lower the price of crude oil.”

Jacob Bournazian  
Economist  
Department of Energy

The construction of a new natural gas pipeline means higher costs for consumers

By Rebecca Newell  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Energy costs go up during the winter months, but next spring, the prices won't go down as the weather warms.

Natural gas and electric utility companies hiked rates by approximately 20 percent on Oct. 1 due to a dramatic rise in the cost of the resources. This increase will affect Oregon and Washington but only minimally impact many Eugene residents.

The main cause of the price increase stems from the construction of a new natural gas pipeline carrying the re-

source from Canada to the Midwest. The Pacific Northwest, which receives most of its natural gas from Canada, was suddenly faced with competition for the gas, resulting in the significant increase in wholesale prices to the utility companies and new power plants, most of which run off gas.

Lisa Schwartz, a policy analyst for the Conservation Resource division of the Oregon Office of Energy, said the sudden high demand has caused gas companies to redouble their exploration efforts for new sources of

Turn to Fuel cost, page 5

# OSPIRG warns against genetically engineered edibles

OSPIRG held a rally to inform consumers of the dangers of "Frankenstein foods"

By Eric Martin  
For the Emerald

Warning that some genetically engineered foods may pose a health hazard and are not safety-tested, organic food experts and OSPIRG activists held a rally at 10 a.m. Tuesday in front of Johnson Hall.

The experts said many genetically engineered foods are not identified as such in supermarkets or on packaging, which disregards the consumer's right to know. It also puts unsuspecting consumers at risk for increased allergic reactions and possibly cancer, they said.

To promote the event, OSPIRG representatives strolled the sidewalks in front of Johnson Hall in homemade costumes that depicted the result of splicing vegetable genes with other food genes. One student wore a silver fish with the body of a tomato.

They encouraged students to attend the rally, which at its peak drew about 10 spectators.

One of Tuesday's speakers was from the Genetically Engineered Foods Alert Campaign, which is calling for a moratorium on genetically engineered foods until long-term safety testing is complete. GE foods are labeled and the biotechnical corporations manufacturing these foods agree to be liable for damages.

"The long-term effect of these foods are not known," said Rachel Spencer, a project coordinator for the Genetically Engineered Foods Alert Campaign. "The [Food and Drug Administration] is no longer formally safety testing these 'Frankenstein foods.'"

Spencer cited the recent FDA recall of Starlink corn products, which contained a bacterial pesticide and were not ap-

proved for human consumption, as an example of the danger GE foods present.

The pesticide, known as Bacillus thuringiensis, or Bt, is used to deter pests from infesting crops, she said. Once consumed, the pesticide basically disintegrates the bellies of these insects.

The corn products containing Bt included certain taco shells and other corn-based products, and were found on shelves at Safeway, Mission Foods, Foodline and other stores before being recalled, Spencer said.

People consuming these products may face long-term effects. Corporations that make the foods use "marker genes" to determine if the insertion of genetic material into a plant's DNA is successful, said J.J. Haapala, a speaker and director of resource education for the Oregon Tilth.

Turn to Genetic rally, page 3



University student Rod Yoder urges students to attend an OSPIRG rally.

Eric Martin for the Emerald