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# Nanotechnology, fuel, file-sharing make news

A Grokster and Morpheus court case, the H2 GROW Act and nanotechnology top the year's technology headlines

## Year in review

**Ali Shaughnessy**  
Environment/Science/Technology Reporter

From nanotechnology to hydrogen-powered vehicles, University students have faced a barrage of environmental-, science- and technology-related issues this year.

Students who use file-sharing programs such as Kazaa or Morpheus have been on a bumpy ride, with the Recording Industry Association of America and the Motion Picture Association of America filing lawsuits against not only the file-sharing programs, but four students from across the nation who had written file-sharing programs. RIAA President Cary

Sherman said in a prepared statement that the programs worked similarly to Napster, which the courts ruled illegal and shut down.

However, in a recent case, a Los Angeles judge ruled that file-sharing companies Grokster and Morpheus could not be held liable because the companies did not have control over what people shared. Apple Computer, Inc., recently introduced the Apple iTunes Music Store, which allows users to download songs for 99 cents each.

Nanotechnology has gained recognition and funding over the past year. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., recently introduced legislation to fund and coordinate accelerated nanotechnology research. At the University, researchers are working with Oregon State University to create a new building — the first of its kind — that will combine nanotechnology research with microtechnology research.

"The challenge is, how do you inter-

face (nanotechnology) to the outside world?" Jim Hutchison, a chemistry associate professor, said. "For example, how do you hook a keyboard up to a transistor that's nano-sized?"

In February, Wyden also introduced legislation that called for a new means of fueling vehicles: hydrogen. The H2 GROW Act, which stands for Hydrogen Transportation Wins Over Growing Reliance on Oil, proposed making hydrogen-powered vehicles marketable alternatives for consumers within the next 10 years, a non-mainstream alternative to the raising gas prices. The act was supported by General Motors, Toyota and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

"Senator Wyden believes America can do more," said Carol Guthrie, Wyden's spokeswoman, in February. "The challenge now is to make it more affordable for average Americans."

Contact the reporter at [alishaughnessy@dailyemerald.com](mailto:alishaughnessy@dailyemerald.com).

## News brief

### West Nile expected in Oregon this summer

Lane County health care professionals are telling citizens to protect themselves against mosquito bites, which may carry a potentially deadly disease.

West Nile Virus, a mosquito-borne disease that has killed 252 people in the United States, is expected to be in Oregon this summer. The virus can cause low-risk, flu-like symptoms, but some people are at risk for more serious complications. High-risk individuals include children, the elderly and people with immune deficiency disorders.

Mild symptoms of West Nile include a fever, headache and body aches. Severe infections may cause West Nile encephalitis signaled by symptoms such as severe headache, neck stiffness, high fever, disorientation and seizure. There is no vaccine for West Nile.

"Students are not usually in the high risk categories, but they do spend a lot of time outdoors," said Betsy Meredith, an epidemiologist at the Lane County Department of Health and Human Services. "It's important for students to cover up and use an insect repellent product with DEET."

Meredith said though there is some concern among individuals about use of chemical pesticides, studies show DEET is a safe and effective product. Alternatives to DEET include natural

products such as citronella and wearing longer or heavier clothing. People are also being asked to do their part in helping the community battle West Nile by eliminating standing water on their property.

Anne Mattson, director of nursing at the University Health Center, said health care providers have developed an "ABC" system for people to follow to avoid West Nile. People should take precautions to "Avoid bites, Be informed and Clear mosquitoes" from their properties. Facts about West Nile and how to avoid it are available at [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/west-nile/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/west-nile/index.htm) or by calling the National Pesticide Information Hotline at (800) 858-7378.

—Lindsay Sauvé

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