

Today	Wednesday	Thursday
		
High: 75 Low: 49 Precip: 0%	High: 83 Low: 55 Precip: 0%	High: 81 Low: 54 Precip: 0%

IN BRIEF

NW Natural asks for more time for cleanup

PORTLAND — A gas company responsible for a toxic tar reef that juts into the Willamette River near downtown Portland has asked that it be allowed to delay cleanup for three years.

NW Natural's request in a May 6 letter comes a year after it agreed to remove the tar body suspected of releasing cancer-causing chemicals into the river. The Environmental Protection Agency wanted the tar body, the most visible feature of industrial pollution that has made a 6-mile stretch of the river a Superfund site, removed last summer.

NW Natural said it is looking for a way to remove the tar and nearby ground pollution all at once, and needs time to form a comprehensive and cost-effective cleanup plan.

"We said we don't understand it well enough to remove it right away," said Bob Wyatt of NW Natural regarding last year's delay. NW Natural has suggested covering the tar with sand while it conducts further study.

In its 2004 annual report to the Securities and Exchange Commission, NW Natural estimated costs for removing the tar body and cleaning pollution at the neighboring site ranged from \$4.3 million to \$12 million. The company expects insurance to pay \$8.3 million, and it will ask the state for permission to charge ratepayers the rest.

The request for further delay frustrated groups seeking a speedier cleanup.

"It's been too long already," said Travis Williams, Willamette Riverkeeper executive director and one of the community advisers monitoring

the Superfund cleanup. "This site has been known about for years, there was a commitment to do it a year ago and NW Natural is a healthy, robust company that has the ability to get it done."

Black bears in Southern Oregon sign of summer

MEDFORD — The best sign that winter is finally over in the Rogue Valley is the reappearance of some unwelcome guests: black bears, who have emerged hungry from months of hibernation.

Because it's not yet berry season, many of the bears find their way into human homes to scavenge for birdseed and garbage. In the process, the animals can cause serious damages, tipping over garbage cans, destroying chicken coops and taking dips in ponds.

So far this month, 28 people in Jackson and Josephine Counties have called the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to complain about the bears.

"If you don't stop them at the trash-can stage, they often get more assertive in getting their food," said agency wildlife biologist Rosemary Stussy in Central Point. "The next thing you know, they're standing on your porch looking through the window thinking, 'What do you have in that kitchen?'"

A black bear with muddy paws recently climbed on Maus and Marianne Bailey's porch in Ashland to swat down a hanging hummingbird feeder.

The bear also munched another one hanging on a manzanita in the Baileys' idyllic hillside yard.

"We're more intrigued than concerned," Marianne Bailey said. "We're so close to the woods that we get all sorts of wildlife. It's just this is the first time we had a bear."

The wildlife agency has a policy against trapping and relocating nuisance bears. Doing so could shift the problem elsewhere, disrupt bears in the relocated areas or transmit diseases.

Instead, Stussy said residents who spot a garbage-lunching bear should turn the animal's intense sense of smell against it.

Fill a balloon with ammonia,

smear a little peanut butter on it and place it on your garbage can lid, she said. One bite into the balloon and the bear will think twice before ravaging a trash can.

Another defense against backyard black bears is to rid property of bear magnets, like compost piles or greasy barbecues.

Supreme Court won't hear Nader challenge

SALEM — The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday announced it won't consider whether Oregon election officials wrongly kept Ralph Nader off the presidential ballot last November.

Without comment, the court declined to hear Nader supporters' appeal of an Oregon Supreme Court decision that denied the consumer activist a ballot spot because of flawed petition signature sheets.

Nader turned to a statewide petition drive after failing at two mini-conventions in Portland to get the 1,000 voter signatures needed to qualify for the ballots as an independent candidate.

He needed 15,306 signatures to get on the ballot under the alternate method, and petitioners turned in more than 18,000 signatures.

But Secretary of State Bill Bradbury said after checking, Nader fell 218 signatures short of being on the ballot. Bradbury disqualified thousands of signatures for not conforming to technical rules, such as petition circulators not having properly signed each sheet.

Nader supporters accused Bradbury, a Democrat and backer of Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry, of using trivial concerns and applying unwritten rules to keep Nader off the ballot.

Nader drew 5 percent of the Oregon vote in the 2000 presidential race, which many Democrats argued was mostly at former Vice President Al Gore's expense.

The state Supreme Court ruled that Bradbury acted within his powers in checking the petitions. Using some unwritten procedures to do that did not make them illegal, the court said.

— The Associated Press

Universities fail to reveal sexual harassment cases

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SALEM — Students at Oregon's public universities are vulnerable to repeat cases of sexual harassment because schools fail to tell them about confirmed cases of sexual harassment, according to the results of an investigation published in the Statesman-Journal of Salem.

The newspaper's investigation also found that punishments for confirmed harassers are usually kept from the general public, and that public universities have not done comprehensive surveys on the number of students who get sexually harassed by professors and peers.

And according to the newspaper, many students do not know how to file a sexual harassment complaint.

The newspaper began investigating the issue of sexual harassment on campus after it reported on a case at Western Oregon University, in which a former professor was accused of sexually harassing his graduate student.

In that case, Western Oregon officials refused to release details about disciplinary action taken against professor Gary Welander.

Officials said the records are part of the professor's confidential personnel file and exempt from public disclosure.

The Statesman Journal asked Oregon Attorney General Hardy Myers to order the university to release the documents, citing a public right to know.

But the newspaper's request was denied on grounds that the records are not subject to disclosure under Oregon's public-records law.

Sexual harassment is part of a hidden, mostly unreported, wave of victimization that occurs on college campuses and mostly targets young women, said Phyllis Barkhurst, executive director of the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force.

"Talk to somebody who's being sexually harassed — they see no benefit

in reporting," Barkhurst said. "They feel like it targets them."

As it stands now, repeat harassers can remain invisible within campus communities, said Kathleen Moore, a professor of philosophy at Oregon State University.

"The thing that is most troubling for us is how we fail in our duty to warn students because of all the personnel rules that sustain all this secrecy and silence," she said.

Still, sexual harassment complaints are relatively rare at Oregon's seven public universities, according to school statistics.

Since 1999, the schools have received 39 student complaints of sexual harassment against faculty or staff, according to public records obtained by the Statesman Journal.

Harassment was found in 22 of those cases, resulting in sanctions ranging from written reprimands to firings and formal apologies.

Moore said complaint data doesn't reflect the reality of campus harassment because it reveals only "the tip of the iceberg."

Moore instead uses a simple measurement technique: a show of hands.

"Our faculty women's network had a meeting recently, for example, and people asked a question: How many of you know about sexual harassment that is going on right now? I would guess about a third of the people raised their hands," Moore said.

Still, change could be on the way. After the Western Oregon University story broke last winter, Gov. Ted Kulongoski ordered a systemwide review of sexual harassment policies and procedures at the state's seven public universities.

On June 2, reports from the seven universities, along with recommendations for change, are due to come before the governor and the state Board of Higher Education.

debate

with AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON DEBATE TEAM

RESOLVED:

The University of Oregon should not conduct research funded by the military

7:00 PM, Wednesday, May 25

182 Lillia (Business School, 955 E. 13th)

Admission: FREE

COME EARLY

Debaters: Jason Lear, Laurel Moealien, Kara Borden, Jenny McBride

Sponsors: UO Honors College Forensics Program, UO Concerned Faculty for Peace and Justice

TODAY!

CiP Volunteer Fair

May 24th EMU Ampitheatre 10am - 3pm

Participating Organizations:

- SASS
- Kidsports
- Child Advocacy Center
- Women Space
- Souljourn
- Red Cross
- Looking Glass
- Greenhill
- PeaceCorps
- CASA

Find out how you can get involved, then stop by the CiP office in the EMU Breezeway to find out how you can get upper-division credit for volunteering!

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