

SENDING SENIORS OFF IN STYLE



KATE HORTON | PHOTOGRAPHER

(Above): Melissa Ballard poses with the Duck for a photo in the EMU Amphitheater during the Senior Send-Off 2005 celebration Wednesday afternoon. (Right): Leah Golden, graduating with a degree in human physiology, enjoys her free rootbeer float in the rain.



Fire: McArthur Court and Autzen Stadium require extra safety precautions

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University Occupational Safety Officer Mark Maguire said this was an important change Eugene and University officials made approximately seven years ago.

"We decided philosophically that sprinkler systems are more effective than alarm systems for fire protection," Maguire said. He said when a sprinkler head goes off, it is immediately fighting the fire while sending a signal to the monitoring station at DPS. He added alarms are only able to send a signal, delaying fire suppression efforts by three to five minutes.

Maguire said new technology enables sprinkler systems to be more effective and respond only when absolutely necessary. Using quick

response heads with fusible links designed to melt and set off a sprinkler when it reaches a certain temperature has allowed for more reliable fire protection. Maguire said statistically, less than two sprinkler heads are used per fire.

Even more advanced systems are in place at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art. A fire detection system in place at the museum can detect the type of smoke being emitted and analyze it to determine the risk factor.

Maguire said not all campus buildings are fully equipped with sprinklers, but the University is working to make it happen. Currently, Allen Hall, the Collier House, the Chiles Center and Millrace Studios 1, 2 and 3 do not have sprinkler systems, but they have monitored alarms, Maguire said.

"We are in compliance with all

applicable codes, and if we aren't, we are working damn hard to get there," Maguire said. He later added, "I can see the time and financial commitments the University has made and to be very candid, they have been large. It's a big dollar commitment, but how do you put a value on life? How do you put a value on a lab or research facility?"

Campbell said most universities in the Oregon University System do not have fire inspectors on staff and instead rely on overworked and understaffed fire marshals. He said the University began inspecting its own buildings yearly in 1998.

In addition to sprinkler systems, staff in buildings where large crowds congregate, such as the EMU, have emergency plans in place in the event of an alarm.

EMU Building Services Coordinator Terry Johnson said he has participated in many of the evacuations. He said his staff is trained to go to the exits and usher people out of the building as quickly as possible. He said a supervisor goes to the alarm box at the same time to verify the location of the alarm and check to see if a fire is actually occurring. The alarm also sounds at a central monitoring location at DPS where officers are dispatched to assist EMU personnel. Campbell said the EMU has good evacuation procedures in place.

"The good thing about the EMU is there is a significant number of people at any time who know what to do," Campbell said.

Campbell said he is present at any event with more than 3,000 people, including all sporting events at McArthur Court and

Autzen Stadium, which on game day becomes one of the 10 most populous areas in the state, according to the Oregon Blue Book. He said measures are in place to avoid false evacuations in the event of a prank or "burning popcorn."

He added that the secret is in organization and training.

"You've got to get people doing what they need to do and not what they don't need to do," Campbell said.

Regardless of any emergency system that is in place, Campbell said individuals must do the right thing and get themselves out of potentially dangerous situations.

"What we need is more people to know what to do," Campbell said. "When the alarm's on or the word is passed, it's time to go."

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Stem cell: Bush argues against experimentation on embryos

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Democratic Sens. Tom Harkin of Iowa, Dianne Feinstein of California and Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts.

The lawmakers say using the cells may accelerate scientific progress toward cures and treatments for chronic diseases and debilitating health conditions.

The most advanced research available is needed to cure diseases, Smith said in a May 25 press conference.

"We cannot ask science to find cures with yesterday's efforts," he said. "We need to expand the horizon of our research. In the spirit of people who are pro-life, in the spirit of medical research to cure the most horrible diseases, we stand united today as Republicans and Democrats on an issue for life."

Wyden generally favors legislation that would provide federal funding

for stem cell research, Wyden spokesman Andrew Blotky said.

"He's consistently supported all forms of research on stem cells," Blotky said.

Wyden cited National Institutes of Health information about the limitations of adult stem cells during a July 14, 2004, Senate committee hearing.

"I come to this issue in a nonpartisan way with the view that I think, while the research shows that using adult stem cells can help some people, there are millions of Americans who suffer from a host of devastating diseases and their valiantly supportive families who I believe deserve more," he said during the hearing.

Senate opponents of the bill, including anti-abortion advocates, raise moral objections to embryonic stem cell research. Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., a staunch abortion

opponent, said he was "disheartened" by the House's approval but pleased by Bush's veto threat.

"Government should encourage lifesaving research, but should focus on science that both works and is ethical," he said.

A Pew Research Center poll in August showed 52 percent of Americans believed it was more important to conduct stem cell research than to avoid the loss of the potential life of human embryos involved in this research.

Calling babies born as a result of frozen embryos, "snowflakes," Bush has called for adoption of embryos as an "alternative to the destruction of life." He also said there have been over 600 experiments based on stem cell lines predating his decision, adding that there's potential for another 3,000 experiments.

"There's a lot of research going on, on adult stem cell research," he

said. "We've got an ethics panel that has been — that is in place, that will help us, hopefully, develop ways to continue to figure out how to meet the demands of science and the need for ethics so that we can help solve some of these diseases."

He added that society must "balance ethics and science."

"And listen, I understand the folks that are deeply concerned for their — a child who might have juvenile diabetes," he said. "I know that the moms and dads across the country are in agony about the fate of their child. And my message to them is, is that there is research going on and hopefully we'll find the cure."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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