

DEQ aiming to talk trash for a year

The Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has embarked on a year-long, statewide recycling study that will help the state get a more accurate picture of the numbers and types of beverage containers that Oregonians are recycling.

Also, it will examine the effectiveness of special curbside programs and recycling depots.

DEQ expects that getting more specific information about the number and types of containers Oregonians are recycling, plus data about residents use of curbside collection programs, will help community recycling programs statewide.

“We don’t necessarily want all recycling collection programs to be the same, but we do want them to be good,” said Peter Spendelow, study coordinator and DEQ solid waste specialist. “We’re hoping information gained from this study will help cities improve their programs.”

Samples of recycled materials will be collected throughout the state from single-family residential homes, multifamily buildings, commercial locations and depot collection sites.

Collection locations will be selected at random from around the state, based on population and quantity of materials recycled at different locations.

DEQ expects to release preliminary results in January 2005 and conclude the study in June 2005, issuing a report summarizing study findings later that year.

Data sought on offender

On Wednesday, July 28, Oregon State Police detectives arrested Craig Anthony Lohbeck, 35, of Phoenix, Ore. on charges of first-degree unlawful sexual penetration and first-degree sexual abuse with two girls.

In an effort to identify additional victims, anyone having information on criminal activity involving Lohbeck is encouraged to contact OSP at (541) 776-6114, Ext. 229.

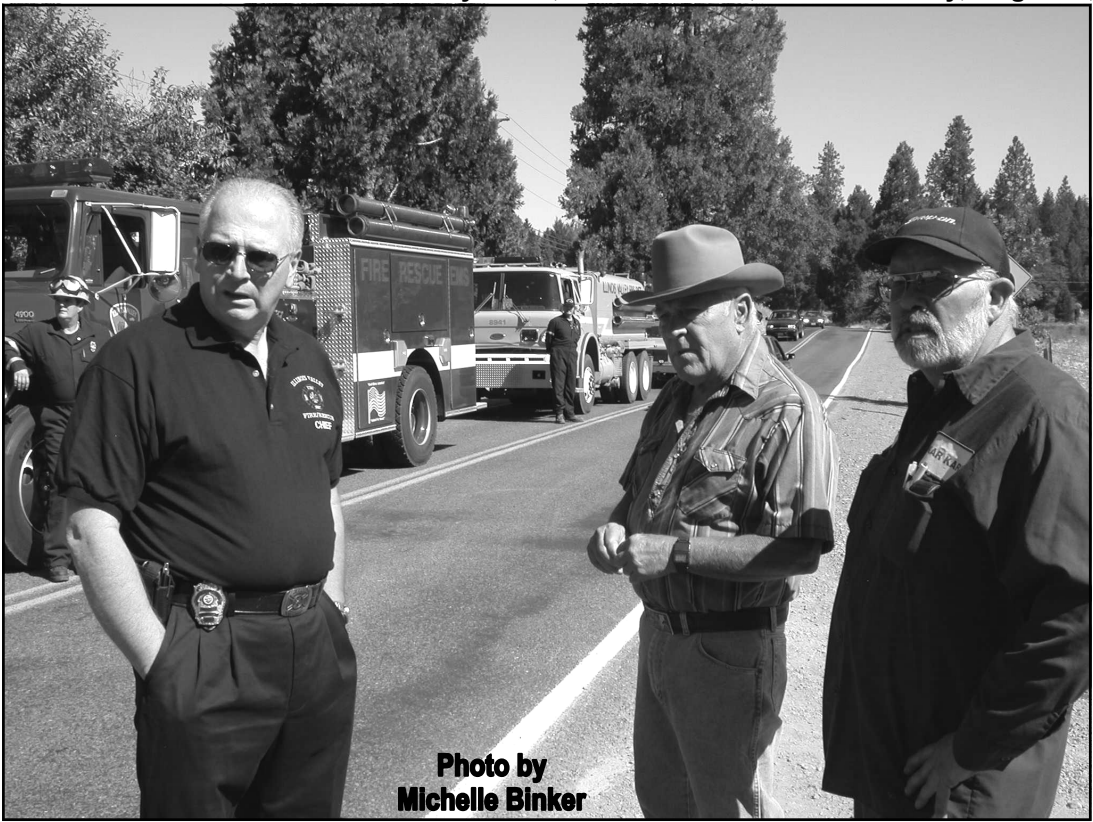


Photo by Michelle Binker

(From left) Next to two pieces of firefighting apparatus too heavy to cross, Illinois Valley Fire District Chief Harry Rich and fire district board members Larry Jones and Joe Malcolm discuss weight limitations on the lower Sucker Creek bridge which hamper the district’s response to incidents in the Holland Loop area.

Failing bridge stymies fire district

By MICHELLE BINKER
Staff Writer

Poised at the edge of a bridge east of the city of Cave Junction that they may not freely cross, four Illinois Valley Fire District rigs made a dramatic back-drop as Chief Harry Rich spelled out his dilemma.

“Holland-area residents are isolated by our limited ability to pass firefighting apparatus over this bridge,” Rich said, surveying the scene.

“I’m extremely concerned that the community is being held at considerable risk,” he said.

Vehicles weighing more than five tons (or 10,000 pounds) are prohibited from crossing the bridge. The district’s water tender (42,700 pounds) and engine (31,200 pounds) are prohibited from crossing. The district’s smaller brush rigs are required to cross at a maximum speed of 5 mph.

The difficulties stem from a decision by Josephine County Public Works Dept. to place a five-ton weight limit on an approximately 50-year-old

bridge crossing lower Sucker Creek on Holland Loop.

The county hired a private engineer to conduct a load-rating study, and based on his calculations, the weight limit was imposed, said Steve Hodge, county engineer.

The bridge is slated for replacement, but due to funding constraints, that may not occur until 2008.

“Oregon Dept of Transportation inspected the bridge about a year ago, but results were not available until after projects (identified in the Oregon Transportation System Plan, or TSP) had been assigned,” Hodge said.

The TSP allocated some \$300 billion for bridge projects statewide.

Hodge said that the county is applying for federal funding to come up with the estimated \$2.5 million required to replace the bridge.

Until then, a temporary fix could bring the bridge’s load limit back up to 80,000 pounds.

“By drilling into the cracked girders and inject-

ing epoxy, the bridge would be made strong enough to carry a regular load,” Hodge said. He hopes to have crews working on the fix by October.

In the meantime, and through the rest of fire season, Rich’s staff and volunteer firefighters must contend with the weight limit.

“If we have a major structure fire (in the Holland area), the time it will take us to transfer personnel and equipment from Station 1” (in Cave Junction) would increase “from three to 20 minutes,” Rich said.

While the district maintains firefighting apparatus at Station 4 on Holland Loop, most personnel would be traveling to an incident in rigs from Cave Junction.

“It’s not just the number of people, but the amount and type of equipment available to work an incident” that’s important, Rich explained.

“We’re highly susceptible to fire out here and they’ve tied my hands,” he said.

OLCC compliance checks result in fines

Six of 10 liquor businesses in Josephine County refused to sell alcohol to a minor during a recent compliance operation conducted by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC).

The businesses that sold in Grants Pass were

Oregon Outpost, Ray’s Food Place, Town & Country Market, and Murphy General Store.

Store clerks who sell are cited for a \$350 fine and face court. Licensees whose employees provide alcohol to the minor or fail to verify their age, face administrative sanctions including fines or license/permit suspensions.

Two inspectors and a minor volunteer conducted the compliance check as part of OLCC’s balancing enforcement program to reducing underage drinking.

The businesses that refused to sell in Cave Junction are Wild River Brewing & Pizza Co., and Carlos Restaurante.

In Grants Pass: Weaksu Inn, Why Not Market & Deli, Marco’s Pizza & Pasta House, and The O’Aces I.

During a compliance check, young people 18-20 attempt to buy alcohol from licensees or their employees to see if they are properly checking identification and obeying state law prohibiting alcohol sales to anyone under 21. The underage volunteers are supervised by OLCC inspectors or other law officers and carry their own legal ID.

The agency tests approximately 1,000 businesses with liquor licenses annually and a number of

police agencies also conduct compliance checks.

Pac Power gets high marks

Pacific Power shot to the top of the utility sector this year for exceptional performance in serving its large industrial electric customers.

That’s according to recently released results from an independent national industry survey conducted this spring by TQS Research of Atlanta, Ga.

The utility, which made a dramatic rise from 23rd to sixth in the 2002 survey and another rise to third last year, showed its best-in-class standing by taking the top spot in the nation in overall customer satisfaction this year.

Results show 86 percent of customers with at

least one megawatt of demand are “very satisfied” with the company.

Pacific Power’s rating places the company first in the nation in terms of customer satisfaction with electric providers, among 60 utilities surveyed. The survey also ranked the company first in the nation in satisfaction with energy efficiency programs and its account management abilities and second in power quality.

The company also moved up to third place in the nation in three areas: the value of its products and services, price and how well it handles customer contacts.

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Breastfeeding Awareness Walk
Friday, August 6, 10 a.m.—Walk begins at Alba Park in Medford
Friday, August 13, 10 a.m.—Walk begins at 6th and G Streets in Grants Pass

To learn more about the health benefits of breastfeeding, call:

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