

Alder Creek Water Co. has pair of hearings set

Two meetings are scheduled in the next month to determine the fate of the Alder Creek Water Company, according to federal and state water safety officials.

The five-system water company which serves the east slope of Mount Hood includes Sleepy Hollow, Wildwood Annex, Mount Hood Country Club, Barlow and Riverside.

Ron Hall, state Health Division investigator, and Larry Payette, Environmental Protection Agency water supply specialist, have been sampling water from the systems to determine whether they constitute a health hazard. The results of the testing will be presented to residents and then to the Health Division, Hall said.

The company, owned by Gerald "Red" Bennett, was placed under the control of Gene Ginther of Beaverton in October 1980 after two years of efforts by the EPA and Health Division to get Bennett to bring the systems up to minimum state health standards.

A study done by the EPA and the U.S. Public Health Service about a year ago revealed the presence of pathogens in the water. A microbiologist's study showed the contaminants had the potential to cause intermittent diarrhea or infections in people who are served by the water system.

Payette said the systems were poorly managed, were built with substandard materials and don't have a

large enough capacity.

He said Bennett was not adding enough chlorine and when the owner was asked to solve the problem, "we didn't get any real cooperation."

Payette added, "The systems are not up to minimum water works practices."

He said he has been collecting samples lately to use in the health hazard determination hearing that is scheduled for Oct. 13 at 10:30 a.m. at the Lions Club in Wemme.

"We're in the middle of an administrative process to determine whether the administrator of the Health Division should form a service district," Hall said.

"The county asked us to come in and conduct the study," he said. When the county did that it gave the Health Division Administrator, Kristine Gebbie, the authority to decide the issue, he said. Hall said the agency can form the district without a vote of the people or it can decide to leave the system as it is.

Hall said an open meeting with area residents is scheduled at 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 29 at the Lions Club in Wemme.

"This is a chance to get questions answered that wouldn't be part of the hearings process," he said.

Ginther said last Thursday "there are a lot of people who don't believe that the water's bad. I guess we'll just have to show them the tests."

His recommendation is to rebuild the whole system. "There are auto exhaust pipes and ship's pipe used in parts of the system," he said.

The only way that can be done, according to Ginther, is to form a county service district. "We only get \$20 a month from 200 hook-ups, and that's not enough to upgrade the systems," he said.

Marv Price, an employee of Ginther Engineering who handles a lot of the Alder Creek business, said the chances of getting a county service district are good. "We're in hopes that they find it a health hazard and form the district," he said.

Such a district would be administered by the Clackamas County Commissioners and county equipment would be used to work on the system.

Ginther said the reconstruction would probably be financed through bankruptcy bonds and Farm Home Administration funds.

Price said the FHA is the only way to get a subsidy for such projects. He said the FHA offers both grants and long-term, low-interest loans.

"We are trying to do what is best for people in the area. Formation of a public system is the only way they will ever have an adequate water system," he said.

"If God himself, or herself, was in charge of that water system, it still would be impossible to operate it on a private basis," Price said.

Sandy camera club forming

Sandy area camera buffs have an opportunity to get together, share tricks and learn some others' secrets when the Sandy Area Camera Club opens the door to its first meeting Tuesday, Sept. 22, at 7 p.m. at Sandy Union High School in Room 40.

Whether you love photography for its creativity, as a way to earn some extra money or just as a hobby, the camera club will try to meet your needs, according to Steve Wolf, one of its organizers.

Slide shows, movies, guest speakers and field trips will help members of the club enjoy their photography more. No matter what level of accomplishment you enjoy, SACC promises to offer something for everyone.

Among the topics which will be covered in meetings in the coming year are color and macro photography, print spotting and retouching, the zone system, and black and white darkroom. Fashion and portrait photography will also be discussed.

The club will honor its photographer of the year and offer cash and prizes in photo competitions. Public photo exhibitions will also be held, as well as exhibitions

with other camera clubs.

For more information about the Sandy Area Camera Club, call Wolf, 668-4536.



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