

Landfill problems unresolved, contractors given more time

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

What to do with the thousands of yards of fill material illegally dumped on the flood plains of the Zigzag and Sandy Rivers has still not been resolved, according to Walter Cate of the Code Compliance Section of Clackamas County Environmental Services.

Excavated dirt, rock and organic materials from the construction site of the new Hoodland Sewer Treatment plant at Welches and from the roadway of the newly-constructed Bright Avenue were illegally dumped at three sites in the Mt. Hood area. Contractors at these projects dumped an estimated 13,000 yards of fill in the flood plains of the Sandy River in Wemme. The fill site is located directly behind the Mt. Hood Lions Club and the Hoodland Construction Company.

Six hundred yards of fill was also dumped at the intersection of Grouse Lane and Highway 26 in Wemme, just west of the other site.

In Rhododendron, over 1200 yards of fill was dumped into the flood plains of the Zigzag River, behind the gas station and the Snowline Motel. Cate said that of all the sites, this one is the most serious due to its potential impact on the river's fisheries.

Cate had first begun investigating the illegal landfills last July. At that time, he said the county was going to hold the property owners—Steven Sweitzer, William Steinbarger and Ray Thornberg, all of Hoodland—responsible, and not the contractors who dumped the fill.

In a letter dated July 21, Cate had ordered each of the property owners bordering the flood plain sites to apply for the necessary permits within 30 days. He ordered each to discontinue filling and grading sites, and to either "restore the area to its original landscape," or challenge the interpretation of the zoning ordinance and ask for a staff decision on the matter.

At the Grouse Lane site, Thornberg, who is the owner of the property, was instructed to submit detailed plans for filling and grading the area.

Both Steinbarger and Sweitzer told Cate they would apply for the necessary permits and submit a detailed engineering plan on how they would rectify the situation. Thornberg said he would remove the fill and the county gave him until Sept. 1 to remove half the fill. The rest was to be removed by Oct. 1.

In October, Cate again investigated and discovered that the contractors had once again begun dumping at the two flood plain sites. Also, at that same time, he wrote Sweitzer and Steinbarger, who had not submitted the necessary plans and engineering reports, that he was referring their

cases to the Board of County Commissioners for action.

Last week, however, the situation changed once more and Cate said that his office is going to give

Sweitzer and Steinbarger more time to submit the necessary plans. Also, Thornberg, who had removed 300 of the 600 yards of fill from his property, elected to leave the remaining materials and

apply for a grading permit. With the rainy season upon us, Jay Massey, a fish biologist with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, said he is especially concerned about the Zigzag site.

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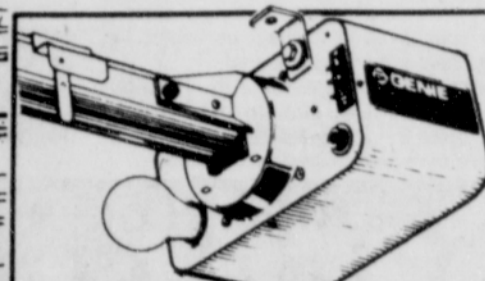
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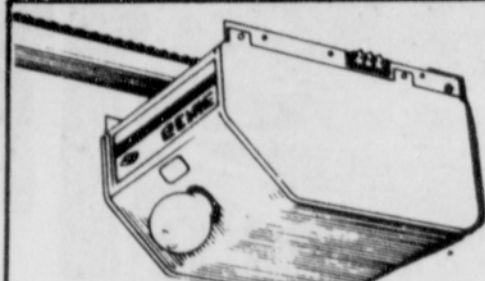
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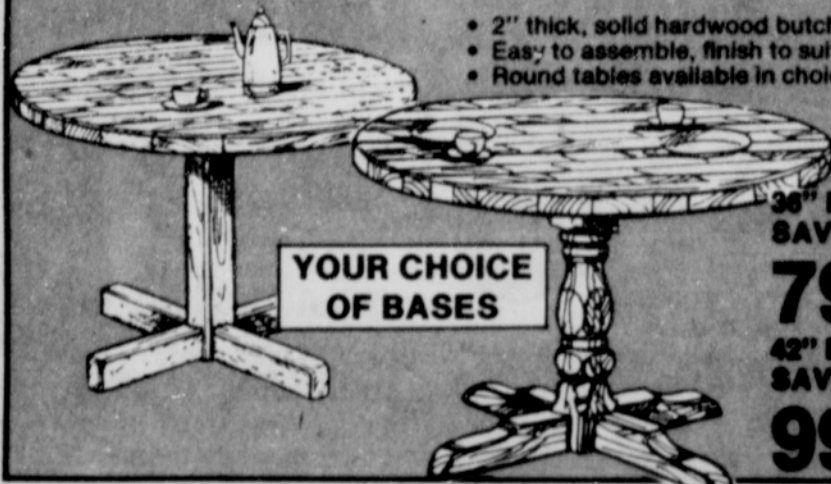
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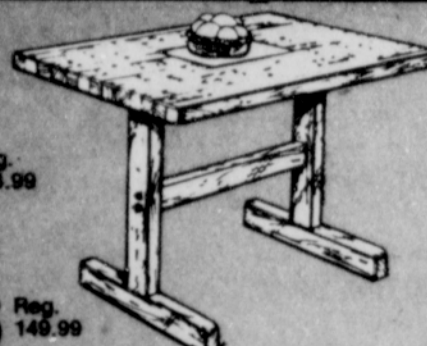
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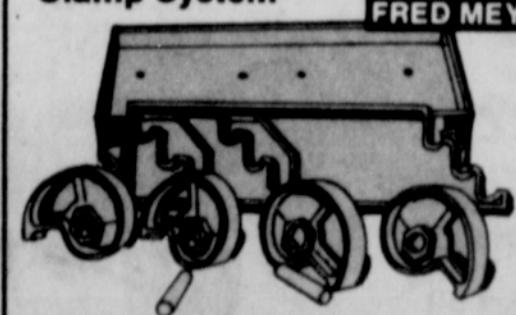
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WEDNESDAY, Dec. 2, 2 PM to 4 PM

WEDNESDAY, Dec. 2, 6 PM to 8 PM

WEDNESDAY, Dec. 2, 8 PM to 10 PM

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WEDNESDAY, Dec. 2, 2 AM to 4 AM

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