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Portland Rental Housing Study to Conduct Voluntary Inspections

A pilot study will begin in April to help assess the quality of rental housing in Portland. The Portland Rental Housing Study, a joint effort of the Citizens Advisory Committee for Quality Rental Housing and the City of Portland, will include voluntary inspections of single- and multi-family housing in five neighborhoods around the city.

"Maintaining a healthy housing stock is a top priority for the city," said Portland City Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury, who heads the Bureau of Buildings. "This study is a direct outcome of recommendations of the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) we adopted last year. It will give us a gauge of what the city's rental housing is like."

The CHAS recommendations led to the appointment of the Citizens Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from landlord groups and neighborhoods as well as citizens interested in housing issues. The committee is sending letters to about 800 landlords to inform them of the study and to ask for their voluntary participation. If a landlord chooses to take part, a city housing inspector will visit the property.

"The purpose of the study is to gather information about the condition of Portland's rental housing," said Greg

Carlson of the Bureau of Buildings. "The program is a real benefit to everyone involved. Inspectors will advise landlords about potential hazards and maintenance issues, landlords will get a written evaluation of their property and the city will get better information about how to better use limited resources."

If the inspector finds immediate threats to safety, such as exposed wiring, broken pipes or lack of heat, the owner will need to make needed repairs. Violations which are repaired within an agreed-upon period of time will not be subject to fines and will not be kept as a permanent record.

"The committee has worked hard to make sure the study is useful to everybody," said Sharif Abdullah, who chairs the Citizens Advisory Committee. "The combination of all our backgrounds, from landlords to neighborhood activists, helped us to hammer out a solid and workable plan."

Inspections will occur in portions of the Brentwood-Darlington, King, Northwest, Portsmouth and Sellwood neighborhoods. Carlson said the neighborhoods were chosen because they represent a cross-section of the city's housing.

The first inspections in the four-month study are scheduled for mid April.

Students Honored at PSU Reception

The Minority Affairs Council and the Office for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs at Portland State University host a reception for community members on Friday, April 24, from 4:30 to 7 p.m. in the Vanport Room (Room 338, Smith Center, 1825 S.W. Broadway). Invitations went out to representatives from the metropolitan area who share diverse urban population concerns.

The purpose of this reception is to share information about activities promoting diversity and crosscultural communication at PSU, to recognize the special efforts of two students in these activities, and to share information about upcoming events sponsored by PSU's student organizations.

The two students honored at the reception are **Indira Sampson-Dawson** and **Andres Vargas**.

Sampson-Dawson is a recipient of the Presidential Associates Community Service Scholarship for 1992-93; one of five students awarded \$2,000 for scholastic ability and community involvement. She is a board member with the American Indian Association of Portland, working on two sub-committees for youth and education. She also participates in the Oregon Indian Coalition on Post-Secondary Education, working toward the recruitment, retention and graduation of Indian students.

She is active in areas addressing women's issues and multicultural issues.

"My career goal of being involved with the educational system as a teacher and as an administrator is interconnected with my activities in the community and at PSU," says Sampson-Dawson. "It is important for me to make a difference in people's lives."

Andres Uribe Vargas is the first graduate of the Portland Teachers Program at Portland State. He finished a vocational training program at a community college but continued his studies in higher education until he was forced to drop out. Returning to school, he received his BA in ceramics in 1990 then entered the Graduate Teachers Education Program in Spring of 1991. As a teacher's aid, he worked in both Special Education-Severely Emotionally Disturbed and the Migrant Education Program.

He is finishing his Masters in Education and will continue studying toward a Masters in Special Education.

"I decided that the only way my son would get a good education was for me to be involved in education," says Vargas. "It's been a long road." Vargas hopes to continue his schooling, however, eventually getting a doctorate.

Kafoury Seeks Nomination for Housing Commission

Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury called for nominations from interested citizens to serve on a new county-wide Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC). The

Commission's charge is to improve the public sector housing delivery system and to provide the leadership to increase awareness of affordable housing issues.

Portland, Gresham and Multnomah County are adopting ordinances to appoint a citizen commission charged with coordinating housing policies and resources. HCDC will advise the jurisdictions on housing, supportive social services, and related community development needs, and link those needs to recommendations for policy, program and budget development.

HCDC will consist of 15 volunteers appointed by Portland (9), Gresham (3), and Multnomah County (3). Staff support to the Commission will be provided by City and County agencies.

The HCDC will have direct access to local government on issues of policy development, budget recommendations, and program coordination for public/private housing initiatives. Commissioner Kafoury stressed the importance of the new Commission. "We need some dedicated and capable citizens who are dedicated to solving local affordable housing problems," she said.

The HCDC proposal is based on a major recommendation of the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) that was adopted by the cities of Portland, Gresham and Multnomah County in December, 1991. The CHAS, a federally-required document, was developed by over 100 local citizens to guide affordable housing development and supportive social services in the county for the next five years.

Nominations for the commission are due May 12. Appointments will be made in early June and the Commission is expected to begin work in July, 1992. If you are interested in finding out more about the Housing and Community Development Commission, contact the Bureau of Community Development, City of Portland, 808 S.W. Third Ave., Suite 600, Portland, OR 97204, phone: 823-2375.

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Philip Morris Doesn't Want Kids To Smoke

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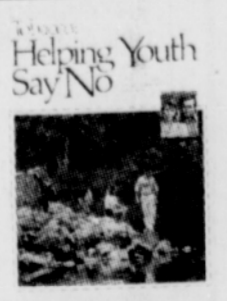
That's why the tobacco industry is offering a booklet aimed at helping parents meet the challenge of providing their children with the tools to resist peer influence. The booklet, "Tobacco: Helping Youth Say No," is

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Primary Election Voters' Pamphlet Produced Faster, Less Expensively

The 1992 Primary Election Voters' Pamphlet will arrive in Oregon homes before the twenty-day voter registration deadline has passed, Secretary of State Phil Keisling announced today.

"In the past, voters' pamphlets have arrived in the mail after the deadline to register to vote," Secretary Keisling said. "We've worked hard to get this pamphlet to Oregonians before the deadline, so that after having seen it, they'd have time to register." Voters' pamphlets will arrive at Oregon residents' homes between April 18 and 25. The deadline to register to vote in the May 19 primary election is April 28.

Secretary Keisling also said that the Elections Division saved roughly \$100,000 on budgeted publication and mailing costs. "By using smaller, lighter paper and presorting pamphlets by mail route, we were able to cut costs by \$100,000," Secretary Keisling said.

Secretary Keisling exhibited the Primary Election Voters' Pamphlet on April 14 at Oregon Lithoprint in McMinnville, where the pamphlet is being printed.