

# HOUSING

The  
Portland  
Observer

## Portland Residents Unveil Action Plan

North Portland residents are working with Housing Our Families to transform their community. On Monday, February 26, they will hold a neighborhood forum to unveil an Action Plan for 1996. The Action Plan includes over 14 projects to be implemented over the course of 1996 by neighborhood residents and community or-

ganizations.

Since 1994, Housing Our Families has been working with residents of North Portland's Boise Neighborhood on a series of projects to improve the livability of the community.

These projects have included a neighborhood Foot Patrol, a series of neighborhood clean-ups, a tutoring

program, and a neighborhood Festival. Projects are coordinated by community members, and include volunteers from all over the Tri-County area.

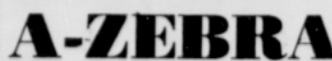
At this meeting, as neighborhood residents discuss the 1996 Action Plan, meeting participants will state how they will contribute to another successful year.

## Tenants' Rights

Learn your rights as a renter at Oregon Housing NOW!'s tenant forum. The forum will include a legal overview of the Landlord/Tenant Law in Oregon and a discussion on how tenants can collectively act to strengthen their rights as renters. This is a rare opportunity to learn valuable legal information.

This event will be held Thursday March 7th, 7:00 pm, at the Inner City Lutheran Ministries, 4219 NE MLK Jr. Bv. (Bus #6). This event is free, wheelchair accessible, and childcare will be available at no cost.


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## Carbon Monoxide Detectors Can Save Lives

With the end of the home heating season still two months away, carbon monoxide poisoning remains a threat in Oregon. Unfortunately, it is a threat some Oregonians may not appreciate until it's too late.

An industry resource group estimates that carbon monoxide poisoning kill 1,500 people a year, representing fully half of the fatal poisoning in the United States. But only 19 percent of Americans believe that in their otherwise normal-looking homes, an invisible killer could be present.

Just last week, Portland General Electric's Joann Woods fielded a customer service call from a Beaverton woman whose carbon monoxide detector was going off. Woods said she instructed the woman to open windows and doors to let in fresh air. After following Woods' instructions, the alarm shut off.

"She thought something was wrong with the detector. What she forgot about was that she had let her

car warm up in the garage earlier. She didn't realize that carbon monoxide from the garage was seeping into her house," Woods said.

A colorless, odorless gas, carbon monoxide can accumulate to toxic levels without occupants even knowing it. Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning resemble flu, causing headaches, fatigue, nausea and dizziness. Prolonged exposure can render victims unconscious and eventually can lead to death.

In December's wind storm, a Hillsboro family nearly died of carbon monoxide poisoning from burning a charcoal barbecue grill in their house for heat after they lost power. The 9-1-1 dispatcher who took the emergency call instructed the family to open all windows and get to an open doorway.

When paramedics arrived, they found the family lying unconscious on the living room floor near the front door.

The main source of carbon mon-

oxide in homes is faulty or improperly installed appliances that operate on combustible fuel, like propane, gas, oil, coal or wood. Industry experts estimate that 63 percent of American homes are equipped with fireplaces.

"Carbon monoxide is a particular threat here in Oregon, since so many people use wood-burning stoves and fireplaces for heat," said Nancy Miller, PGE's home safety product manager.

Oregon's stringent building codes also can contribute to carbon monoxide problems, Miller said. While the extra insulation and sealing required by state codes minimize drafts, these "tight" homes also can trap carbon monoxide. Chicago already mandates carbon monoxide detectors in homes. Several states, including Washington, are considering similar legislation.

"In time, carbon monoxide detectors will take their place beside smoke detectors in every home," Miller said.

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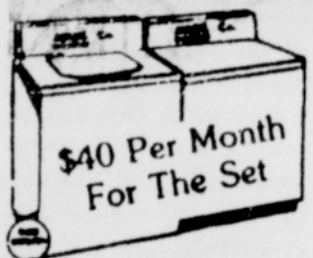
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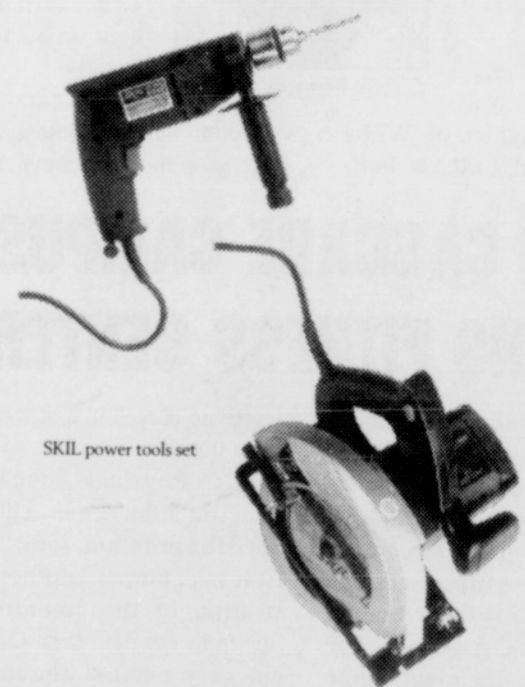
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