

# H O U S I N G The Portland Observer

## Save on home weatherization

Residential heating oil customers have just one more month to take advantage of a special offer from the Oregon Office of Energy to save even more money on home weatherization.

The Oregon Office of Energy's State Home Oil Weatherization (SHOW) program offers free, one-time, home energy audits and cash incentives to help improve home energy efficiency. Homeowners and renters who add insulation or a new high efficiency burner by October 1st can receive an extra \$100.

Through the free home energy audit, homeowners and renters can learn what they can do to save the most energy and money.

Trained energy specialists will check the insulation in the attic, the walls, and the floors, inspect the windows and perform a renters understand which actions make the most sense for them.

As a special incentive, the SHOW program is offering all households that heat with oil cash rebates of 25 percent of the cost of insulation or a new high efficiency flame retention burner. Funding for the rebates is limited and will be available with no maximum income limit on a first-come, first-served basis until the money is gone.

The maximum rebate is \$400.00, but if the work is complete before October 1st, customers can receive

an extra \$100.00. Most customers wait until after the cold weather comes to schedule their energy audits and to have work done, which means they pay more than they need to for home heating.

By having the work done before the heating season begins, customers can save even more. Low-interest loans are also available to pay for those measures and for new, energy saving windows or high efficiency replacement oil furnaces.

The loans are offered by participating lenders throughout the state at 6.5 percent interest to people who heat their home with oil.

"Adding insulation before the winter begins makes sense."

## Build to suit

IRIS USA Inc., the American subsidiary of IRIS OHYAMA Inc., Japan's largest manufacturer of plastic consumer products, has purchased a 23-acre site and is building a 381,000 square-foot production and distribution facility, which they will own in the Lake View Corporate Park in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin.

The transaction, with a total estimate value of nearly \$13.6 million, was arranged by Dennis Hiffman, president of Hiffman Shaffer Associates/New America Network, Chicago.

Lake View Corporate Park is located midway between Chicago and Milwaukee. "A primary factor in IRIS selecting the site was its convenience

to Interstate 94 and to the Union Pacific Railroad, making it easier for the company to bring in large shipments of plastic pellets that are used in making plastic products," said Mr. Hiffman.

The facility is scheduled to open in the last quarter of 1996 and will employ nearly 80 people. Products to be manufactured at the site include plastic storage containers, shelving units, and floral pots and containers. In addition, IRIS USA will base its United States corporate headquarters there, said Mr. Hiffman.

The Wisconsin plant will be IRIS USA's second American facility. A 160,000 square-foot plant opened in Stockton, California in January 1996.

## Looking for trends, insight

Bob Arcand, chairman and CEO of The Arcand Company, recently was appointed to the influential editorial advisory board of *Housing and Development Reporter*.

Published in Washington D.C., the housing trade magazine reports on current legislative actions and judicial opinions affecting housing, community development, real estate business, finance and taxation.

The board, comprised of leaders in the housing industry, meets quarterly to discuss key housing topics and industry trends, provide insight into current industry activities, and review the direction of

## World's largest solar building

The Natatorium is not only a beautiful location for some of the Olympics' most breathtaking events, it also is the world's largest solar building.

Solar energy is providing electricity for the building and is responsible for heating and cooling the water.

It's quite fitting that solar power is being harnessed for the Atlanta Games, which have been characterized by high temperatures. However, even on overcast days, solar power is proving its value to hundreds of athletes and thousands of spectators.

The 275 solar panels keep the pool temperature at a constant 26 degrees C/79 degrees F (plus or

minus 1 degree) the temperature mandated by the rules of competition for international swimming events. Water is pumped through the solar heating system, which heats the water using free energy from the sun during the day.

At night, the system can be operated to radiate heat into the night sky, thereby cooling the water to the appropriate temperature for the next day's events.

The 2,800 photovoltaic panels, incorporated into the striking architecture of the building, produce electricity which is fed into Atlanta's utility grid, thereby making a significant contribution to overall energy production and reducing the cost of electricity for the Natatorium by about

30 percent. PV (photovoltaic — commonly called solar electric) panels generate power by converting the light of the sun directly into an electrical current.

Each panel produces 120 watts of electricity.

The total capacity of the Natatorium panels is 344 kilowatts — enough power for 40 homes.

There are several other solar and energy efficient projects throughout the Olympic village and Atlanta that were put in place through a cooperative agreement between the Department of Energy and a number of private companies represented by the Solar Energy Industries Association and the Alliance to Save Energy.

## Housing advocates needed

Are you concerned about the future of low and moderate income housing for the elderly?

Do you have something to say about the shortage of low-income rental units?

Are you interested in issues of safety and security for the elderly tenants of subsidized housing?

If so, you need to participate in the Housing Task Force.

People over the age of 60—elders of all races and backgrounds, and those with disabilities are needed to serve on the Housing Task Force of the Portland/Multnomah Commission of Aging (PMCoA). PMCoA's mission is to improve the quality of

life for our community's elders.

At the heart of this mission is the urgent need to advocate on a variety of housing problems faced by low and moderate income elders.

This one year commitment will be exciting, challenging, and fulfilling. You will make new friends as you advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves.

The Housing Task Force meets on the second Monday of every month from 2:00pm to 4:00pm in the downtown area, accessible by public transportation.

For more information and an application packet, call Karyllyn Echols at PMCoA at (503) 823-5269.

## Habitat for Humanity

Home Shopping Network, Inc. announced this week that it has joined forces with Habitat for Humanity International.

Home Shopping, in conjunction with its first ever HomeDay event, will build a house with Habitat for Humanity International.

The construction of the house will be broadcast on Sunday, September 15 from noon until midnight EDT.

Home Shopping Network viewers will be able to shop for items for their own home while watching the construction of the Habitat/Home Shopping Network house. HomeDay's 12 hours of programming will offer the largest variety of products

for the home ever presented in a single programming day.

The products will be presented in a room by room format. Some segments will be broadcast from the homes of Home Shopping Network's popular show hosts.

Habitat for Humanity, a non-profit organization, works in partnership with people in need to build affordable housing.

The houses are then sold to those in need at no profit and with no interest charged. Habitat for Humanity is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year by building its 50,000th house.

## When Kemp headed HUD

Jack Kemp talked a better game than he played when he headed the Housing and Urban Development Department, his successor Henry Cisneros said Tuesday.

Cisneros told reporters that Kemp, selected by Republican presidential challenger Bob Dole as his running mate, cleaned up corruption in the vast agency and brought lots of enthusiasm to the job, but also "spent a lot of time sort of raising expectations and speaking about programs that never came to fruition."

Kemp was housing secretary under President George Bush from 1989 to 1993. Cisneros, the former mayor of San Antonio, replaced him when President Clinton took office.

Cisneros said Kemp made hundreds of speeches pushing the idea of selling public housing developments to the residents, "but at the end of the day, one development in the whole United States, in Washington, D.C., was sold."

"We've tried to take those same concepts and make them real so I understand how slow it was, but most Americans probably believe that he was doing this on a massive scale. It just didn't prove to be true," Cisneros said.

He said Kemp's addition to the Republican ticket would bring "a broader vision than the Dole vision" to the debate on urban issues.

## Protect your landscape

Attack landscape weeds this fall. Don't let them grow through the winter or they will be a big problem the following spring, according to Ray McNeilan, home horticulturist with the Oregon State University Extension Service.

"Many landscape weeds are easier to kill now, before their root systems spread and become well-established," said McNeilan.

An alternative to hand weeding is the use of a pre-emergent herbicide. However, before buying any pre-emergent herbicide materials, check the product label to be sure the herbicide is safe to use around woody or herbaceous plants.

For lawns, McNeilan recommends a treatment with a weed and feed combination or hormone type broadleaf weed killer sprays. Lawn weeds, like weeds in flower and shrub beds, will be easier to kill now before their root systems become better established. Lawn weed killer will control many weeds that will germinate this fall as well as those that are now thriving.

"And the fertilizer in weed and feed combinations will give the lawn a final boost to keep it looking healthy through the winter," McNeilan said.

## Pruning landscape plants

By BOB ROST

Although spring is the best pruning time, a light fall pruning is beneficial to some shrubs and trees.

"Some plants need preparation for the winter, especially those with an abundance of twiggy growth," said Ray McNeilan, home horticulturist with the Oregon State University Extension Service. "High winter winds may damage these plants if they aren't pruned down to a more compact size."

In addition to pruning lighter growth, prune the crossing growth in the interior of the plant, as well as dead or diseased wood.

The removal and disposal of diseased wood after pruning is important.

Otherwise fungus diseases on the wood will overwinter and continue to be a problem next spring, McNeilan said.

McNeilan emphasized that fall pruning should be light. Heavy pruning of shrubs and other plants is a spring activity.

## Scraping the skies

Jutting far out of the skyline of Germany's financial capital, the tallest office building in Europe is rapidly nearing completion and looks set to add some flair to Frankfurt's ordinary-looking centre.

Built to a revolutionary design by eminent architect Norman Foster, its facade will be adorned by

hanging gardens at dizzying heights containing olive trees and bamboo bushes.

The skyscraper will serve as the new headquarters of Commerzbank AG, Germany's third largest bank, and will have a height of 298.74 metres (980 ft) including a 40-metre (131 ft) aerial.

## HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

### The Great Clean-Up Of '96 — Righting Record Storm Damage

(NAPS)—Coast-to-coast blizzards and late-winter flooding have caused the Federal government to issue more disaster declarations already this year than in all of 1995. Coupled with new laws that prohibit homeowners from sending leaves and downed branches to public landfills, the backyard aftermath of the Great Blizzard of '96 has folks scrambling to recycle their yard debris.

"The losses of winter are the homeowner's gain," notes Mike McGrath, editor-in-chief of *Organic Gardening* magazine. McGrath advises homeowners to collect, shred, and compost yard debris into "garden gold."

"It is foolish to throw away grass clippings and leaves," McGrath explains, "and then go to a store and buy fertilizer and mulch." So-called yard waste, says McGrath, is just a few steps away from becoming "better fertilizer and mulch than you can buy anywhere."

The key, McGrath reports, is to learn the basic recipes for good, clean compost. Done correctly, converting volumes of yard debris into an enriched soil conditioner takes as little as two weeks.

The first step, however, is collecting the debris.

**Get light on your lawn.** "Sweep up the lawn first," advises Tim Gilbert of The Patriot Company, manufacturers of chipping, shredding and vacuuming machines. "Get ground clutter off the turf, so that sun and air can reach the grass."

Patriot makes a machine to speed lawn clean-up, a combination chipper blower vacuum. Resembling a lawn mower, it vacuums leaves as you walk behind it, shredding and depositing them neatly into a collection bag. The built-in chopper converts pruned branches into coin-sized landscap-



Vacuum and shred yard debris to break down volume and accelerate composting.

per's chips. Then, says Gilbert, that newly made mulch is ready to prevent—or smother—weeds.

**Turn down the volume.** "The early snow last fall trapped a lot of leaves on people's lawns," notes Jean Nordgren of The Toro Company. Reducing the sheer volume of debris, according to Nordgren, is a key concern among homeowners—especially those with urban lots or limited space.

To break down the volume, Nordgren says an electric blower-vac with a special vacuum mode chops up fallen leaves as it picks them up. Cutters reduce leaves tenfold, making them ideal for composting. Toro also makes compost bins, which according to Nordgren, encourage the proper mix of moisture, air and temperature, promoting faster compost-making.

**Free information.** Homeowners seeking advice on composting and yard clean-up should contact the Yard Waste Hotline toll-free at (888) 798-CHIP (2447) for a free brochure.

**RENT YOUR NEXT WASHER & DRYER**  
FROM THE HOME LAUNDRY EQUIPMENT SPECIALISTS

With option to buy. This Coupon Good For  
**\$10 Off**  
DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION FEE

**rental Co.**  
washer

**231-7413**  
1657 S. E. TACOMA ST.

**WILLIAMS LANDSCAPING**  
**289-0841**  
Any & All Landscape needs!

Specializing in residential & commercial:  
**Lawns & scrubs**  
**Gardens**  
**Tilling**  
**Edging**  
**Tree Trimming**

Hauling Available at Reasonable rates  
Call-Let us give you a "Quote"

**•SATISFACTION GUARANTEED•**

**Dad's Oil Service**

Speedy Service  
Friendly  
Call For Quote

**VISA** **MasterCard**

heating oils  
Best Cash Prices  
104 NE Russel  
Portland, OR 97212  
**282-5111**