

HOUSING

The
Portland
Observer

Governor Urges Support for Oregon HEAT

Governor John Kitzhaber visited the home of Mrs. Valerie Fuqua today to call attention to Oregon HEAT, a nonprofit organization that provides emergency energy assistance for low-income households during the heating season.

"They often must choose between paying for heat and paying for food, medicine or some other basic necessity," the Governor said. "Some simply turn off the heat - or keep it very low - and endure the cold."

"Oregon HEAT will provide bill assistance for 5,000 families this year so they can keep their homes warm."

Oregon HEAT is funded by and serves the customers of Portland

General Electric, Pacific Power and the city of Milton-Freewater. The maximum level of assistance is \$125 a year per household. They must pay some amount toward their overdue bills and are encouraged to take some action to reduce energy bills -- insulating the water heater or installing water-saving showerheads, for example.

"By improving the energy efficiency of their home and giving them a little help to pay overdue energy bills, they usually can reduce their dependence on energy assistance," said Jay Formick, director of Oregon HEAT.

Oregon HEAT also serves households who heat with oil. The organi-

zation empties oil from tanks being decommissioned -- saving the homeowners a pumping fee -- and delivers the oiled to people who need it.

The largest and fastest-growing population that Oregon HEAT serves are single parents with two or more children -- and a job -- who are in crisis because of an illness or an accident or because their employer cut back their work hours.

Many clients are seniors who are on a fixed income and can't afford to cut back on medication or other expenses. "When we find them," Formick said, "they're living in a cold house."

Oregon HEAT also provides



PGE Energy Expert Mel Edridge shows Gov. John Kitzhaber that saving money on your heating bill can be as simple as insulating pipes under the kitchen sink.



PGE Energy Expert Mel Edridge teaches Valerie Fugua, a low-income Salem resident, how to save money on her heating bill this winter by checking the seals on her refrigerator. Mel went room to room in Valerie's home showing her a variety of energy saving tips, from wrapping pipes to sealing windows.

emergency energy assistance to people with disabilities, many of whom are unable to work a living-wage job. "They often do not have family to help out or any resources other than the community social service network," Formick said.

Because the community action agencies that distribute funds for Oregon HEAT also provide weatherization services for people with low incomes, many get signed up for weatherization too, Formick said. But demand for weatherization services far outstrips funding.

Two out of three low-income households in Oregon -- some 150,000 -- live in unweatherized homes, and as much as a third of the

heat they pay for is lost through holes and cracks and uninsulated walls, floors and attics.

Even through many households will still need help paying their heating bills if their homes are weatherized, less heat and money will be wasted. They can use the money weatherization saves to pay for other necessities.

Portland General Electric took the first steps toward weatherizing the Fuquas' home during the Governor's visit to show how efficiency improvements reduce heating bills. The event today was one of several activities carried out by Portland General Electric, the Oregon Office of Energy, NW Natu-

ral, Pacific Power and the Portland Energy Office to raise awareness of home energy issues during October, national Energy Awareness Month.

Contributions to Oregon HEAT are tax-deductible. Portland General Electric and Pacific Power customers will get a donation envelope with next month's bill. Donations may be sent to P.O. Box 127, Tualatin, OR 97062.

Community action agencies and the Salvation Army will begin accepting applications for emergency energy assistance the first week of January. For more information, call Oregon HEAT at (503) 612-3790.

Network supports affordable housing

Network for Oregon Affordable Housing (NOAH) announced that it has selected six affordable housing projects in Oregon as recipients of its new Resident Services Funding Program. Under the program, NOAH provides a reduced interest rate on selected permanent mortgage loans allowing the owners of the affordable housing to use the savings to provide a variety of supportive services to residents.

The selected projects are Madras Family Housing Center, sponsored by Central Oregon Community Action Agency Network; Somerville Place in Harrisburg, sponsored by Linn County Affordable Housing; Myrtle Terrace in Myrtle

Creek, sponsored by Umpqua Community Development Corporation; Otessa Place in Northeast Portland, sponsored by Sabin Community Development Corporation; West Place in The Dalles, sponsored by Columbia Cascade Housing Corporation; and Hailey Place in Pendleton, sponsored by LINK Community Development Corporation.

NOAH created the Program in recognition of the importance of service-enriched housing to lower income families. "Housing for lower-income families means more than just providing shelter," noted Don Johnson, NOAH Board Chairman and Senior Vice President in US Bank's Commercial Real Estate Group. "It means creating places where people

are supported in their efforts to build stable lives for themselves and their children. That requires making the resources that they may need as accessible as possible. Our Resident Services Funding Program provides the funding to put those resources directly on-site, literally within walking distance of the families who need them."

The Resident Services Funding Program is a unique commitment by the financial community to fund more than the physical housing development. The banking community generally would not subsidize community service programs, but working through NOAH, the banking industry can provide a valuable additional service.

According to Gustavo Wilson, Community Services Administrator for Oregon Housing and Community Services Department, "This is an excellent example of the continuing public-private partnerships that make Oregon a national leader in creating the kinds of affordable housing and resident services that effectively change the lives of lower income Oregonians."

NOAH is a non-profit consortium of nineteen Oregon financial institutions providing permanent mortgage financing for multi-family affordable housing across the state. Since inception in 1990, NOAH has provided \$53 million in financing for the development of 2200 affordable apartments.

Peak Investments "Owner Financing"

Peak Investments, a mortgage investment brokerage which specializes in structuring and buying privately held real estate notes, announces the opening of its new office in Beaverton. This may be of great interest to developers and other property sellers in need of creative financing to close sales.

Strong lending guidelines make it difficult for many people to qualify for a traditional home loan, particularly the self-employed. This limits the number of potential buyers, often resulting in offers far below the appraised property value. Peak Investments can show a seller how to broaden their market by

offering "owner financing." With no fee or contract required, sellers are advised on how to structure a note with a buyer, which is typically purchased by Peak Investments at the same closing table where the real estate transaction takes place. This innovative concept allows sellers to close quickly on their property and gives unqualified buyers a chance at home ownership. And everyone saves big on closing costs.

Peak Investments is also interested in existing mortgage paper. For more detailed information please call (503) 649-PEAK or fax 848-6271.

2% Down May Boost Home-Buying Sales

"House-buying should get a major boost from the recent T.V. and radio announcement of the 2% only down payment needed to purchase a house in today's market," says Alfred Porter, a real estate consultant and investor, 8306 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 488, Beverly Hills, CA 90211.

He provides a "free" report which includes information about the 2% down only payment to

assist first time home buyers.

"The mention of 2% down is only window dressing," he continues.

"Because the U.S. Government has been giving the low to moderate income families assistance in home-buying for ages. All previous announcements just fell on death ears.

We have short-term memories. The average person who lived in

the 60s and in the early 70s doesn't remember anything about the \$1 homes that were available nor about the great move-on-house and units projects."

Porter advises all to write for his special report that guides one to the government sources of funding, mortgages and just good old general information. "We give updated information, or direct you to great resources and

sources where you may be able to obtain the needed help and guidance in purchasing your home," says Porter.

"Many of the properties from the government today are geared toward the first time home-buyer," notes Porter.

"There are numerous houses and income units available at remarkable and surprisingly low prices," says Porter.

Make your oil heat home comfortable

This is your last chance to make your oil heated home more comfortable and affordable this winter and win free heating oil for a year.

The Oregon Office of Energy's State Home Oil Weatherization (SHOW) program offers free home energy audits, free furnace efficiency test, and cash incentives to help Oregonians who heat with oil save on their home heating bills.

Through the free home energy audit, homeowners and renters can

learn what they can do to save the most money. Trained energy specialists will check the insulation in the attic, walls, and floors, inspect the windows and perform a furnace efficiency test. A written energy analysis helps the homeowners and renters understand which actions make the most sense for them.

The SHOW program offers all households that heat with oil cash rebates of 25 percent of the cost of insulation or of a new high efficiency

flame retention oil 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.

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 Oregonians

who heat their homes with oil.

Anyone who has not had an energy audit and requests one for their oil heated home by October 31st will be entered in a drawing for free heating oil for a year, up to 500 gallons. Only Oregon customers are eligible and only for one free home energy audit. If you have not taken advantage of this service, now is the time to call SHOW toll-free at 1-800-452-8660 to schedule your free home energy audit. Let us show you how you can save.

Central City Concern Awarded Grant for New Housing

Central City Concern was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Lorene Sails Higgins Charitable Trust for their latest development project, the Rose Wood Apartments.

Central City Concern will remove a motel on 48th and NE Sandy Blvd.

for 35 units of housing for people with low or no income living with HIV/AIDS. The building will open in early 1998.

Richard L. Harris, Executive Director of Central City Concern, was thrilled with the Trust's sup-

port. "It is gratifying to know that in our community, a project like the Rose Wood Apartments receives so much public and private support.

Partnerships with organiza-

tions like the Lorene Sails Higgins Charitable Trust really make a difference in the quality of life for all Oregonians."

The Lorene Sails Higgins Charitable Trust was established in 1968 for broad charitable purposes in the service of Oregonians.

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