

\$3.75B Phen-Fen Drug Settlement

About 6 million people took the drug combination.

NEW YORK - American Home Products has agreed to pay \$3.75 billion to settle thousands of lawsuits by patients claiming health problems due to the company's once popular fen-phen diet drug, the company announced today.

The settlement will include money to pay patients who say they were injured by the drugs and for future medical monitoring for those who are still healthy. Pending a judge's approval, initial payments will begin later this year.

American Home made fenfluramine, the "fen" in the fen-phen combination, and gave the drug a brand name of Pondimin. It also made Redux, a chemical cousin. In September 1997, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration pushed for their withdrawal after a Mayo Clinic study linked the fen-phen combination to potentially fatal heart valve damage.

The settlement is open to anyone who used Pondimin or Redux in the United States, whether or not they filed suit,

American Home said.

Shares of American Home rose \$3.12 1/2, or 7 percent, to \$48.25.

About 4,100 suits have been filed against American Home over the drug, making it one of the largest product liability cases ever.

About 6 million people took the drug combination.

The settlement terms call for payments to continue for about 16 years.

Payments to be made during the next two years are antici-

pated to total \$1.85 billion.

A toll-free telephone number (800-386-2070) has been established to provide information on the settlement.

The settlement covers all claims except for patients who say they suffer from primary pulmonary hypertension, a rare but serious lung disorder.

The settlement includes a \$1 billion fund to pay for medical monitoring and \$2.55 billion fund to pay for injuries and \$200 million in plaintiffs attorney fees.

Leaf program aims to keep drains clear

Local residents are asked to use coupons for free leaf disposal rather than raking leaves into the streets. Keeping leaves out of the street will help with flood control this fall.

With a coupon, City of Vancouver and Clark County residents can drop off leaves free of charge at H & H Wood Recyclers, 8401 NE 117th Ave, and West Van Materials Recovery Center, 6601 NW Old Lower River Road, any business day through December 15. H & H is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, closed Sunday. Coupons for free leaf recycling were included in the September/October City of Vancouver water/sewer bills and Hazel Dell Sewer District bills, the October Curbside Recycling newsletter, the October issue of Clark County's "656 Square" and in many neighborhood newsletters.

For additional coupons, call 397-6118, ext. 4352 or 696-8186. The program is for leaves only - yard debris or mixed loads will be charged the regular rate.

UPS Ends Some Gun Deliveries Will Reduce Risk of Firearms Being Stolen

ALLENTOWN, Pa. - United Parcel Service has decided to stop delivering handguns through its ground service, sending gunmakers scrambling to find alternatives to the world's largest package distribution company, The Morning Call reported today.

Atlanta-based UPS - which handles the vast majority of firearms shipments - is changing its policy beginning Monday to reduce the risk of guns being stolen en route.

"We're trying to protect ourselves from employees stealing and criminals stealing," UPS spokesman Bob Godlewski said.

Handgun shipments have been stolen in the past, Godlewski said, although he would not say how many.

The company will continue to ship handguns by overnight air service, since such deliveries involve less risk than ground shipments that can take up to six days, Godlewski said.

Overnight delivery, however, costs about \$25 more per gun - or about four times as much for a complete shipment, said Jim Chambers, executive director of the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute.

"That's what we're trying to come to grips with. We're look-

ing for alternative methods," Chambers said.

UPS will continue to ship long guns, rifles and shotguns by ground. Godlewski said handguns are more of a target for criminals.

Each business day, Atlanta-based UPS delivers 12 million packages via its trademark brown trucks and brown-uniformed employees. UPS handles up to 75 percent of guns sent from manufacturers to distributors and nearly all firearms shipped from distributors to dealers, Chambers said.

The U.S. Postal Service also will not send handguns by ground

shipment, said an employee at the service's nationwide Postal Answer Line.

A small gun dealer in Walnutport, Pa., said the UPS policy change would hurt his business.

"It's going to kill me," said Paul Keifer, owner of Keifer's Gun Shop.

Joe Koehler, owner of Eagle Arms Sport Shop near Breinigsville, said he supported the change if it helps keep guns off the street.

"So it costs a little more," Koehler said. "I think it's a non-issue. It's their policy. Maybe one day they'll say they won't ship any guns."

NEWS BRIEF'S Superintendent Rejects Drug Tests

PORTLAND - The superintendent of Portland schools says he doesn't see any reason to make teachers take drug tests. Superintendent Ben Canada says he won't drug test teachers because he feels it's demeaning. But he says if the district ever has a problem with drugs, he's confident teachers wouldn't mind being tested to help solve the problem.

Poverty Rate Up In Oregon


The Census Bureau says Oregon's poverty rate went up to more than 13 percent in 1997 and 98. It was about eleven-and-a-half percent the year before that. The median household income in the state was just under 38-and-a-half-thousand dollars in 1997-98. That's up slightly from two years ago.

Oregon Gets HUD Money

Oregon is getting nine-point-six-million-dollars from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. The money is supposed to help with low income housing by giving vouchers out for as much as 70-percent of a person's monthly rent. The grant will help two-thousand families in Oregon with housing.

Benefits for Victims

If you quit your job in Oregon to escape domestic violence, you can qualify for unemployment benefits. The state changed its rules to give victims the time and flexibility to find a new job where they can't be tracked down by the people who were abusing them. Before the rule change, domestic violence victims could get unemployment benefits on a case-by-case basis if they called the state for help. But the guidelines were never set out in writing, and most workers never knew about the benefits. The new rules require that victims must try other options to escape abusers before they quit their jobs, including transfers or asking for a restraining order against the abuser.



THE CATLIN GABEL SCHOOL

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Rummage Sale "Cast offs" become a thriving financial Aid Program

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WHERE: Portland Expo Center exit 306B I-5 North near delta park. Hall D

What is the Rummage Sale? The Annual Catlin Gabel Rummage Sale is one of the largest rummage sales in the world. We fill 60,000 square feet at the Portland Expo Center with merchandise to sell. All net proceeds go to student financial aid.

What donations are accepted for the Rummage Sale? We sell everything, but especially appreciate donations of quality merchandise such as antiques, jewelry, fine clothing, furniture, household items, toys and books. We are unable to accept chemicals, tires, mattresses, anything mildewed, wall-to-wall carpet, large appliances, magazines, broken and torn furniture, non-working electronics of any kind.

To schedule a Rummage Truck pickup call 297-1894, ext. 423
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Want to volunteer or have questions? Call Leah Kemper at 297-1894, ext. 423

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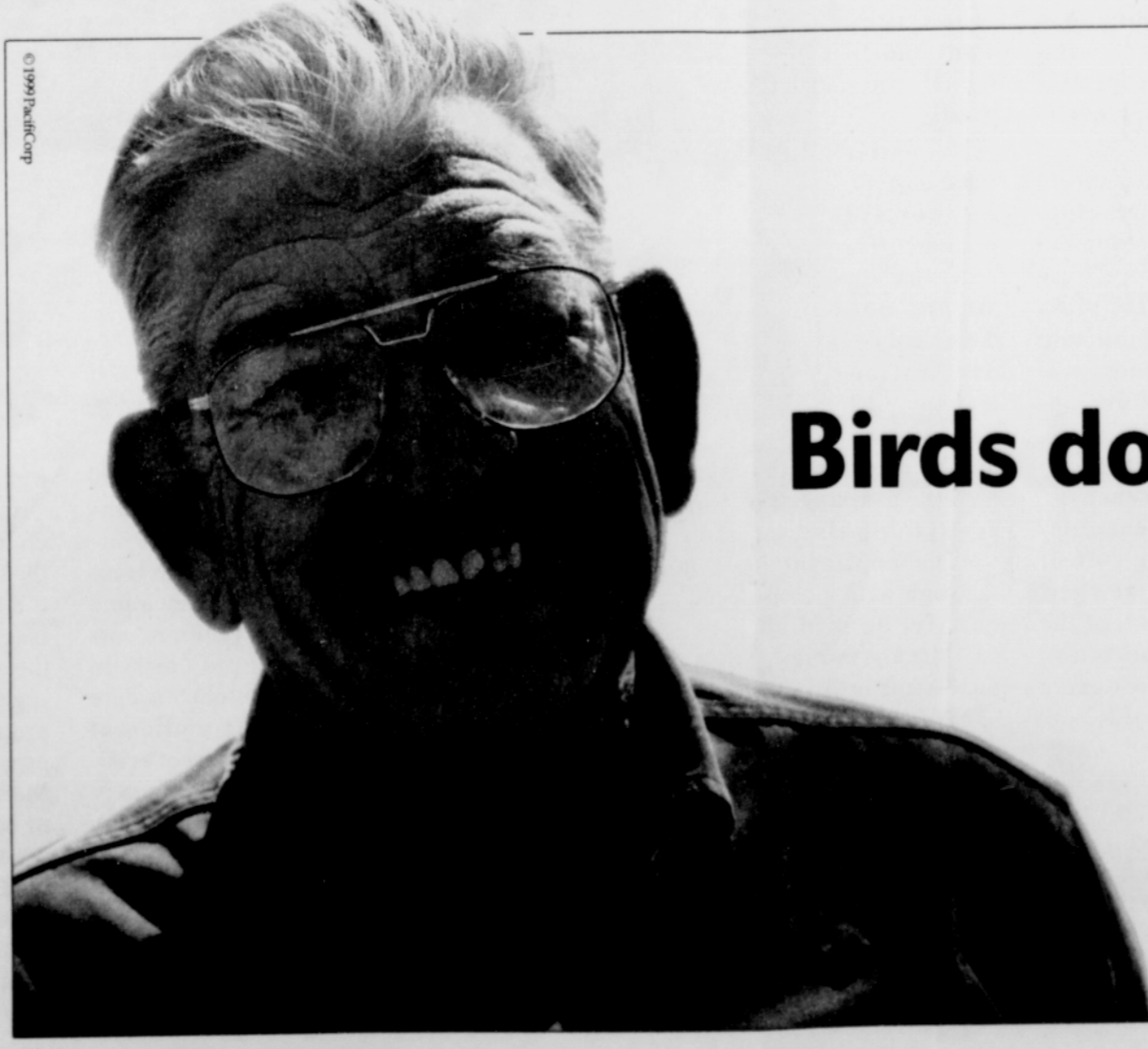


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Birds do it. You can't.

Ever wonder why a bird can sit on a power line and not get shocked? That's just one of the questions school kids in Laramie ask Rod Redding. Always quick with an answer, Rod explains that when a bird sits on a power line, it's only sitting on one wire and it's not touching anything that's grounded. There's more to it than that, but it all becomes clear when you see it demonstrated on the Hazard Hamlet, a large electronic board that can simulate electrical hazards. Rod takes it with him when he goes to grade schools. The kids are startled when they see sparks come out of a toaster not used safely. Or learn why they shouldn't let a kite get caught in an overhead power line. Rod Redding has been giving electrical safety presentations in grade schools all over Wyoming for 12 years, and that's not even his real job. When he's not volunteering to teach kids safety, he's a district meter man for Pacific Power. Rod's probably taught 15,000 kids, but he figures that if he's kept one child safe, then it's a good thing, Rod Redding, Meter Man. Teacher. And the kind of employee that Pacific Power is proud to have helping in our schools.

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