

# Crew: Students find new way to battle laziness



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Kenny Graham gets ready to clear some weeds on Aug. 24.

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"If you see someone doing something (damaging), you are more likely to tell people to stop," Graham said. "It's a pride thing."

Sophomore Phoenix Brown acknowledged another benefit: combating laziness.

She said she has a tendency to want to lounge her summer away, but she

can't while working summer duty.

"I'm keeping myself busy and I can see a healthy difference," she said. "I'm working instead of being lazy."

Then, there's Gilbert's famous habit of being generous with snacks and treats, like rhubarb and ice cream at lunch on Wednesday.

"Even when you are work-

ing, it feels like you are on a break," said sophomore Seth Hammond.

Graham added that while the group has a good time together, they're working hard and have accomplished a lot this summer.

"It's an incredible amount of work — a ton, a ton of work — but it all pays because it looks beautiful," he said.



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Tracy Young, Nathan Gilbert and Seth Hammond prepare to complete more work.

# New plan won't require lead testing

*State Department of Education will require districts to reduce exposure*

**By Jolene Guzman**  
The Itemizer-Observer

SALEM — The State Board of Education's new rules regarding plans for schools to reduce student exposure to lead in water won't require testing.

But it does make districts responsible for coming up with plans to reduce exposure to lead through water and paint, and to make those strategies public through a "Healthy and Safe Schools Plan."

Neither the Oregon Department of Education nor the Oregon Health Authority has the legal authority to require lead testing. The

healthy schools plan does compel districts to make a "plan to test for and reduce exposure to lead in water used for drinking or food preparation."

The rule also requires schools make plans for reducing exposure to lead paint in compliance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency's "Renovation, Repair and Painting Program Rule."

Plans for radon testing and pest management, both required by law, are to be included in the Healthy and Safe Schools document in an effort to be more transparent about what schools have in place to deal with

environmental issues in buildings.

"The rule was crafted to do two things: one, to promote maximum flexibility for districts and, two, also maximum transparency to communities," said Michael Elliott, of ODE, during an informational presentation on the new rule.

Those plans are public, and results from any testing done in accordance with those plans are to be released within five days of receiving them.

While lead testing is not required in the rule, ODE spokeswoman Tricia Yates said the rules provide guidance to districts which also

allow for the public to have a say in how schools plan to test and reduce exposure.

Brett Sherry, with OHA, said there is no safe level of lead exposure, but noted that most elevated lead levels don't stem from exposure at schools or through drinking water. Lead exposure is especially dangerous to children younger than 6 years of age because their brains are still developing.

"Lead based paint is the major cause of childhood lead poisoning in Oregon," Sherry said. "The vast majority of that is happening in the home."

He said there has been no

direct link established between elevated blood lead levels and drinking water.

Kari Salis, also with OHA, said if schools are testing, the department recommends following Environmental Protection Agency protocol. She said the guidance isn't clear about when testing should be conducted, but is clear about what conditions should be in place before samples are drawn.

She said the EPA recommends testing after water has been sitting in the pipes for eight to 18 hours, and that if testing in the summer, schools should try to simulate regular conditions.

She said it's up to school districts if they want to test more faucets than those used for drinking and food preparation or if they want use a lower "action level" than the 20 parts per billion.

Elliott said it is possible that lawmakers would designate funding to schools for testing, but money to fix problems found through testing is likely to remain the districts' responsibility — at least for now.

"There is no designated source of funds," he said.

Draft Healthy and Safe Schools Plans must be submitted to ODE by Oct. 1 and final plans are due Jan. 1, 2017.



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