

Boardman eyed for coal generation

Puget Sound Power & Light Co., an investor-owned utility based near Seattle, is considering Boardman among other locations for a future coal-fired plant, according to United Press International.

UPI quoted John Ellis, utility president, as telling stockholders last week the company must seek an alternate means of generating electricity because of its rising use and the delays in proposed nuclear projects.

Debbie Miller, spokesperson in the company's executive offices at Bellevue, Wash., said in a telephone interview that Puget Sound has applied for a fuel feasibility study grant to determine if coal gasification could alleviate the need for natural gas for power generation. She said that in the same plant coal might be converted into gas which then could be burned to generate power. In the process, surplus gas could be converted into methanol.

Miller said study contracts have been given to the Boeing Engineering and Construction Co. and the General Electric Co.

Lumber-mill jobless total cut

The number of employees adversely affected in western lumber mill closures and curtailments has dropped to 54,000, according to the results of a survey released last Thursday by the Western Wood Products Association.

The previous week the figure was 61,000.

The report showed also that the number of mills closed due to current economic conditions was 195, down from 211 the previous week. There were 19,000 people laid off at those closed mills.

Inventories decline

Inventories of lumber at mills in the West dropped by 34 million board feet during the week ending May 2, according to the Western Wood Products Association. This was the second straight week of decline.

The previous week inventories declined 20 million board feet, the first time in six weeks total mill stocks on hand in the West had not increased. WWPA figures show.

More than half of the western lumber industry's mills are now either closed or operating on curtailed schedules because of slowed demand caused by the national house construction slowdown.

An estimated 61,000 people are being affected by lay-offs and reduced work schedules in the West's 820 lumber mills, the association reported.

Carpenters needed

Jobs as carpenters will be the fastest growing occupations through 1985, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

Average annual openings in the U.S. for carpenters will be 67,000. The second fastest growing occupation will be real estate agents (45,000), followed by heavy equipment operators (41,000), emergency medical technicians (37,000) and automobile mechanics (32,000).

The USDL predicts that the short recession the U.S. is in will cause a severe backlog in housing making more openings in the first three job areas.



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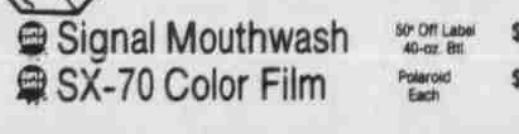
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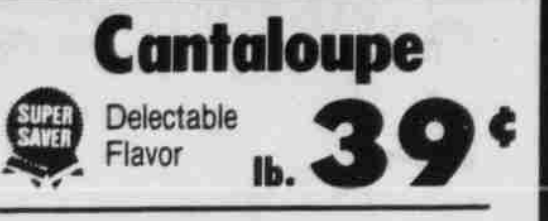
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