

TIMOTHY J. GONZALEZ | Statesman Journal

Marion County's new household hazardous waste facility, which could open by February, will accept herbicides, pesticides, antifreeze and other materials that cannot be picked up curbside. The dropoffs will be free except for businesses.

Hazardous waste gets new home

County prepares space for dangerous household chemicals

BY CARA ROBERTS MUREZ
Statesman Journal

If you're thinking about cleaning out that messy garage and know you might stumble upon herbicides or old antifreeze, you might want to wait a couple of months.

Marion County is about two months from opening a household hazardous waste facility that will take dangerous household chemicals for free.

Construction of the 2,000 square foot facility at the Salem-Keizer Transit Station on Deer Park Drive SE is expected to be completed this month, said Jeff Bickford, county senior environmental engineer.

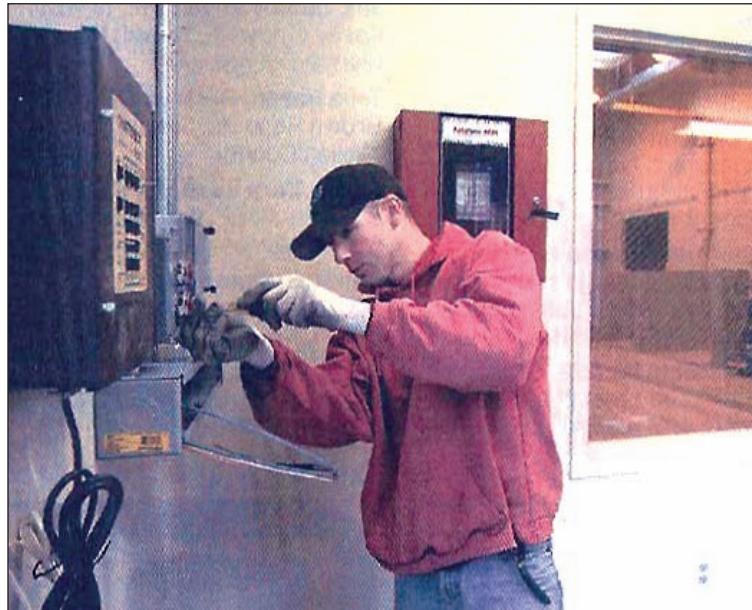
The county expects to have a contract in place by mid-January with a business that will operate the facility. It could open for business in February.

It will be available to Marion, Polk and Yamhill county residents, whose counties each will subsidize the service.

The cost of building the facility will be about \$640,000, which will be paid with solid-waste reserve funds. Operating costs will run about \$200,000 per year.

Bickford expects the new disposal option to be popular. He estimates that as many as 75 people could drop off hazardous, poisonous or flammable chemicals on each of the five days the facility will be open each month.

"A lot of folks accumulate a heck of a



Scott Gatchet of EC Electrical Construction Co. works on wiring for the household hazardous waste facility.

lot of this stuff," he said.

Some hazardous items, such as batteries and paint, can be recycled at the curb or taken to the transfer station.

Others can be disposed of only at irregularly held collection events. Some items, such as antifreeze, are not accepted even at those.

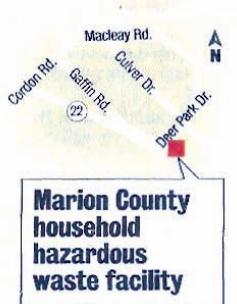
The new facility will take antifreeze and other chemicals from households and small businesses. The businesses will be charged a fee.

"The purpose is to get the hazardous materials out of the waste stream and dispose of them safely," Bickford said.

It will help avoid dangers such as chemicals that mix in the back of a garbage truck and could explode, and toxic fumes from chemicals at house fires.

Karen Hillyer, a 2003 Marion County Recycler of the Year, is glad to have an outlet for the paint thinner and furniture stripper that await recycling in her garage.

"I think that's a great idea," Hillyer said. "Don't you feel people – if that's available to them – will use it? I do."



KAY WORLINGTON
Statesman Journal

What's allowed and what's not

The new Marion County household hazardous waste facility will take a laundry list of dangerous chemicals after it opens in February.

They include:

- Antifreeze, fuel, engine cleaners and lighter fluid
- Rose dust, slug bait and other pesticides and herbicides
- Furniture stripper, paint thinners, swimming-pool chemicals, wood preservatives, turpentine, degreasers and solvents

A few hazardous materials will remain off-limits, even for this special collection center.

No explosives, radioactive waste or infectious waste will be accepted.

The facility will have a radiation monitor to ensure that no material gets in.