



Linn County NEWS



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Santiam Canyon home fire hardening program is popular

ALBANY — A program to help Santiam Canyon residents make their homes more resistant to wildfires is being well-received, Linn County Planning and Building Official Steve Wills told the Board of Commissioners Thursday morning.

Wills said Linn County has partnered with the Oregon Building Codes Division to assist families affected by the September 2020 wildfires.

"We have already had 28 applications," Wills said of the program that started April 1. "We have made five payouts, nine applications were denied and 14 are awaiting payment."

Wills said the county was allocated \$32,000 and has expended \$23,300. In all, the county may provide up to \$160,000.

Fire hardening is using materials for siding or roofing that is resistant to fire ignition during a wildfire. It includes installing fire-resistant windows and attic ventilation devices.

To qualify for the program, a person must own a home or business that was damaged or destroyed in the 2020 Oregon wildfires.

To learn more and apply, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/Pages/firehardening.aspx>.

Commissioner Will Tucker said Linn County has "done a great job" reaching out to the Santiam Canyon families.

"This is a real benefit to the folks in the canyon," Tucker said.

Wills said the program will run through June 2023.

In other business, the commission-



Steve Wills

Planning and Building Official

ers:

- Were informed by Linn County Accounting Officer Bill Palmer that although the Fiscal Year is about 75% completed, department spending is well below a comparable level. General Fund spending is 58.7%, the Law Enforcement Levy is at 59.3%; and the Health Department is at 55.2%. Personal services spending is at 69% and materials and services expenditures have been 55.8%.
- Learned that there were 280 total permits issued in March by the Linn County Planning and Building Department. There were six single family permits, seven manufactured

dwellings, 10 dwelling additions and 13 accessory buildings. Alyssa Boles said the county has waived \$105,000 in permit fees for families in the Santiam Canyon, whose homes were destroyed in the September 2020 wildfires.

- Approved a \$1 per month lease with Casetta di Pasta (which has a restaurant in downtown Albany) to provide food services in the courthouse diner. The diner will be open from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except for holidays.
- Approved accepting an Oregon State Parks County Opportunity Grant to replace a restroom at Waterloo County Park. The project has an estimated cost of \$207,248 and the grant will pay for \$103,624. Parks Director Brian Carroll said the project will begin this Fall and was completed in Spring 2023.
- Accepted a \$15,000 grant from the Oregon Secretary of State's Office to be used by the Clerk's Office to purchase elections-oriented equipment.
- Announced that the 2022-23 Budget Hearings will be held May 2-5 at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center.
- Was asked by Lebanon resident Ron Edwards to take a drive on Lebanon Drive, Oak Loop and Wagon Wheel Drive. He is concerned about potential traffic safety issues posed by development of an apartment complex in the neighborhood.

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