



Date: April 13, 2006

Contact: Kim Metzler, 736-1056, ext. 218

Merlyn Hough, 736-1056, ext. 216

Lane County Media: 06-7

LRAPA changes name to better reflect agency's role in community

The Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority has a new name: The Lane Regional Air **Protection Agency**.

“Same acronym, new name,” said Kim Metzler, LRAPA spokesperson. “Keeping the same familiar acronym was important to maintain continuity.”

“After reviewing the agency’s mission and goals several months ago, the LRAPA board of directors decided to recommend changes to the agency’s name to better reflect today’s role of the agency, said Metzler” Once the board voted on the name change, the recommendation was adopted by each of the agency’s governing bodies of Eugene, Springfield, Cottage Grove, Oakridge and Lane County.

LRAPA’s new director Merlyn Hough wholeheartedly supports the change.

“It makes a lot of sense,” Hough said. “The old name reflected the original role of the agency to regulate industry, hence the word ‘authority.’ LRAPA’s role today reaches far beyond the regulatory program into planning, special projects and public education, as well.”

“The word ‘pollution’ was changed to ‘protection’ to emphasize the positive role of the agency’s efforts on the overall community,” Hough explained.

In addition to regulating industry, LRAPA implements and enforces various county and city programs, such as home wood heating (woodstove) advisory programs in the Eugene/Springfield area and city of Oakridge; backyard burning programs in Eugene, Springfield, Lane County and the Florence area; school bus clean-burning-retrofit programs in Cottage Grove, Eugene, Springfield, and Triangle Lake/Blachly; and air monitoring programs in Cottage Grove, Eugene, Springfield, Sagi-naw, Oakridge and Coburg.

“When you look at all the things LRAPA does, it becomes apparent the agency is more than a regulatory authority, with much of its focus on involving and protecting the general public and partnering with cities and our other stakeholders to make a difference in air quality,” Hough said.

LRAPA originated in 1968 when the state of Oregon encouraged local action on air pollution. At that time, Lane County, Eugene and Springfield entered into a joint agreement to form LRAPA. Cottage Grove and Oakridge joined into the agreement at a later date. LRAPA is headed by a nine-member board of elected and appointed board members.

###