

Hazardous materials Hazardous-materials ordinance proposed

6-3-85

By JAMIE MARKS

Sentinel Staff Writer

SANTA CRUZ — Supervisors will consider a sweeping hazardous-materials law Tuesday that requires anyone who uses or stores toxic materials to get a permit from the county.

The ordinance differs from other laws already on the books in that it requires firms to draw up a hazardous-materials management plan.

The board will take up the proposed law after the consent agenda at 9 a.m.

In a letter to the board, Ray Talley, director of county environmental health, wrote, "This part of the ordinance is the most substantive in that it puts a requirement on all hazardous-materials users to audit their activities and demonstrate the adequacy of their operations from a health-protection standpoint."

The county health officer will issue a permit only after "demonstration that the required public protection standards are being met," according to Talley.

In addition to the permit, companies using hazardous materials will have to fill out a disclosure form. "This was done because of the different purpose of the public disclosure requirement from the storage/use permit," said Talley.

The storage/use permit is required for enforcement purposes, while the disclosure form is for pub-

lic information and for safety personnel responding to the scene of a spill or leak, he said.

Although paperwork would be duplicated, the fees would not. The fees for getting a permit will be determined later.

The hazardous-materials management plan requires an "environmental audit," detailing the kinds of materials kept on the premises, the quantity, a diagram and description of the air and water emissions generated from the use of the hazardous materials, and contingency plans in the event of a spill.

In addition, the management plan must have a map, showing where the materials are stored, and the access to each area.

A diagram describing the flow of all hazardous materials through each step of the process also has to be included.

The ordinance contains two other key provisions, according to Talley.

It calls for an above-ground storage permit. This would extend

the requirements of the underground hazardous-material law, which the county enacted Jan. 1, 1984, to toxic-substance containers above ground.

A third provision calls for companies to fill out a disclosure form annually.

Any changes in the company — from the handling of a hazardous material to a new business address or name — will require an amended form to be filed, according to the draft law.

Companies will be required to have primary storage tanks and back-up tanks. In the event of a spill or leak of a toxic material from a primary tank that does not escape from the back-up, the firm is required to report to the health officer within five working days.

If the material escapes from both containers, the incident must be immediately reported.

The health officer will be allowed to make inspections at his or her discretion and without notice to ensure that the law is being followed.