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# Toxic material disclosure law is OK'd

SANTA CRUZ — The City Council Tuesday unanimously passed a Hazardous Materials Disclosure law to regulate the storage and handling of toxic substances.

The so-called "right-to-know" ordinance requires businesses to disclose the type, quantity and location of hazardous materials used or stored.

Referring to the need to prevent toxic spills that ruin the health of citizens, Councilman John Laird said, "We are really adopting this for future generations. If we make mistakes in this generation, we might not be able to correct them for many, many years."

Councilwoman Jane Weed said it is important to pass legislation as a preventative measure, before there is a disaster.

Referring to reported health problems caused by contaminated water in Santa Clara County, Weed said, "Thank goodness we don't have a situation with birth defects and miscarriages here. I hope we won't."

There was no opposition to the ordinance at a public hearing Tuesday night.

The ordinance was drafted by a task force appointed by the council, after

citizens lobbied for regulations in a petition drive in 1983.

Leading the lobby was California Public Interest Research Group (CalPIRG), a consumer organization that has been lobbying around the state for the passage of similar laws in other counties.

"Our neglect for the environment is finally catching up with us," commented CalPIRG spokesman David Pais. "We must prevent contamination from occurring."

Also supporting the ordinance was People's Democratic Club, The League of Women Voters, Senior Network Services, Parents' Center, Green Peace, Westside Community Health Clinic, Women's Health Center, and city employees whose jobs may bring them into contact with toxic materials.

City officials plan to work with the county in implementing the program. Unincorporated areas of the county are also covered by a similar county ordinance.

Similar ordinances are in place in San Diego and Santa Monica. Proposals are on the books in Berkeley and Los Angeles, said Pais.