

# Tent City told to meet fire code

United Press International  
HOUSTON — Tent City residents, long a target of critics who want the makeshift camp for the jobless closed, appeared headed for a noon showdown Thursday with fire marshals alarmed by a fire death in the camp.

Following a tent fire fatality Wednesday, Harris County Fire Marshal J.J. Pruitt sent an order requiring elimination of fire hazards to the 150 residents of a roadside park on U.S. 90 about 30 miles east of Houston.

Investigator Bill Cunningham said arson was suspected in the midnight blaze. James R. "Scotty" Bolland, 41, a British native who last lived in Wash-

ington state, was killed in the fire. Cunningham said a "violent dispute" preceded the fire.

Pruitt promised to evict, arrest and seek fines for violators of his order.

Pruitt's order said: "One person has died, and several fire injuries occurred. Severe fire safety problems shall be corrected to prevent further deaths and injuries at this site."

Chief Fire Investigator Shelton Lawson said officials intended to evacuate the camp of violators at "high noon" Thursday if Pruitt's requirements are not met.

"If they can't comply, then it will be cleaned out," Lawson

said. "Any individual found in the facility that's judged to be unsafe will be charged with violating the fire marshal's order, arrested and taken to jail."

"We can do it, and we have sheriff's deputies to help us. The sheriff's department will be providing additional deputies as well as a couple of paddy wagons," he said.

Lawson said anyone who complies with the order will be allowed to stay.

"There may be some that have these camp trailers, or van or vehicle or something like that that would technically be all right," Lawson said.

State Rep. Tony Polumbo, D-Houston, said he would be glad

to see the camp go because it is inaccurately perceived as a haven for the jobless. Many of the residents actually have taken handouts but turned down jobs, he said.

But Hank Sprouse, a member of Baytown First Presbyterian Church who has befriended the campers, said, "The majority of these people are good people who have gotten some bad publicity (because of) freeloaders."

Pruitt's order, technically also issued to the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation which has responsibility for the roadside park, requires tents be made of flame-resistant material and located 10 feet apart.

Pruitt also banned open fires and required residents to have firefighting equipment on site, among other things.

Residents said they would comply but were not sure they could.

"There's no way we can comply," camp leader Bill K. 54, said. "I don't know we're going to do. I would imagine most of us would go to jail because we couldn't pay a fine."

Violating the fire code order is a Class B misdemeanor carrying a possible \$1,000 fine.

The camp has no clean water or sewage facilities.

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# Dallas residents fight plans to burn wastes

United Press International  
DALLAS — General Portland Inc.'s plan to burn hazardous wastes could send fumes from the "most potent man-made toxin presently known" into downtown Dallas, a former officer of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said Wednesday.

Deborah Speak, who left the EPA's Dallas regional hazardous waste section in 1981, claimed that the use of hazardous wastes for kiln fuel in the company's cement plant could release polychlorinated biphenyls, a suspected carcinogen, and the potent toxin 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin, into the

atmosphere. She said Oak Cliff and west Dallas residents would be immediately affected by any environmental problems stemming from the burning wastes, although prevailing winds from the southwest could endanger downtown office workers.

Officials of the Texas Air Control Board said they will call a public hearing on the plan to burn the waste in the Oak Cliff section south of downtown as soon as they get a written request from state Rep. Steve Wolens of Dallas. Wolens has requested a hearing.

Jim Morriss, attorney for General Portland, said that no traces of TCDD or PCBs were found at a General Portland plant burning hazardous wastes in California, and that company officials believe production of the two toxic agents is "not a pos-

sibility with our process." Speak and 60 Oak Cliff residents have signed a petition asking the Dallas City Council to seek a postponement of TACB decision on General Portland's permit application. They are the 10th Dallas neighborhood organization to request additional review of the plan.

Speak also criticized EPA's decision to exempt use of hazardous wastes as kiln fuel from federal regulations.

"By admission of EPA, the Portland Cement Association, uncertainties exist concerning the mechanism of waste destruction in kilns, and until they are understood, the applicable performance data is questionable," she said in the petition.

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# Statute on rape queried

United Press International  
AUSTIN — Sen. Bob McFarland, R-Arlington, Thursday introduced legislation that would extend the statute of limitations in rape cases from three years.

Under current Texas law, a person suspected of rape is subject to prosecution for up to three years after the offense.

"To me, there seems little logic in providing a statute of limitations for offenses of theft and forgery, but not for offenses of rape, robbery, arson, and then only 96 hours for rape," McFarland said.

McFarland said the bill such a law was brought attention by a young woman who, just over three years ago, was the victim of a brutal assault that is still unsolved.

"The woman that I suffered victim on Dec. 1, 1979," McFarland said. "The statute of limitations has now run out on her attacker, who is suspected of over 30 similar offenses now wave at his victim the steps of the courthouse with impunity."

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