

PUC chairman Erwin expected to resign

United Press International

AUSTIN — Public Utility Commission Chairman Al Erwin is expected to resign May 1 and open an Austin office of the public relations firm he worked for before his appointment to the PUC last year.

Erwin declined to confirm or deny reports that he will leave the three-member utility regulatory agency after the PUC completes work on Southwestern Bell Telephone's \$1.3 billion rate case in late April or early May.

But Erwin confirmed he has told Gov. Mark White repeatedly that he does not intend to serve out his full six-year term.

"I don't like the job," he said. "I've never made any bones about it. I'm hurting financially and I'd rather be elsewhere."

The Dallas Times Herald reported Saturday that White's office has recently reopened its search for appointments to the commission.

Sources told UPI that White is interested in appointing a black or Hispanic to the commission, and that Associate Commissioner Peggy Rosson of El Paso would probably be promoted to chairman.

The Times Herald said the leading candidates to succeed Erwin appear to be Dennis Thomas, who directs management and budget in the governor's office; Rafael Quintanilla, director of the Texas Department of Community Affairs and a former PUC hearing examiner; and Don Butler, a lawyer for the Texas Municipal League in utility rate cases.

Erwin, 38, resigned as vice president and Houston office manager for Hill and Knowlton Inc., to accept White's appointment to the \$58,000-a-year PUC post in February 1983.

He and Rosson were appointed within hours after the surprise resignations of two of former Gov. William P. Clements Jr.'s appointees, George Cowden and Tommie Gene Smith.

One of the reasons Erwin is expected to remain in Austin is

that his wife, Gay, was appointed by White last year as executive director of the newly created Governor's Commission on Women.

Bob Dilenschneider, chief of U.S. operations for Hill and Knowlton, said earlier that Erwin had asked to return to the company after serving on the PUC and the company wanted him back.

If Erwin leaves the PUC, it would be the second time he has resigned from the agency without completing his full term.

Erwin, one of the first appointees to the commission after its creation in 1975, served a previous stint from 1976 until 1979.

On his second appointment, Erwin told reporters: "Boredom I don't think is going to be a problem this time — unfortunately. I wish it would be, but it's not going to be."

When he resigned in 1979, Erwin said the PUC was running smoothly and no longer presented a challenge.

EDB standards called lax

United Press International

AUSTIN — The director of a 4,000-member food cooperative Friday predicted there will be another 10 to 15 cancer deaths among his membership if current Texas guidelines on exposure to the pesticide EDB remain in effect.

"We feel that's outrageous," Brad Rockwell of the Austin-based Wheatsville Cooperative said in a Texas Health Department public hearing.

The Health Board will vote in May on permanent standards for human exposure to ethylene dibromide, a powerful cancer-causing substance

used to fumigate grains and citrus. EDB has been widely used since the 1940s.

The state board adopted emergency standards in February that mirror those recommended by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

The EPA acted after the substance, identified in 1974 as causing cancer in laboratory animals, began appearing in food and water supplies in many states, including Texas.

State health officials were urged during the hearing Friday to strengthen Texas' emergency guidelines, which they say do not go far enough

in protecting consumers.

"I think the EPA has been extremely lax and overly concerned with the effects on the corporate food industry," said Rockwell. "Basically they (EPA) are subsidizing the corporate food industry with people's health."

Rockwell said the state should test a wider range of products to determine contamination by EDB and other dangerous substances.

"We have all these products in our store, but we cannot tell our customers whether they're contaminated or not," he said.

Tani Adams, director of the Texas Pesticide Watch,

said the Health Department had tested some 800 products and found 300 contained some level of EDB.

"Only a few dozen have actually been recalled," she said. "There are hundreds of products that have EDB, but are below the Health Department levels."

Under the emergency standards adopted by the Health Board in February, ready-to-eat foods, including raw fruits, can contain no more than 30 parts per billion of EDB. The level for food to be cooked and unprocessed grains products is 150 ppb and for unprocessed raw grains it is 900 ppb.

Medical records 'irrelevant'

United Press International

SAN ANTONIO — Prosecutors Friday said none of the 1,000 boxes of medical records spared from a shredder last week could be relevant to an investigation of infant deaths at Medical Center Hospital.

Special prosecutor Nick Rothe, in a hearing to facilitate disposition of the unneeded documents, told State District Judge Pat Priest that the grand jury had released the records for disposal.

Attorneys Tom Sharp and Cynthia King said their client, the University of Texas Health Science Center, had no objection to the irrelevant documents being destroyed.

However, it was unclear whether the documents would be destroyed immediately.

Defense attorney Royal Griffin, who represents vocational nurse Gene Jones, said he had not yet determined whether any of the records will be needed for her defense on charges of injury to a child.

Priest gave Griffin permission to look through the 25 tons of medical records, but the attorney responded that "Heracles would not have a shovel large enough" to go through them all.

Griffin said the records could remain at a San Antonio recycling company "until Hell freezes over."

District Attorney Sam Millsap obtained a temporary restraining order last week to halt destruction of the records, claiming they included memoranda, X-rays and CAT scans of at least two children who died in the hospital's pediatric intensive care unit.

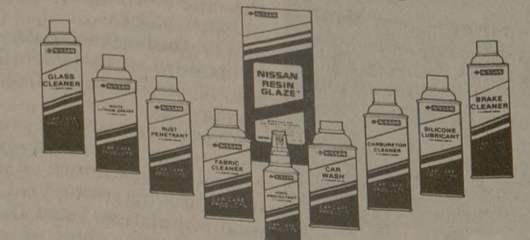
The records were ordered

destroyed by the Health Science Center, which provides staffing and administration for MCH.

Ms. Jones, who attended the hearing, is charged with injuring 4-month-old Rolando Santos with an injection of heparin, a blood-thinning drug, while she worked in the pediatric unit.

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The following incidents were reported to the University Police Department through Sunday.

MISDEMEANOR THEFT:

• A student's wallet containing her driver's license, student I.D. card, \$18 in cash and several credit cards was stolen from her purse, which was left unattended on a table on the fourth floor of the Sterling C. Evans Library.

• A woman's wallet, containing her staff I.D. card, \$20 in cash and several credit cards was stolen from an unlocked desk drawer in 432 Blocker.

TERRORISTIC THREAT:

• Someone called the University Police Department and implied a bomb had been placed in Bolton Hall. Officers who searched the building found nothing.

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