

Bend Roto-Rooter Fined \$8,238 by DEQ for Operating without a License

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Idaho-based RNR Enterprises, Inc., doing business in Central Oregon as Roto-Rooter Service, has been assessed an \$8,238 Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) penalty for performing sewage disposal services without a license between July 1, 2005 and Feb. 28, 2006. The company did not appeal the penalty by the deadline, and the full penalty amount is now due.

In early November 2005, the Crook County Environmental Health Department received a "Final Inspection Request" form from RNR Enterprises, Inc., indicating that it installed a new septic tank at 364 N.E. Brennan Lane in Prineville after pumping the contents of the original septic tank on Oct. 18, 2005. However, DEQ records show that the company's license to provide on-site sewage disposal services in Oregon had expired on June 30, 2005.

State law requires persons conducting sewage disposal services to be licensed, properly bonded and knowledgeable about proper installation of septic systems in order to ensure protection of public health and the environment. Unlicensed operators do not provide such assurances. By not providing this assurance, unlicensed providers may gain economic advantage over competitors by avoiding the licensing and bonding fees.

On Nov. 25, 2005, DEQ sent RNR Enterprises a notice reminding the company that its license had expired and that performing sewage disposal services, or advertising or purporting to be in the business of performing such services, without first obtaining and maintaining a current license, is a violation of Oregon's environmental law. Subsequently, DEQ learned that the company continued to pump septic tanks in Oregon through February 2006.

On March 17, 2006, DEQ sent RNR Enterprises a certified letter requesting the company's origin-destination records for all sewage disposal services rendered between July 1, 2005 and Feb. 28, 2006. The company is required to maintain such records on file and make them available to DEQ upon request.

Although the company received the certified letter on March 20, 2006, it did not submit the records as requested.