

Sarah Wallace

AR 525

**Raising of the \$24.00 per month threshold.**

The \$24.00 per month rate which was set in 2003 is being considered for an increase to \$30.00 in 2008 represents a 25% increase in 5 years. This is about equal to a 5% increase per year.

This rate should be compared to electricity, an Oregon utility operating in the same economy in the State of Oregon that is also regulated by the PUC. Power rates increased from \$.0751 to \$.0838 per kilowatt hour, an 11.5% increase from December 2006 to December 2007. Source material is attached: April 16, 2008 "The Oregonian Newspaper."

If you were to convert the increase granted to electricity to water for 5 years your result would equal a 57.5% increase. This would mean an increase of \$13.80. This increase would be added to the current \$24.00 per month to arrive at \$37.80.

Some areas of expense for water utilities that have increased since 2003 are Health Division Fees up 24% plus new fees for cross connection reporting, sanitary survey, and additional testing requirements. Postage and Lab testing costs have increased by 12% and 5% respectively. There is also extra testing from more stringent drinking water requirements. Material costs are up 40 to 50%, especially brass and copper.

With no future indication when this threshold will be visited again some extra consideration needs to be given to the setting of the threshold at this time involving some very small water utilities. For a small water system almost all of the same state regulations apply as for larger ones in keeping with the Safe Drinking Water Act.

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Public Utility Commission of Oregon  
Administrative Hearing Division

~~Sarah Wallace  
Free Hillwater~~

Mal Olson

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WEDNESDAY  
APRIL 16, 2008

# The Oregonian

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## Abuse scandal makes pope feel 'ashamed'

**Pedophiles** | Benedict XVI, in his first visit to the United States, faces an American church hurt by priests' actions

BY IAN FISHER  
and LAURIE GOODSTEIN  
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON — Pope Benedict XVI chose to address bluntly the sex abuse scandal that has torn at the church even before he landed Tuesday on his first official visit to the United States, saying he was "deeply ashamed" by the actions of pedophile priests.

His comments aboard his plane, in answer to a written question submitted by a reporter and selected by the Vatican, appeared to soothe many Catholics but left others demanding more action than words.

"It's difficult for me to understand how it was possible that priests betrayed in this way their mission to bring healing to others," the

### GAS

Oregon average for a gallon of unleaded regular gas  
April 15, 2007: **\$3.06**  
April 15, 2008: **\$3.49**  
Source: AAA Oregon/Idaho

### ELECTRICITY

for residential Oregon customers\*  
December 2006: **7.51¢** per kilowatt hour  
December 2007: **8.38¢** per kilowatt hour  
Source: Energy Information Administration  
\*latest figures available

### MILK

a gallon of whole milk  
April 2007: **\$2.24**  
April 2008: **\$2.95**  
Source: Oregon Dairy Cent

# Oregonians feel squeeze

Having a job isn't always enough when food, fuel and utilities get more expensive

BY DAVID AUSTIN  
THE OREGONIAN

Escalating gasoline prices. Increasing grocery bills. Skyrocketing utility costs. They're in the headlines every day, but Oregonians are feeling the pinch in ways they haven't seen since the last recession.

Tim Dwyer, a University of Oregon economics professor and the director of the school's Oregon Economic Forum, said working people are hurting more now because income levels haven't grown since the last recession in 2001. The American dream, he says, is moving out of reach.

### Wholesale prices

**Food costs** jumped **1.2 percent** in March, much higher than expected, propelled by increases in prices for vegetables, beef and especially rice.

**Oil prices** rose to **\$113.79 a barrel** Tuesday, and analysts warn consumers should expect not a bad inflation news to come.

**Car costs:** The prices of soap and detergent rose **2 percent** and pet food by **1.3 percent**. However, the price of new cars has dropped **0.2 percent**.

**Insider:** A surge in energy and food costs is coming just as unemployment is rising, and many economists believe the country has fallen into a recession **A4**

"A recent job doesn't get there anymore," he says. "It do take much to throw an average son into debt with the huge increase in food bills and utility bills. I have families wondering how you could say we're well off but the stress because the income is stagnant."

Officials with agencies that the needy say they're seeing something unprecedented: More families with two incomes are joining the needy people seeking help food, shelter and other essential. "We have so many more people

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P.W.C. Threshold

