

Domino's given clean bill of health

By Michelle Carr

A Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department investigation prompted by a former employee's complaint against a Lincoln pizza company was made Friday, according to a health department official and a supervisor of the company.

Domino's Pizza, 611 N. 27th St., passed inspection and the investigation file was closed because the company met the health department's standards, according to Ed Pearce, director of operations for Dominos.

Kevin Graham, 22, a former employee of Domino's, told the Daily Nebraskan Thursday that he had filed a formal complaint with the health department because he had witnessed several incidents of sanitation violations.

Graham said on one occasion a manager "had me deliver a pizza that had been dropped on the pavement." He said he had found insects in many of the ingredients to be used in the pizza and found several dead insects on the floor when he cleaned.

Pearce said he couldn't believe the dropped pizza allegation because no customer would accept a pizza that had been dropped.

"If you have ever seen a hot pizza after it has been dropped, I don't think any customer would accept it," Pearce said.

During the summer, insects do present a problem, Pearce said, but employees are instructed to throw away any ingredient or pizza that has an insect in it. Pearce said the company had two incidents of an insect being found

in a pizza. The customers were offered a new pizza or their money back, he said.

Graham said he discussed the conditions with health department officials on Oct. 11. On Oct. 17, Graham was fired and he made a formal complaint with the health department on Tuesday.

Graham said the reason for his firing was not clear. He said his employers listed insubordination as the reason. Graham said his employers might have known that he had discussed sanitation conditions with the health department.

However, John Chess, an investigator with the health department said the complainant's name is kept confidential while an investigation is underway.

Pearce said Graham was fired because he failed to get another employee to work for him when he had to leave early. The company policy is that a worker must find a replacement, he said.

Former employee complaints are common, Pearce said. Such incidents happened at other Domino stores that he worked for, he said.

Graham said he complained because he said he feels the sanitation practices are a "danger."

"I have nothing to gain or lose in filing a complaint," he said.

Chess, who investigated the Domino's complaint, said he investigates over 100 cases a year that are complaints from fired employees. Chess said once a complaint is made, the investigator inspects the premises and discusses the complaint with the owner. Because Domino's did not commit any violation, the file was closed.

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Waddel said a number of students have been complaining about reserve materials not being in the libraries when they are supposed to be.

He said the new fine rates should give students a better incentive for returning reserved materials.

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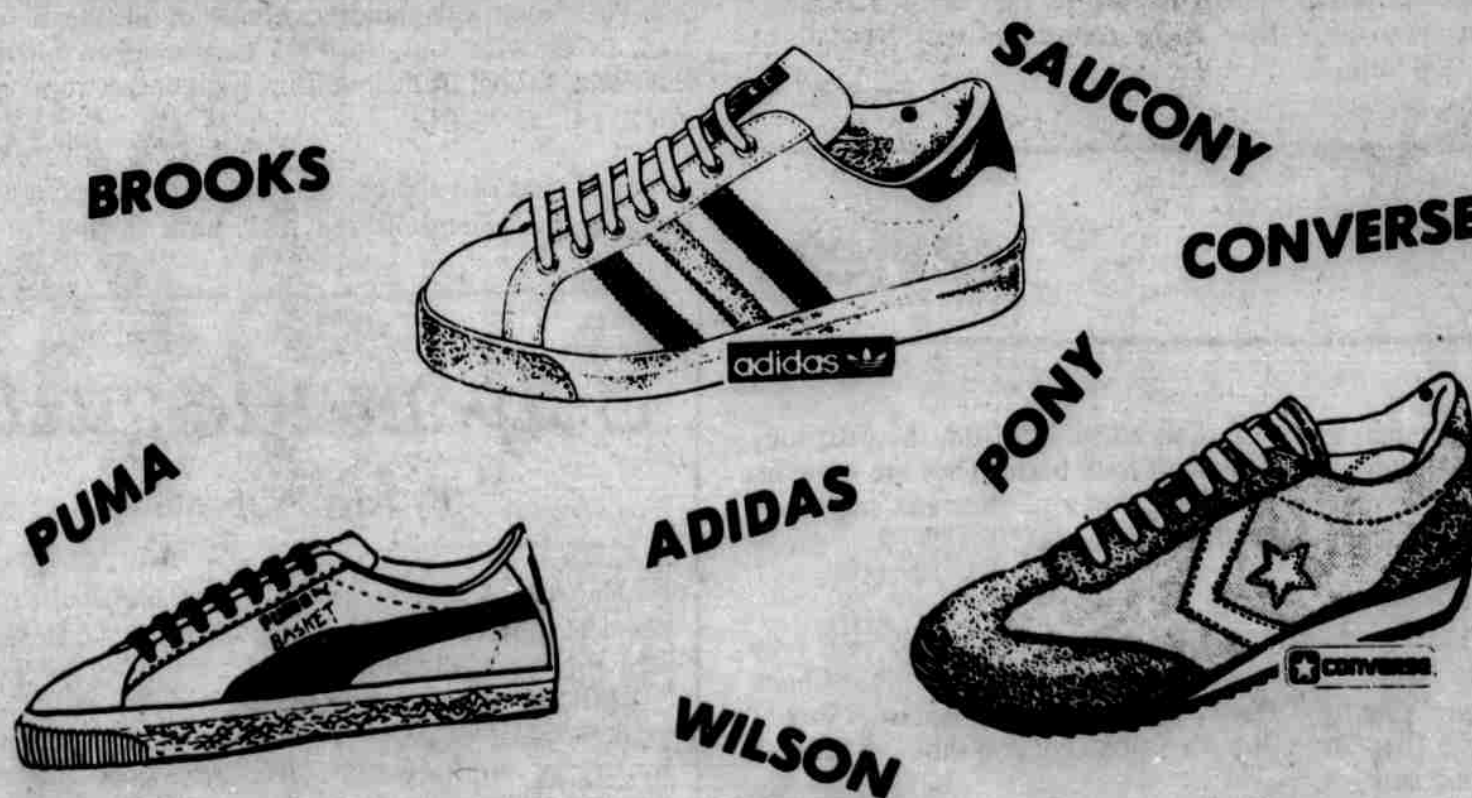
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