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Aftermath



Jon Waller/DN

Lincoln firefighters decide how to secure the area surrounding a fire that engulfed Ray's Lawn and Home Care at 503 West A St. early Wednesday morning. Firefighters were afraid of the spread of hazardous materials.

Health department assessing chemical blaze

By **Angie Schendt**
Staff Reporter

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department is trying to determine the danger from chemicals at an early Wednesday morning fire at Ray's Lawn and Home Care.

Marcia Willhite, assistant chief for the environmental division of the department, said it also was trying to find where water run-off was going. Lab results are not back yet.

"We have to make an assess-

ment first, and then we can figure out how to clean it up," Willhite said.

Willhite said the department wanted to get the chemicals cleaned up as soon as possible, but she said she didn't know when the test results were expected.

The roof of the business at 503 West A St. was gone Wednesday, and the building was destroyed.

No one was hurt in the blaze, although a dog was in the building at the time. A firefighter on the scene did not know how the dog

was doing.

The cause of the fire still is undetermined. The fire started a combustion of different chemicals in the building, such as pesticides and fertilizers.

Initially, five fire engine companies and two fire truck companies were sent out. By late afternoon Wednesday, two engines and one truck were left on the scene.

The fire was controlled, and two health department officials were able to inspect the scene, though the firefighters were letting the chemicals burn.

The Village Square strip mall in front of the building has been closed until the results of the samples are known.

The Shiner Food Mart, which is across the street from the Village Square Food Mart, experienced more business because of the fire, cashier Lisa Davis said.

"They said if the wind changes, we will have to close down," she said.

Davis said she saw a couple of flames when she came to work at 11:30 a.m., but the building was just smoking in the afternoon.

Nelson promotes tax cut

By **J. Christopher Hain**
Senior Reporter

Gov. Ben Nelson wants to cut income tax — a little bit.

Nelson testified before the Legislature's Revenue Committee Wednesday in support of his plan to provide Nebraskans with a 4.5 percent reduction in state income tax.

Nelson said his plan would put money back in the pockets of Nebraskans.

Returning tax money to individuals, he said, will strengthen state and local economies and allow Nebraskans to share in the benefits of cutting government.

Nelson said it was important to pass along the government's savings, even if it was a small amount.

"It's better to inject some money into Nebraska's economy than always drawing it out," he said.

The governor's proposal, LB663, was introduced to the committee by Sen. Eric Will of Omaha.

Will said the income tax cut was not dramatic, but it showed that state officials were working to reduce government.

"If we can afford it," he said, "it sends the right message."

The cut would result in a \$35 million loss in state revenue each of the next two years.

Nelson said that loss in revenue would be made up by streamlining government, cutting the budget and receiving additional funds from the federal government.

The loss in revenue would also mean a more than \$5 million reduction in state aid to schools through the fund created by LB1059 in 1989.

Nebraska's public schools receive part of their funding from local property taxes and part from the LB1059 fund, made up of state sales and income tax.

Nelson suggested that money would be replaced by other general fund dollars.

Sen. Stan Schellpeper of Stanton

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Chadron shooting raises concerns of future teachers

By **Matthew Waite**
Senior Reporter

Violence in the classroom is in the back of Amy Franzen's mind.

The junior elementary education major said Wednesday that last week's shooting of a Chadron teacher during class showed the need for some type of training on how to handle violence.

Franzen said violence in the classroom did not warrant the creation of a separate class, however. She also said the violence wouldn't move her to change her major.

"I tend to be more naive and think that all kids are good and find the good in kids," she said in Henzlik Hall.

In the Teachers College's educational psychology curriculum, the topic of violence in the classroom comes up from time to time, said

Greg Schraw, a coordinator for the educational psychology program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

But much ground must be covered in the class, he said, and violence in the classroom does not get much time.

But since the Chadron shooting occurred, students have been bringing up the issue in class, Schraw said.

Andy Pope, a Chadron middle school teacher, was shot by a seventh-grade student at the school.

The issue usually comes under the title of classroom management, Schraw said. Three weeks during the semester are devoted to classroom management, he said.

During those three weeks, he said, the class talks about discipline and management from all sides of the issue.

"I also like to talk, not only about violence

perpetrated from students to teachers, but the other way around," Schraw said.

For example, he said, corporal punishment is still allowed in Texas.

Among the faculty he talks to, Schraw said, there is not much discussion about adding classes to deal with classroom violence. He said, however, that because the Teachers College is spread out through six buildings, he did not know if other faculty had been discussing the idea.

Also, Schraw said, he did not know of anyone in the college who had any degree of expertise in classroom violence.

To account for that, he said the issue of classroom violence was new, and many professors at UNL focus on more fundamental aspects of teaching.

Compared to the rest of the nation, Nebraska has a lower level of violence in the

classrooms, Schraw said, and that might explain why professors at UNL are not digging into the issue.

But even though Nebraska has a lower violence rate, Schraw said the state wouldn't see a mass migration of teachers because of it.

"I don't think people go into education for that at all," he said.

For a teacher to leave a school because of violence, the situation would have to be very bad, Schraw said.

"They think about it, but it wouldn't be much of a deterrent," he said.

Franzen, however, said violence would determine where she went because she did not want to raise a family where there was a lot of violence.

But, she said, many students in the college are looking for the challenges of inner-city schools, where most of the violence occurs.