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GREG HANSEN
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AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS
Alicia Keys, Destiny's Child, Aaliyah among top winners **A4**



Snowbirds flocking to Tucson despite 9/11
Business

Qwest extends privacy 'opt-out' period

By David Wichter
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Qwest Communications is giving customers at least two extra months to take their names off the company's marketing lists after a new privacy policy drew criticism from consumers and state regulators.

A Qwest official said Tuesday that the company has extended the deadline to March 29 for customers to restrict sharing of their information and to beefing up its customer service department to handle a crush of privacy requests.

In December, Qwest sent notices in its billing to its million Arizona customers and customers in 13 other states, advising them that their account information may be shared with related companies unless they contact the company to "opt out" within 30 days of receiving their bills.

But complaints over the opt-out procedure prompted Arizona Attorney General Janet Napolitano to ask Qwest to re-examine its privacy procedures, and the Arizona Corporation Commission has scheduled a hearing.

Opting out

- To opt out of information sharing by Qwest, call 1-877-629-3732.
- Customers can also opt out of information sharing or view the privacy notice online at www.qwest.com/opts
- For utility information or complaints, call the Arizona Corporation Commission at 628-6552 (Tucson) or 1-800-535-0348 (outside Tucson).

SEE QWEST A5

Emissions tests go high-tech

The environment

New test will mean quicker trips through the stations, like this one at 1301 S. Stocker Drive, officials say, but at least one motorist has been disappointed.



Photo by Stephen Sautter / Star

Method for newer cars will cut smog, officials say — but it has its critics

By Susanna Cahilo
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

A new, computer-based method of checking a vehicle's emissions will result in cleaner air and quicker trips through Tucson's three testing stations for some drivers, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials say.

But some critics are concerned that the new system will cause more cars to fail their tests.

Under the new system, which began Jan. 2, the state's computer hooks up with a vehicle's computer to determine if there are any problems with the engine or emissions system.

It bypasses the long-used tailpipe test, where a probe "sniffs" emissions and measures the hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide.

The new system, called on-board diagnostics, does not actually measure the tailpipe emissions. Instead, a vehicle will fail the test if the computer detects "trouble codes" that indicate possible emissions problems.

Vehicles built since 1996 must take the new test, which is required by the Environmental Protection Agency. But vehicles 5 years old or newer are exempt from emissions tests altogether, meaning 1996 and 1997 models face the new test this year. Vehicles built before 1996 face tailpipe tests.

"A lot of data that's out there is showing that (on-board diagnostics) is questionable and needs some more evaluation," said Laura Riehm, spokeswoman for AAA Arizona.

In 2000, the Environmental Protection Agency conducted a study of 194 cars that had their "check engine" lights on, which are triggered by the trouble codes. The study found that 70 percent of those vehicles were still emitting acceptable levels of pollution.

Dan Grubbe, manager of the state Department of Environmental Quality's Car Care Program, said the new testing system aims to identify and correct problems before an auto starts emitting too much pollution.

SEE EMISSIONS A9

KC-130 crashes, killing 7 Marines

By James Dao
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — A U.S. military tanker plane crashed into a mountainside and exploded during its final approach to an airfield in southwestern Pakistan on Wednesday, killing all seven Marines aboard, the Pentagon said.

A spokesman for the U.S. Central Command, Maj. Randy Sandoz, said Marines and Pakistanis have approached the crash site, but no bodies had been recovered as of late Wednesday.

"We made it to the crash site on foot," Sandoz said. "But they were able to remain there. It is a very steep grade and they were unable to get footing. The site is secure."

The aircraft, a Marine Corps KC-130 Hercules, had left Jacobabad, Pakistan, and was on its way to an airfield at Shamsi, 140 miles south of the Afghan border. The Shamsi airfield has become a supply hub and staging base for Marines moving in and out of southern Afghanistan.

President Bush, speaking at a fund-raising event in Washington for his brother, Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida, said that the crash had reminded him of "how serious

SEE TANNER A9

Bush wants food aid for legal immigrants

By Robert Pear
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration proposed on Wednesday to restore food stamps to many legal immigrants, whose eligibility for benefits was severely restricted by the 1996 welfare law.

The White House said that at least 280,000 people — legal immigrants who have not become citizens — would qualify for food stamps under the proposal, to be included in the budget that President Bush sends Congress in early February. The proposal would cost the federal government \$2.1 billion over 10 years, the administration said. In October, 18.4 million people were receiving food stamps.

Bush's proposal, or something similar to it, has an excellent chance of becoming law. The Senate is considering such changes as part of a far-reaching bill to reauthorize farm and nutrition programs.

However, the White House proposal sets up a potential battle with Senate Democratic leaders, who have proposed restoring benefits to 100,000 immigrants.

SEE FOOD AID A9

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Weather

7 DAYS FORECAST
Partly cloudy.
High 72 / Low 43
Wednesday: High 70 / Low 45
For complete weather information, see the weather forecast page on page 8 of Star.

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