

This is a printer friendly version of an article from the **The Olympian**
August 10, 2006

Published August 10, 2006

8 lab sites await cleanup in county

By Keri Brenner

The Olympian

YELM - Jim Bauer's new 1.7-acre property has everything: an early 1900s house, a view of Mount Rainier, a 20 percent below-market price and a lot of peace, quiet and privacy.

□ It also has a trailer that was formerly home to a meth lab, an assortment of abandoned cars, garbage, an aging hot tub, a few old refrigerators and some rusted motors.

"There's a lot of cleanup involved," said Bauer, who knew the property was contaminated when he bought it July 14 for \$85,500.

Full restoration - including removing the meth lab trailer with an excavating truck using special demolition equipment - will cost \$15,000 to \$20,000 more, he estimated.

"I'm sure it will be OK," Bauer said. "It's just surface stuff, with different things lying around."

Bauer's land is one of eight sites in Thurston County where methamphetamine labs were found and shut down but where cleanup has not yet been done.

A special team of the Thurston County Sheriff's Office closed more than 200 meth labs in the past five years. No labs have been found so far this year.

The list of eight sites is kept by Gerald Tousley of the county Department of Environmental Health. The state Department of Health also posts a master list of all meth labs found and closed in each county on its clandestine drug labs Web site, www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/CDL/default.htm.

"If a structure is posted unfit for use, copies go out to all interested parties, the county auditor and the state," Tousley said.

Bauer, a contractor who moved to Rainier with his wife six months ago, found the land in Yelm through a real estate agent. They plan to tear down the existing structure and build their own home on the property.

"This is my first day on the project," Bauer said. "It's a beautiful spot."

Keri Brenner covers Thurston County and Tumwater for The Olympian. She can be reached at 360-754-5435 or kbrenner@theolympian.com.
