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the next two years. Smith said any additional costs on the plant would also have to be incurred by the consumers.

Smith said Shearon Harris could not be accurately compared to the Chernobyl plant.

"I think its natural that Chernobyl has raised questions and anxieties among people with respect to nuclear power plants, he said. "It's our industry's responsibility to provide the public with sufficient information so that they'll know that what happened at Chernobyl absolutely should not happen here."

Both groups have been providing the public with information to support their separate claims. Confusion has been the result.

"Some of the information is conflicting," Chatham County Commissioner Carl Thompson said. "That's a tremendous problem where we're concerned. We want to make a decision based on fact."

Chatham, Wake, Harnett and Lee counties all lie partially within the 10-mile radius around the reactor. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission requires CP&L to have an evacuation plan for towns in the radius before it is given a license to operate.

On May 27, CASH scored its biggest victory when the Chatham County commissioners expressed dissatisfaction with the evacuation plan and voted unanimously to withdraw from it. "I really think that's what the people of Chatham County wanted," said Earl Thompson, commission chairman. "A local official is supposed to go with the majority."

Smith said that if Chatham County does not participate in the plan, the opening of Shearon Harris could be delayed six months at a cost of \$2 million a day.

Thompson said the commission would reconsider the plan after "critical examination of unresolved issues."

Beyond Chatham County, the influence of CASH on local governing bodies has been felt, among others, by the city councils of Durham, Carrboro, Hillsborough and Chapel Hill, and June 17 by the Orange County Commission. Each has responded to public pressure by passing resolutions calling for the conversion of Shearon Harris to a non-nuclear fuel plant.


"We don't believe in politics anyone is immune from the public," Eddleman said. "The basic idea is this: we get the facts out to the public, and when they see there are better and cheaper and safer alternatives, they just simply will not stand for Shearon Harris. Then we, the aroused public, contact our public officials and say do something about it."

On the Chapel Hill Town Council, Nancy Preston said the efforts of CASH definitely influenced the council's decision.


William Cummings, a leader of the Orange County CASH, said communications with public officials was not difficult. "We're a local-based, grass roots organization, so there's not a huge gap between us and them," he said.

The strength of CASH varies from county to county. In Wake County, the home of Shearon Harris, CASH has yet to present the commission with any evidence of its support there. "No, people haven't been contacting

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