

Nuclear plant to be safe, operational, CP&L official says

By RACHEL STIFFLER
Staff Writer

Despite some opposition from the public, the Shearon Harris nuclear power plant will begin operation in early 1987, a corporate communications spokesman for the plant said.

Jay Mullins, speaking for Carolina Power & Light, the company building the reactor, said the plant's fuel was not loaded in July as originally planned because pre-operational testing of the plant has not yet been completed.

"There are literally thousands of checks that must be made before a plant begins operation," Mullins said, adding that there have been no problems with the testing so far.

In Chapel Hill, 25 miles northwest of the town of New Hill where the Shearon Harris reactor is being built, the Coalition for Alternatives to Shearon Harris has been distributing

posters for area businesses to display in their windows which read, "This Business Does Not Support Shearon Harris."

CASH member Lightning Brown said the group's main concern is the safety of the reactor. He said accidents have occurred in other nuclear plants in the country as a result of problems similar to the ones that have occurred at Shearon Harris. He cited faulty seals in the coolant system as an example.

CASH's information on conditions inside the plant have come from the workers themselves, Brown said, adding that the problems have been reported to the attorney general and district attorney.

"I think it's trustworthy evidence," he said. "We have every right to question a big corporation that says nothing is wrong with their plant."

Brown said CP&L has been plagued with management problems in other nuclear plants it operates and that in 1983 the company was given the largest fine ever levied against any plant operator by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for infractions found at its plant in Brunswick County. He also cited the recent controversy in which plant workers were suspected of drug use on the Shearon Harris site.

Another issue of concern is that of the cost efficiency of the reactor, Brown said.

Brown said one alternative to the Shearon Harris plant would be for North Carolina to contract its electricity to be sent from other states where electricity is produced less expensively.

"Right now we are paying six to seven cents per kilowatt hour for electricity," he said. "The cost

estimate that CP&L has given the N.C. Utilities Commission is 15 cents per kilowatt hour. There's no reason why a company should be allowed to mismanage a plant so badly that they can charge twice as much (as we're paying now)."

Mullins said the figure that CP&L gave the Utilities Commission, which determines the rate customers will pay, is the amount it will cost the company to generate the electricity through Shearon Harris, not the amount that the customers will actually be charged, which he estimated to be close to nine cents per kilowatt hour. Although the plant would be operating at a loss, the company will be earning revenue from the plants that have already been built and have recovered their cost of construction.

Mullins said the cost and length of construction of Shearon

Harris was no greater than those of other nuclear reactors built at the same time. Construction on the plant began in 1978, he said.

He said the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board dismissed the drug use allegations against the workers after a thorough investigation.

The fine levied against the Brunswick plant was the largest ever received at the time it was given, Mullins said, but since that time larger fines have been given to other companies.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission regulates the industry "very tightly," he said. "There are very few utility companies that have not received a fine for some infraction. The problems at the Brunswick plant were mostly procedural."

"We've never been fined for anything that was a threat to public

health and safety. At the time the Brunswick plant was fined, it had been in operation since 1975; it was not under construction."

Mullins criticized CASH for overlooking the track record of the Brunswick unit since 1983.

"The NRC gives us a report every 18 months," he said. "The last report, which covered all of 1985 and part of 1986, gave us very high marks. We are very confident that Shearon Harris will operate safely."

"These plants represent the best technology available. We are legally required to build the plants necessary to generate electricity for an area. We don't build plants just to make money. Our choice is to build Shearon Harris or a coal plant, and we think the nuclear plant is far better, safer, and will have less impact on the environment than a coal plant."

Concern over acid rain levels grows among N.C. scientists

By PAUL CORY
Staff Writer

Acid rain is falling in western North Carolina, but a scientist from N.C. State University studying the problem said it's too early to tell if plant and stream life is in danger.

Ann Bartuska, assistant professor of forestry and program manager for the Southern Commercial Forest Research Cooperative, said the pH of the rainwater in the area has fallen as low as 3.6 (a pH of 7 is average).

"Data has just begun to come in," Bartuska said, adding that the soil in western part of the state is already acidic, so the acid rain may not have any major short-term effects. Also, since most of the water in the mountains is in the form of streams that contain small numbers of fish, any impact on North Carolina's fish population will take a while to become noticeable, she said.

Jim Shepard, public information officer at the N.C. Environmental Management Division agreed, saying, "We have had some acid rain, but there has been no major damage."

The scientists from N.C. State University are also studying whether or not the combination of acid rain and the high concentration of ozone in the mountains is causing severely stunted growth in trees.

Acid rain is caused by sulfur oxides, which come from power and

manufacturing plants, and nitrous oxides, which come mainly from cars, trucks, and motorcycles, being emitted into the air. The oxides then react with the water in rainclouds to form nitrous and sulphurous acids, which then fall to the ground in rain.

In other areas of the country, particularly the Northeastern states, acid rain has killed off entire lakes and large areas of forest. If nothing is done, the same thing could happen in North Carolina. Bartuska is hopeful, however, that the trend can be reversed.

The Environmental Protection Agency has placed lower limits on the amount of sulfur oxides in plant emissions, and Congress is considering several bills to lower the limits even further. The actions of the EPA, plus a concentrated cleanup effort, have managed to restore some devastated New York lakes to life.

The bills before Congress are mainly concerned with sulfur oxide emissions. But Bartuska warned that acid rain will continue to be a problem until nitrous oxide emissions are reduced as well. She said this would be the hardest part, because it would entail higher automobile costs and people would have to drive their cars less.

"We have to decide whether we want an environment that's livable, or lower bills," Bartuska said.

Students measure support for Broyhill on campuses

By SHARON KEBSCHULL
Staff Writer

UNC's chapter of Students for Broyhill began a mock election Monday to rate Sen. James Broyhill's popularity on campus.

The poll will continue through registration, with the results out in about two weeks, said Gene Davis, who was taking results outside Hanes Hall.

The poll, which read, "If the election for U.S. Senate was held today, for whom would you vote?" is funded by Students for Broyhill, which is funded by Broyhill for Senate.

Broyhill, a 23-year Republican congressman from Lenoir, was recently appointed to Senate to fill the post of John East, who committed suicide last month. He and former Gov. Terry Sanford, a Democrat, are vying for the seat.

The mock election will be held

statewide, with polls taken at 30 participating North Carolina campuses. The statewide results will then be compiled to see "how candidates are doing across the state with students," said Andrew T. Ragan, the SFB state executive director.

No campaign contacts will be made from addresses given on the poll, unless students starred the ballot. Those students will be helped by SFB to register to vote and receive absentee ballots, Ragan said.

SFB was pleased with the turnout by Tuesday afternoon. "We did this also for the 1984 governor's races, and this is the biggest turnout yet," said Jim Wooten, chairman of the Chapel Hill chapter.

No other activities have been planned yet by SFB, but they are working on getting Broyhill to speak on campus, Wooten said.

Rains ease drought, but shortage persists

By SCOTT GRIEG
Staff Writer

The water level of University Lake, the main water supply for Chapel Hill, rose just over eight inches in three hours Wednesday, but Orange Water and Sewer Authority officials said they were not yet considering lifting the mandatory water conservation measures.

Patrick Davis, assistant to the executive director of OWASA, said University Lake was 29 3/4 inches below normal capacity at 2:15 p.m., up from 37 1/2 inches below normal at 11 a.m.

Davis said in a telephone interview that the Chapel Hill area had received 2.3 inches of rain since 8 a.m.

"We can in no way say that the worst is over, though," Davis said.

"We're coming up on the three months that are traditionally always the driest of the year — September, October and November — and the National Weather Service just released its outlook which predicts the rainfall for that time period to continue to be below normal."

The water conservation measures are still mandatory and put restrictions on watering lawns, washing cars, serving water at restaurants and other dispensable water uses.

Those measures are "stage two" measures, based on a severity scale from one to five. Chapel Hill has never had to implement measures beyond stage 3, which go into effect when University Lake has dropped 54 inches or more below normal.

"To my knowledge, we haven't had any complaints from commercial customers about the restrictions," Davis said. "People have been very good about following the guidelines we set up and water use has dropped substantially."

"Since the mandatory restrictions were imposed, water demand has dropped to 5.5 million gallons a day, which represents a 20 percent drop in use," Davis said.

According to Davis, the accumulated rainfall from January to July in Orange County was 12 inches below normal and that was what caused the reservoirs to drop so rapidly.

"The lake (University Lake) was dropping at a rate of about an inch a day, and the rain we were getting was not enough to cause substantial run-off," he said. "The rains weren't hard enough or long enough, and consequently, the water just ended up being soaked up in the top layer of soil before it ever got a chance to run off."

At the worst part of the drought,

the quarry and the reservoir were dropping six to eight inches a day, he said.

Davis said the water shortage problem in Chapel Hill-Carrboro appeared to be an annual one but that OWASA tried to meet the needs of its customers.

The temporary dam on Cane Creek and the purchase of the Stone Quarry in Hillsborough are examples of this effort, he said.

Davis said he hopes returning students at UNC would do their best to help conserve water.

"The University is responsible for 30 percent of all the water used in the community and that amounts to almost 1.6 million gallons a day," he said. "In 1986, UNC used 583 million gallons of water."



AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY



SALE!
20-50% off summer cottons!

All clothes designed and sold exclusively at Modern Times
415 W. Franklin St. Chapel Hill, NC 27514

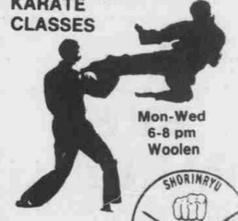
The Gold Connection says Dare to Compare
We have the lowest prices in town on 14K gold & sterling silver jewelry...
EVERYDAY!
967-GOLD
128 E. Franklin St.
Downtown Chapel Hill (behind Johnny T-Shirt)
Jack Tomkovic, Owner

You are invited to
Cornerstone Bible Church
4023 Pope Road, Durham
Dr. Phil Rose, Pastor

Sunday School	9:45 a.m.
Worship Service	11:00 a.m.
Evening Service	6:00 p.m.

Call 942-7735
for more information or transportation

KARATE CLASSES



Mon-Wed 6-8 pm
Woolen

Introductory Meeting: Wed, Aug 27
Studio B Woolen Gym 6:00 pm
Jack Davis 942-4382 or 942-9346
UNC Okinawan Shorin Ryu Karate Club

Westminster Alley
British and Irish Import Shop

In the Triangle's most interesting shop...

You'll find English brasses, Irish tea towels, Welsh stuffed dragons, Scottish woolens, tea pots and cosies, Pimpernel tablemats, Ladybird books, tartan and tweed ties, British Isles music, books, stationery and cards, kilt pins, sweaters, pubware, lovely soaps and fragrances, and the largest selection of British and Irish foods between here and London.

All under the green awning at Kroger Plaza
On D and F Bus Lines

10% Discount on any item with this coupon
Good through September 30, 1986
Mon.-Sat. 10-5:30
967-4528




CAROLINA DINING SERVICE

The Marriott Corporation is honored to have been selected to provide your Dining Service at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Our programs have been designed to provide quality food service to the campus community through responsive management, sensitive to the needs of you — the customer.

Our policy is open door. We welcome your constructive comments, opinions, and suggestions at any time.