

OWASA asks residents, students to conserve water as dry weather continues

By LINDSAY HAYES
Staff Writer

A repeat performance of last summer's dry weather has prompted the Orange Water and Sewer Authority to request voluntary water conservation measures by Chapel Hill-Carrboro area residents, businesses and institutions.

The request resulted from "extended hot and dry weather conditions in June and July and a 30-day forecast for below-normal precipitation and above-normal temperatures," said Pat Davis, assistant to the executive director at OWASA.

The city of Durham has been selling water to OWASA since Aug. 18. The water is pumped from Lake Holt in Butner, Davis said.

"The availability of water from the city of Durham reduces the potential need for requiring mandatory conservation measures," Davis said.

Water levels in the three local reservoirs have been dropping during the past few months, he said. The largest reservoir, University Lake, now contains about 240 million gallons of water, about 53 percent of its usable capacity of 450 million gallons, he said.

Stone Quarry and Cane Creek Reservoir are holding about 70 percent of their capacity of 198 and 190 million gallons respectively, Davis said.

In July and August, the 55,000 people served by OWASA in southeastern Orange and Durham counties consumed between 6.5 and 8.5 million gallons of water daily, Davis said.

OWASA officials expect that voluntary conservation will lower water consumption to less than six million gallons per day, he said.

Returning UNC students place a large demand on the water supply in September, when water use increases 8.5 to 13.5 percent, Davis said. After mandatory conservation measures were removed in September 1986, water consumption shot up more than 10 percent, he said.

The weather will determine how long OWASA will request voluntary water conservation measures, Davis said.

"If extreme dry weather continues over the next several weeks or months, (OWASA) might consider going to some additional conservation measures, including mandatory ones," he said.



DTH/Charlotte Cannon

Mist rises early Wednesday morning from the low level of water left in the north end of University Lake

In August 1986, when mandatory conservation measures were in effect, customers notified OWASA about people who were not complying with the guidelines, he said.

"Usually people won't hesitate to comply because they see the need for water conservation," he said.

To inform students of water conservation, OWASA will distribute brochures entitled, "The Tar Heel

Student's Guide to Easy Water Conservation," said Jo Soulier, an OWASA secretary in customer relations.

OWASA will give the brochures to the University housing department for distribution to each dormitory room, she said.

Future water shortages will be less likely during dry months after the Cane Creek Dam and Reservoir is

completed. Cane Creek will store three billion gallons of water, Davis said. Construction began in December 1986 and is scheduled for completion in July 1989, he said.

Cane Creek will yield up to 10 million gallons of water per day, Davis said. By comparison, University Lake has a reliable daily water yield of 3.5 million gallons.

Candidates

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erate the Republican session and former N.C. Gov. Jim Hunt will moderate the Democratic session, said David Dill, assistant to the chancellor.

The moderators will question the candidates on educational issues for the first hour. In the final half hour the candidates will field questions from public television journalist Judy Woodruff and New York Times education editor Edward Fiske.

"(The debate) is confined to education, unlike other debates which are often more shallow," Stedman said.

The candidates will face the audience in a semicircle, giving the debate a more intimate atmosphere and allowing the moderators freedom to move around, Dill said.

Special invitations to attend the forum have been extended to the

governors of 15 Southern states in an attempt to give the event a more regional significance, Stedman said.

In a related event, Secretary of Education William Bennett and Ernest Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, will be featured speakers at a banquet in the Morehead Planetarium Sept. 10.

Early estimates set the cost for the forum at \$30,000, but security has proven more expensive than planned, Dill said. The UNC system and UNC-CH will split the costs, he said.

Tickets for the debate are free and can be obtained by calling the UNC Office of Public Information at 962-0045, or by writing to the Presidential Forum, UNC Ticket Office, Box 3000, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27514.

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