

Ozone Levels Lead to Lawsuit

By JENNIFER HAGIN
Staff Writer

Complaints by several northeastern states that North Carolina is contributing to their high ozone levels have led to a legal battle that could cost power companies millions of dollars and raise rates for N.C. customers.

Some power companies are angered by the amount of nitrogen oxide that the Environmental Protection Agency has proposed for them to reduce, because such a large reduction would be very expensive.

As a result, they have banded together with companies from other states such as Michigan, Ohio, Virginia and West Virginia to protest the proposal and have also asked N.C. officials to join the fight.

Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts claimed the coal power plants in 12 southern and mid-western states were contributing to their high ozone levels. The northeastern states appealed to the EPA to force the 12 states to clean up the air.

Under Section 126 of the Clean Air

Act, individual states can petition the EPA to impose air quality control over power plants of other states.

Jeff Clark, director of policy analysis of communications in the EPA, said the concern surrounded the emission of nitrogen oxide. This gas combines with other pollutants in the air to form ground ozone and smog.

Clark said studying air quality models showed that wind was carrying ozone from the 12 states to other surrounding states. "The reason that we're doing this is to reduce smog in a cost-efficient way," he said.

The EPA had set a budget to reduce plant production by 75 percent and to reduce emissions from large boilers.

N.C. officials said the controversy was not over the idea of a nitrogen oxide reduction, but over the size of the reduction the EPA had proposed.

Mike Hughes, a company spokesman for the Carolina Power & Light Co., said CP&L had already planned to reduce its yearly nitrous oxide production from 29,000 tons to 24,000 tons by 2005.

Joe Maher, Duke Power Co. spokesman, said Duke Power was also

reducing production, following the state's plan.

Ed Scott, chairman of the Environmental Concerns Committee of the N.C. Citizens for Business Industry, presented another argument against the EPA's decision, saying the data collected in North Carolina disputed the EPA's claim. "Our data shows that we don't (cause other states' ozone levels to rise)." Hughes also said the charges were unfounded. "The charges are not backed up by scientific data and impose burdens economically to address problems in the northeast," he said.

Duke Power and CP&L requested that North Carolina join the other states in challenging the EPA.

Hughes said if the courts decided in favor of EPA, it would cost \$300 million and require companies to make significant changes in a short time period.

Scott said he wanted Gov. Jim Hunt to intervene for the state. "We encourage the government to weigh in on the state's behalf and say this isn't right."

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

YMCA Presents Expansion Plan

By SABINE HIRSCHAUER
Staff Writer

The Chapel Hill Town Council is examining the necessity of an expanded YMCA after organization officials made a presentation of the facility's needs to council members.

The YMCA of Chapel Hill-Carrboro, located at 980 Airport Road, filed an application this month with the town of Chapel Hill seeking a special use permit and presented its plans to town officials on Monday night.

According to the plan, the facility constructed in 1975 will receive an additional 27,899 square feet of space for expanded recreation tools and programs.

The council will make its final recommendation on April 10. Town Council member Kevin Foy summarized the council's overall satisfaction with the expansion plan but criticized the lack of a second access road to the facility.

"With the larger facility, there will be increased traffic to and from the prop-

erty," Foy said. "This is why it is very important to have more than just one access road to the property."

The construction schedule is divided into several phases. The expansion will provide for a variety of new recreational activities.

"In Phase 1, we will build, for example, a new gym, a weight-lifting room and a new jogging track," said YMCA Executive Director Glenda Andrews. "The second phase will include a child-care center, but this will be years from now."

Andrews also emphasized that the new facility would further enhance the YMCA's existing programs and would specifically integrate senior exercising programs.

"With the larger facility, we will be able to offer more active adult exercise programs and more educational seminars," she said.

The need for expansion became obvious as the 25-year-old YMCA facility outgrew most of its activities, Andrews said.

"Our parking lots were always

crowded, and we always had long waiting lists for our programs," he said.

Andrews said the first phase of the project would cost about \$1.2 million, and so far \$1 million had been raised. All of the money will come from fund raising.

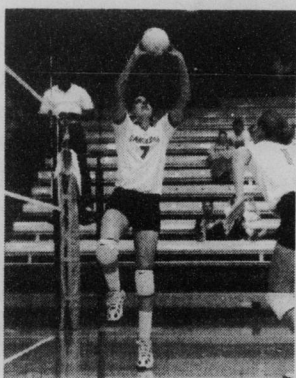
"We received most of the money through gifts from corporations and individuals in the community," she said. "And we are hoping for more of these gifts (to reach the \$1.2 million mark)."

The YMCA will have one year after the town issues the special use permit to start construction.

Town Council member Flicka Bateman said other than the lack of a second access road, she did not see any objections to approving the YMCA's application.

"The project is not at all controversial," she said. "If I were a resident on Airport Road, I would be delighted with such a new facility."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.



Kathy
Konczal

The University of North Carolina and Wachovia would like to congratulate Kathy Konczal, the Wachovia Woman of the Week.

Kathy is a sophomore from San Rafael, California, and a member of the UNC Women's Volleyball Team. She earned Dean's List and ACC Honor Roll honors the last two years and finished last semester with a 3.6 GPA. She is involved with the Student-Athlete Council, but gets most of her enjoyment from working with Project Home Start, a part of the HYPE program. On Tuesday nights, Kathy volunteers her time by working with kids in transitional Housing. Poised and mature beyond her years, Kathy is described by her coach as a quiet role model for her team, peers, and others.

Wachovia is committed to supporting achievements by women and is proud to celebrate Kathy Konczal's accomplishments.

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