

Town aldermen enact law to limit water use

By JUDITH TILLMAN
Staff Writer

An ordinance placing restrictions on water consumption in Chapel Hill was approved 6 to 1 by the town's Board of Aldermen at a special meeting Monday night.

The ordinance, effective as of 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 19, prohibits watering lawns, shrubbery and flower and vegetable gardens except from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Water flow into swimming pools must be reduced to the minimum necessary to maintain operation. Water-cooled air conditioners and other equipment that does not recycle water may not be used except when necessary to health and safety.

Washing motor vehicles, including use of commercial car washes, is also prohibited. Water may not be used to wash outside areas such as sidewalks, patios, and driveways. Its use in decorative fountains, pools, and ponds is banned.

Restaurants may serve water only on request while the ordinance is in effect. Those who violate the provisions of the ordinance will be charged with a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than \$50 or imprisonment of not more than 30 days.

The ordinance is based on a conservation plan prepared for the Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA) by Daniel K. Okun, Kenan professor of environmental science at the UNC School of Public Health. It outlines five stages of restrictions on water use which are based on the level of University Lake, Chapel Hill's only reservoir. The restrictions which went into effect Tuesday are in accord with stage two of the plan, the warning stage. Okun's report said that stage two restrictions should be used when the lake level fell to 48 inches below its normal level of 349 feet above sea level. The lake is now 57 inches below normal.

"We're trying to implement what Dan Okun calls drought management," said Alderman Jonathan Howes. "We don't know much about it and we're learning some very hard lessons this year."

Restrictions on water use will become more severe if the lake level continues to drop. Stage three would be effected if the lake fell to 72 inches below normal. No lawn watering would be permitted, while the restrictions of stage two would remain in effect.

If the lake drops to 96 inches below the top of the dam (the emergency stage), all outdoor uses of water would be banned except in situations involving firefighting. It would be illegal to operate air conditioners that recycle water except during business hours. All water flow to swimming pools will be stopped.

Stage five of the ordinance, the crisis stage, would be enacted if University Lake reached a level of 132 inches below full. Water would be rationed to provide minimal quantities required to maintain citizens' health and safety.

Stage one of the plan calls for voluntary reduction of water consumption when the

bus

Continued from page 4.

for 1977-78. The town had planned for \$400,000 in bus payments from UNC for 1977-78, an increase from the \$366,200 paid last year.

But Jones offered only \$338,409 for the upcoming year, the same percentage (37.5%) of the total budget UNC paid last year.

UNC's proposed cuts took town officials by surprise. According to town officials, the University early this year said that UNC would increase payments "up to \$400,000" to help cover inflation.

But the University cut its proposed payment on the assumption that reduced service is cause for reduced payment.

The town contends that the cuts in the bus budget affect only bus service to townspeople and not University personnel. Town officials emphasized that point in a meeting with University officials last Thursday.

Under the compromise, UNC would pay \$366,200 and the town would pay the rest of UNC's projected \$400,000 share of the bus budget.

lake is at 36 inches below its normal level.

Alderman R. D. Smith voted against the ordinance because he does not think it is strict enough. "We have passed the warning stage and should be using emergency restrictions now," he said.

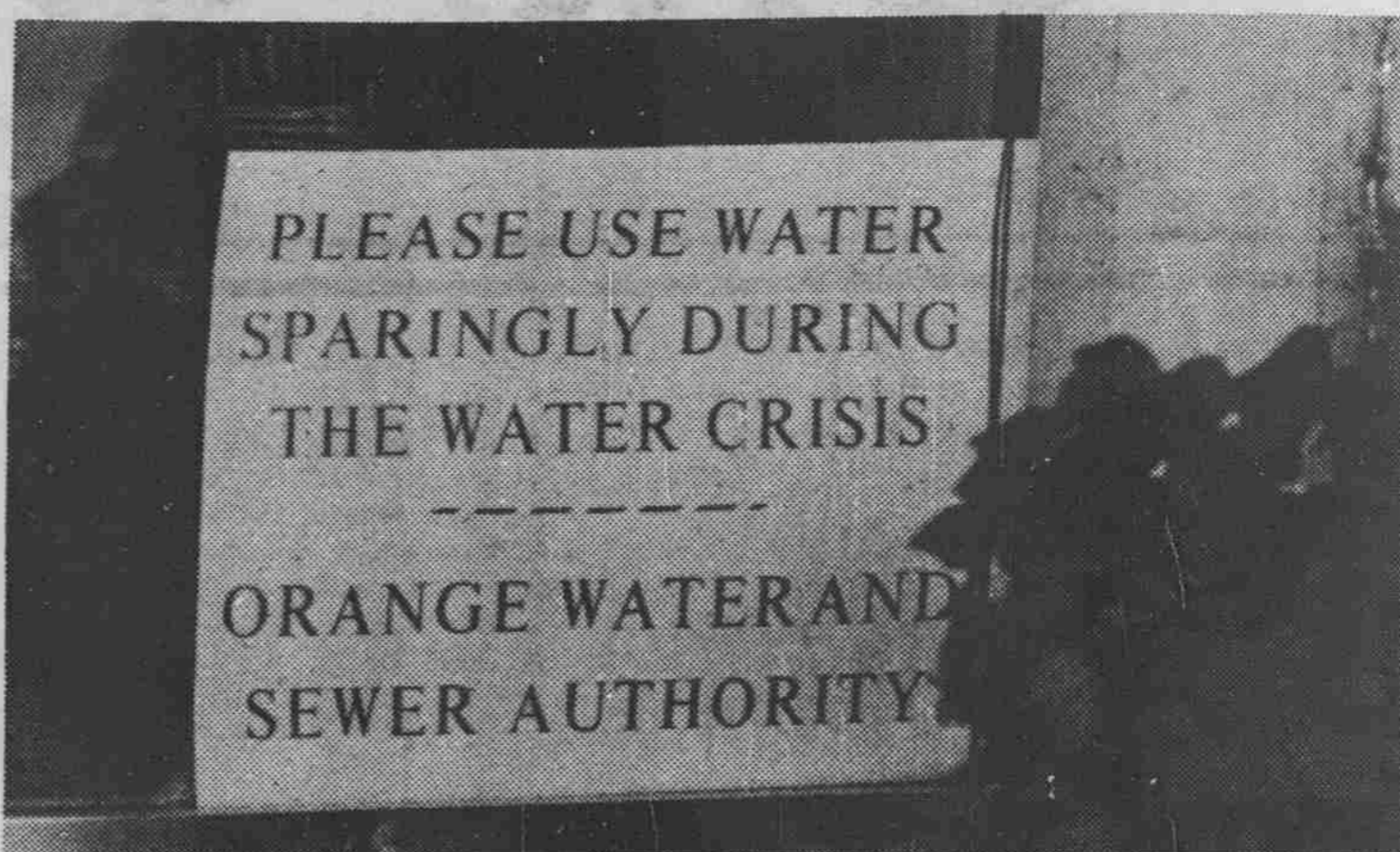
Chapel Hill's water shortage is more critical this year than it was in 1976 because of a lack of rain, unusually high temperatures, an increase in water consumption, and Durham's inability to sell as much water as it has in the past.

Durham's supply is taxed to the point that they just can't supply us with very much," said Alderman Howes. "We'll barely be able to purchase an average of one million gallons a day. We're looking at short-run possibilities such as the Eno River."

Durham sold Chapel Hill one to three million gallons of water daily from August to November, 1976.

Howes also said that OWASA is trying to speed up action on the Cane Creek reservoir proposal. Residents of the Cane Creek area have opposed the plan which is now in the hands of the courts.

Mayor Wallace added that he hopes OWASA is moving ahead with rationing facilities. "I think it's coming sooner than we realize," he said. "I think it will be necessary this summer."



The Board of Aldermen acted Monday night on an ordinance that will put into effect restrictions on water use in Chapel Hill. Photo by L. C. Barbour.

The Aldermen urged citizens to conserve water as much as possible. "We need an extensive campaign to get the message to citizens that the situation is very, very crucial," said Alderman Gerry Cohen. "People can cut water consumption dramatically without altering their standards of living. If they don't, they're

going to alter it seriously very soon."

UNC announced voluntary conservation efforts last week, but there has been no discussion among University officials on the possibility of delaying the start of the fall semester on account of the water shortage. Students will be returning to Chapel Hill during the last week in August.



the MAD HATTER

A NORTH CAROLINA STYLE DELI

The Ultimate Salad Bar

Choose from over 40 items
Three types of fresh crisp lettuce, fresh mushrooms, croutons, grated cheeses, peanuts, fresh cauliflower, ham, shrimp, sardines, cottage cheese, sunflower seeds, broccoli, and topped with a homemade dressing!

Try this truly mouthwatering salad bar—

Wednesday, Thursday or Friday Only

for only:

1.50

Downstairs in the BBI
Next to the Yogurt Barn

929-3824
128 E. Franklin St.