

# news

## Water shortage not seen for Chapel Hill this fall

By Martha Schutz

No water shortage problems are anticipated for Chapel Hill this summer by Orange Water and Sewer Authority, University or town officials.

OWASA Director Everett Billingsley said the water supply is good and the University Lake level is just an inch below full.

Claude E. Swecker, UNC Physical Plant director, said it may be too early to make predictions as "droughts are always possible," but a shortage is not in sight.

The adequate water supply can be attributed to sufficient rainfall, but may be due to more conscientious consumers.

In past summers, long dry spells and increasing water demands resulted in severe shortages. The summers of 1976 and 1977 revealed the necessity for expansion of water resources and triggered the current Cane Creek reservoir controversy.

Despite population growth, community conservation efforts have held current demands to the level of five years ago, Billingsley said.

Since 1977, when Chapel Hill began practicing water conservation, the "University has been quite effective at reducing its water consumption," said Robert S. Peake, UNC utilities director. Today, fewer and fewer students are aware of the potential problems, he said, and if a crisis were to occur, stricter measures would be enforced.

In the event of such a crisis, contingency plans would go into effect. These plans would include many of the same



DTH File Photo

Sign during 1977 drought ... shortage almost closed UNC

restrictions imposed in 1977. The University would comply with town guidelines for restricting water use: limiting dormitory showers and transporting water for maintenance use from outside Chapel Hill.

The University should have no need for these plans, though, Town Council member Jonathon Howes said. "There is no likelihood of a problem like we had in '76 and '77. OWASA has acquired a quarry full of water—as much water as we have bought from Durham in prior years."

The stone quarry is a temporary solution to a problem OWASA feels the Cane Creek reservoir would solve. The procurement of the dredging and filling permit and appeals by the Cane Creek Conservation Authority are the only obstacles to the reservoir.

An environmental impact statement on Cane Creek has been prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers. A public hearing on the study is scheduled for this fall.

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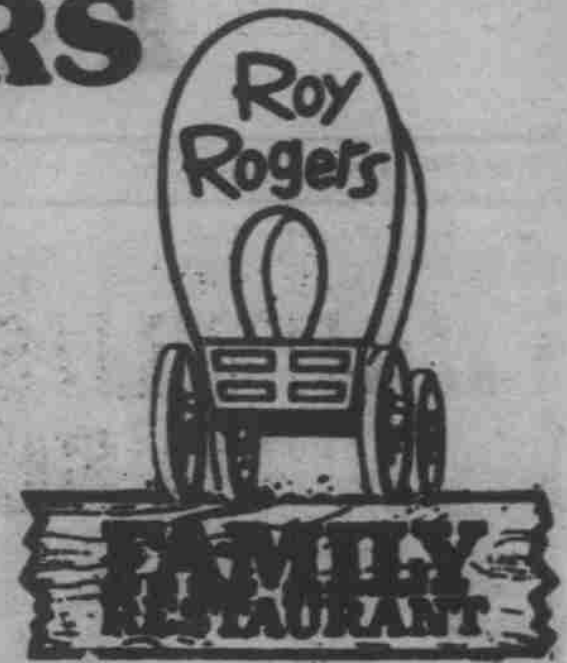
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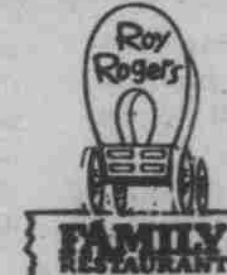
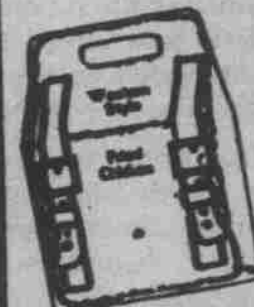
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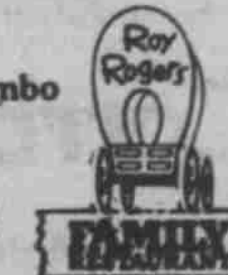


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