

Safety report slams local power plants

By MICHAEL JORDAN
Staff Writer

A report released Sept. 8 by Ralph Nader's Public Citizen group criticizing several nuclear power plants — including plants owned by Carolina Power and Light (CP&L) and Duke Power — misconstrues Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) records, spokesmen for area power companies said.

The report, entitled "1986 Nuclear Power Safety Report," said Duke Power and CP&L ranked in the top 20 for the number of emergency shutdowns at their nuclear power plants.

"We believe the report to be extremely misleading," said Rick White, manager of news services at CP&L.

The group opposes nuclear power, said Paul Viggiano, a spokesman for Duke Power.

"Their whole goal is to attack the

nuclear industry," Viggiano said. Joshua Gordon, a nuclear analyst for Public Citizen's Critical Mass Energy Project and principal author of the report, said the report indicates accurately the industry's declining safety standards.

"Over the course of years, we've seen (the nuclear power utilities) get worse and worse," Gordon said Friday.

Gordon said nuclear plants have experienced emergency shutdowns with increasing frequency.

The plants were designed to accommodate a limited number of shutdowns without damage to operating parts, but the utilities are approaching the upper limits of the safety margin, Gordon said.

"I think that Duke Power does not deserve the good reputation it has," Gordon said.

The NRC reports the worst accidents or near-accidents in the nuclear

industry to Congress each year, he said.

In 1986 plants operated by Duke Power had three out of the 11 abnormal occurrences classified by the commission, Gordon said.

"These results, on a safety scale, posed no danger to the public," Viggiano said. "And that's what we're concerned with."

Viggiano said the shutdowns were safety precautions, not emergencies. He said two of the shutdowns occurred because of events beyond the company's control, including last summer's drought and parts supplied to the company that failed to meet safety standards.

"We feel that we have the best nuclear power system in the nation," Viggiano said. "We don't know why he's singling out Duke Power. Maybe it's because we're the best in the industry."

Sue Gagner, a public affairs officer

for the NRC, said Nader's group took facts from the commission and interpreted them to fit its desires.

"We would like to see Mr. Nader's group report things more accurately," Viggiano said.

Viggiano said Gordon had misused the NRC's records on licensing problems.

Viggiano said licensing problems can be anything from an improper filing of documents with the commission to a full-scale emergency shutdown, but that Gordon had not made that distinction in the report.

The report said Duke Power's two Catawba plants, located south of Charlotte, ranked seventh and 10th in the number of licensing problems in 1986.

The report also said Duke Power's Catawba plants ranked eighth and 11th in emergency shutdowns in 1986. A CP&L plant in Hartsville, S.C. ranked 16th.

Task force suggests housing improvements

By LEIGH ANN McDONALD
Staff Writer

Substandard housing conditions in the poor parts of rural Orange County hardly compare to conditions in Chapel Hill, but county government and private sector businesses could work together to provide decent affordable housing, according to a report prepared by the county's

Low- and Moderate-Income Housing Task Force.

"There are major differences between Chapel Hill and rural Orange County," said task force Chairman Lightning Brown. "Chapel Hill appears to be an island of rich people."

The housing report targets county residents with low and moderate

income, which is less than \$26,720. This income figure is 80 percent of the county's median income, which is \$33,400.

The task force found that 513, or 2.4 percent, of the houses in Orange County have no indoor bathrooms. There are no heating systems in 11.9 percent of the homes.

Among the 10 recommendations, the task force suggested that Orange County form a non-profit housing corporation that would create affordable housing and improve conditions in existing homes.

"A non-profit housing corporation is needed in the county to serve the general needs of the ordinary people," Brown said. "By ordinary people, I mean people such as the secretaries on the University staff. Less than one third of the University staff can afford to live in Chapel Hill."

The task force made other recommendations that the study indicated would be especially successful in Orange County:

- Rehabilitate housing that is below standard health and safety conditions.
- Encourage private developers to build more low- and moderate-income homes, such as modular and site-built homes, by amending the restrictive county zoning ordinance.
- Amend the county zoning ordinance to allow the construction of new mobile home parks and improve conditions in existing parks.

The zoning ordinance limits the amount of space allowed for mobile

home parks, said Tara Fikes, housing services director.

"The task force recommended that the commissioners should examine any county ordinances that would prevent developers from building mobile home parks," Fikes said. "Mobile homes are one of the better options (for low- and moderate-income families) because of their affordability."

Brown agreed that mobile homes are currently the most reasonable option for many county residents.

"The housing market (in Orange County) is such that for people who earn ordinary salaries, the best choice they can afford is mobile homes," he said.

But some existing mobile home parks are in bad condition, Brown said. The shortage of mobile home parks in the county holds down competition among the park developers and owners, who sometimes fail to enforce minimum health and safety standards.

According to the task force report, mobile homes are the most important source of low- and moderate-income housing available, and they are the fastest-growing segment of the county housing market.

The task force has presented its findings to the county commissioners and the county manager, Fikes said. The county manager will determine which agencies can best implement each of the report's recommendations and then report back to the commissioners.

Bell Tower to shut down for rewiring operation

By MICHAEL JACKSON
Staff Writer

For three days this week, the Morehead-Patterson Memorial Bell Tower will not remind students of the time by sight or by sound.

The tower's clock and chimes will not be operating Sept. 22, 23 and 24, said John Yesulaitis, director of the Marching Tar Heels. Rewiring of the tower will be completed on those days by physical plant workers.

"The tower is very old, and the wire

is deteriorating," Yesulaitis said. "It's a hazard."

There have been no problems with the tower's wiring system before, he said, and the rewiring is simply a matter of prevention.

The 56-year-old tower, which plays songs four times a day and chimes every quarter-hour throughout the day and night, will probably operate again late Thursday or Friday morning, Yesulaitis said.

U.S., Soviet officials iron out remaining kinks in arms pact

From Associated Press reports

WASHINGTON — Despite an agreement in principle on a nuclear arms pact, the United States and the Soviet Union remain divided on two important provisions and are sending their experts back to the bargaining table.

Yet to be resolved are differences over the timetable for withdrawal of the intermediate-range nuclear missiles covered by the agreement and on a set of rules to prevent violations of the treaty.

After three days of talks, President Reagan announced on Friday that he and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev were committed to signing the treaty at a summit meeting in the United States this year, but that details must still be worked out.

"It's a commitment to each other to work our backsides off on the details; it is not an agreement to sign any old thing because there is to be a summit this fall," said one of several U.S. negotiators who spoke about the remaining differences on condition of anonymity.

Bork's chances still uncertain

WASHINGTON — After the first week of his confirmation hearings, Robert Bork's chances of becoming a Supreme Court justice remain as much in doubt as the effects of his extraordinary five days of testimony packs for future nomination fights.

As the Senate Judiciary Committee prepares to hear from Bork's backers and detractors in the hearings' second phase, key questions are unanswered:

- Will the impressions Bork created in his bid to win approval of the committee's 14 members be bolstered or eroded as the hearings continue?
- What effect will the committee's vote, still weeks away, have when the nomination reaches the full Senate?
- Has the Supreme Court now established without a doubt the propriety of asking a Supreme Court nominee about his or her judicial ideology or political

News in Brief

beliefs, and then voting based on those views?

■ Has Bork's willingness to provide answers to such queries, a break from recent precedent, set the model for future nominees?

Among the committee's eight Democrats and six Republicans, Bork appears likely to win the support of five Republicans and attract negative votes from five Democrats.

Followers criticize Pope

NEW YORK — Pope John Paul II talked more than he listened during his pastoral visit to the United States, leaving his sometimes reluctant followers wondering how much he really heard.

"It is pretty clear to me that he has not listened at all to what people are saying. They have no impact on his views," said Leonard Swidler, a Roman Catholic theologian at Temple University in Philadelphia.

"He is hearing what is said, he just doesn't agree with everything that is said," concluded historian David O'Brien of Holy Cross College in Worcester, Mass. "I think the pope does not understand well the problems that confront the American church."

An unusual smuggling attempt

NEW YORK — Doctors found 46 condoms filled with cocaine inside the stomach of a man who sought treatment for severe abdominal pain and constipation about a week after he returned from Colombia, police said.

Fidel Figueroa, 31, of the Bronx, went to Lincoln Hospital's emergency room Saturday. X-rays led doctors to operate, and they discovered the condoms and called the police, said Hugh Barry, a police department spokesman.

Police believe he swallowed the cocaine-filled condoms during a recent trip to Colombia in order to smuggle the drug into the United States, Barry said.

Purdy's from page 1

Mason said people 21 and older who still have valid Purdy's memberships can trade them in for Sponge's memberships.

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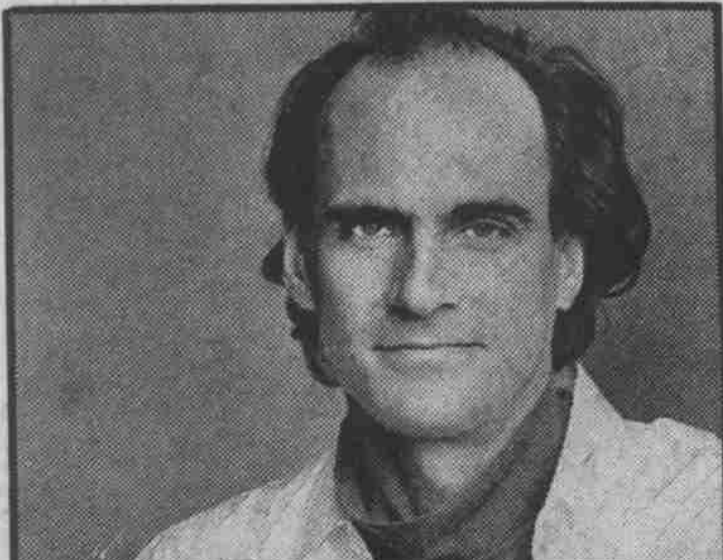
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