

County Survives Bolivia Water Crisis

BY TERRY POPE

Visitors at the Brunswick County Government Center in Bolivia Tuesday morning noticed fire hoses running from a couple of hydrants, but there was no fire.

County officials had to reroute water from county-owned hydrants during a water outage by the town of Bolivia, which sells water to the complex.

"Everything's on go right now," Cecil Logan, Brunswick County's Emergency Management coordinator, said Tuesday morning. "The complex has a full supply of water."

An emergency outage was announced by the town of Bolivia around 4:30 p.m. Monday and was scheduled to last from 8 a.m. to noon Tuesday. Logan said some valves had to be replaced.

County Manager David Clegg said he at first panicked, for a lack of water would have shut the government center down.

An estimated 400 people were scheduled to fill the Brunswick County Courthouse Tuesday for unusually crowded sessions of district criminal and superior civil court. The county jail and cafeteria are fed from the Bolivia water system.

"The pressure will be down, but we will have water," said Clegg. "They have addressed that problem."

Logan and Public Utilities Director Jerry Webb devised a way to feed county water from a hydrant on U.S. 17 in front of the complex into the Bolivia water lines on the complex grounds. Fire hoses were borrowed from Tri-Beach Volunteer

Fire Department near Holden Beach.

"They are new hoses that have never been used," said Logan. "We just got together Monday afternoon and thought about what we could do, and we came up with this solution."

Clegg said he was told Monday that the town was experiencing some major valve problems. Within two hours, county officials had reached a solution to the water outage at the complex.

Logan and Webb briefed Clegg so he could inform county commissioners of the outage at Monday's meeting at 6:30 p.m.

"It's good to know that when faced with a crisis like this that county employees can put their heads together and come up with a solution so quickly," said Clegg.



STAFF PHOTO BY TERRY POPE

NEW FIRE HOSES borrowed from the Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department helped provide water to the Brunswick County Government Center Tuesday.

HELP IS OFFERED

Local Support Groups To Battle Diabetes

BY TERRY POPE

The county's two hospitals are working together to offer help and support to patients diagnosed with diabetes.

"When you have been labeled as having a disease, you panic," said Rita Hatcher, public health educator for the Brunswick County Health Department. "When you don't have someone to sit down and talk with you about it, you panic even more."

Ms. Hatcher has coordinated the effort to begin a diabetes public education program and support group for both Doshier Memorial Hospital in Southport and The Brunswick Hospital in Supply. Diabetics often face the future with fear and uncertainty, she said.

She was inspired to pursue help for diabetics in April, when she first joined the department and heard that a need was there.

"When I did take this knowledge to the community, I found out how true it was," said Ms. Hatcher. "There was a real need for this service."

The health department completed a community diagnosis assessment of health problems and concerns in Brunswick County. The top concerns, the study found, were diabetes and osteoporosis.

Since Brunswick County is a retirement mecca, the elderly are likely to be interested in how to prevent or live with diabetes, she said. Diabetes is a disorder that produces excessive amounts of sugar in the blood or urine. A proper diet is needed to help prevent the disease.

Osteoporosis is a decrease in the bone mass caused by poor nutrition, resulting in fragile and brittle bones in a person's later years.

However, diabetes is across the board; it affects all ages, she said.

Often, doctors don't have the staff or the time to spend with diabetics to teach them what they need to know about nutrition, administering medications, risk factors and monitoring of the disease, said Ms. Hatcher.

An education center will be established at both hospitals where nurses can teach patients how to live with the disease. Diabetics who go through the program will be asked to volunteer for the support groups, to offer new patients and their families moral support.

"We're hoping that one program will feed the other," said Ms. Hatcher.

Keeping the program at the hospitals ensures that a doctor will always be close by, she said.

"I think that's very important,"

she said. "If you have any questions, the experts are there to answer them."

A group of 14 volunteer nurses, doctors, hospital staff members and diabetic patients have been meeting regularly to review material that will serve as an education kit. Other counties that have support groups and the state have furnished sample materials.

The group will meet today (Thursday) at the Brunswick Hospital, hopefully with word on how soon the support groups can form, said Ms. Hatcher.

In the support groups they plan to discuss a range of issues associated with diabetes, such as: how to obtain health insurance for those diagnosed; how parents can help children cope with the disease; how exercise can help in its treatment; how to overcome problems associated with diabetes; how diabetics can enjoy eating in restaurants; and how to cope with traveling.



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