

(13)

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING THE
PROPOSED OWASA WATER CONSERVATION
REGULATIONS**

1. Section II.2. "By [date to be determined], all irrigation systems that are equipped with automatic timers and which use OWASA-supplied potable water shall be equipped with automatic rain or soil moisture sensors that are activated to prevent the operation of those irrigation systems when it is raining and/or when soil moisture is adequate. Rain and soil moisture sensing devices shall be subject to approval by OWASA."

- a) Is it intended that this requirement for rain/soil moisture sensors be applied to existing systems?

The requirement is intended only for newly installed irrigation systems. OWASA will recommend that existing systems be retrofitted.

- b) Are such systems in existence in Carrboro?

Yes. Most irrigation contractors provide these on newly installed systems.

- c) If so, what cost is involved in adding these sensors?

Contractor quotes for retrofitting the most highly recommended rain sensor are in the range of \$60 to \$145, installed.

- d) Why is OWASA's approval of the sensing devices necessary? What will the approval process be?

OWASA's approval was proposed to ensure the installation of devices with appropriately high standards of performance and reliability. Subsequent communication with local contractors has indicated that one product in particular is more highly recommended than others and is installed on virtually all new systems. Given these findings, the requirement for OWASA's approval may be unnecessary.

2. Section III.1.c. Why should restrictions be invoked based on demand reaching a specified percentage of the "target three-day peak limit" when that limit is based on peak demand for the prior year rather than water treatment capacity?

The use of demand conditions for invoking water restrictions is consistent with Goal 2 of the ordinance: "To reduce the upward trend of seasonal peak day demands that drive the costly expansion of water treatment, storage, and transmission facilities." The use of percentages (90 percent for Stage I, and 97 percent for a Stage II shortage) provides a mechanism for alerting the community that demands are approaching a level that should not be exceeded. Average consumption for the prior 12 months is used as the denominator for calculating the peak day ratio, because those data provide the most current indication of annual demand. The proposed language provides for target limits to be based on "other production constraints – such as water treatment capacity" if necessary.

3. **Section IV. Is the intent of this section that the Mayor be required to issue a proclamation invoking the restrictions of the ordinance when informed by OWASA's Executive Director that conditions described under Section II exist, or that the Mayor is authorized to issue such a proclamation?**

The language of Section IV is taken directly from the existing ordinance: "the Mayor . . . is authorized, empowered, and directed to issue a public proclamation declaring to all persons the existence of such state and the severity thereof, and in order to more effectively protect the health and safety of the people within Carrboro, to place in effect the restrictive provisions hereinafter authorized." The language appears to require the proclamation, but if this is unclear, the intent could be further clarified by language adopted by the Board of Aldermen.

4. **Section V. The introductory paragraph applies the restrictions to "any person, firm, or corporation," but subsection 5 seems to indicate that "business and institutional customers" including UNC are "encouraged" but not required to comply. For example, subsection 3 prohibits using OWASA water to wash vehicles, but under subsection 5.c. this restriction does not apply to "government-owned vehicles."**

The intent of Section V.5 is to clarify The University's role under the ordinance. (This is further discussed in the response to Question 5 below.) Section V.5 was not intended to exempt businesses from any requirements of the ordinance, and the word "Businesses" should probably be deleted from the draft.

5. **Section VI. What is the rationale should [sic] The University be "encouraged" rather than required to comply with the requirements of this section relating to irrigation?**

OWASA is advised that an existing statute grants UNC sole control over its own buildings and facilities, and The University would, therefore, be exempt from the local requirements specified in this ordinance. UNC officials have volunteered to establish their own water use restrictions that parallel the requirements of the ordinance and have indicated their intent to remain "in step" with restrictions imposed on the community at large. The exemption cited in Section VI.1 (which should also appear in Section V.1) is intended to recognize UNC's duty to control its own facilities as well as its willingness to restrict water use by its own regulations. The exemption should not be construed as lessening in any way The University's water conservation responsibilities in comparison to OWASA's other customers.