

Local

Three residence halls scheduled for fire drills

By CATHIE FEICHL
Battalion Reporter

Three residence halls on the Texas A&M University campus will conduct fire drills some time this month.

Ron Sasse, associate director of student affairs, said area coordinators from the Commons, Corps and North area dorms will select one dorm in their respective areas to participate in a drill.

Dr. John J. Koldus, vice president for student services, said the present major hotel fires in Las Vegas and five fires on the Texas Christian University campus this year have made the department more conscious of fire damages in campus buildings.

"It's a concern we have always had," Koldus said. "It's not something we've been against; it's just something we haven't been as proactive about as we should be," he said.

With student enrollment on the increase, Sasse said, it is becoming necessary to re-evaluate the fire alarm system. He said in halls like Schumacher, which has only one central exit, evacuation during a fire could be dangerous and disorganized. Problems with safe evacuations from the dorms and effective alarm systems need to be re-evaluated, he said.

"We need to find out what is right for Texas A&M, and we thought a good way to do that would be to provide a test run in each area," Sasse said.

"By watching what happens in these three dorms we are going to figure out a plan for next fall for all the dorms," he said.

Sasse said each area's staff will plan and conduct its fire drill. He said the staffs will decide whether the drills will be announced or unannounced, and when they will occur.

Paul Henry, Commons area coordinator, said the Commons fire drill will take place in Mosher Hall. Henry said he selected Mosher, the largest dorm on campus, because it houses 674 women and would be the most difficult to evacuate.

The Commons staff will coordinate the time and place of the drill with the fire department Henry said. He said he is excited about the new fire drill program because large housing facilities need to take more fire safety precautions.

Monica Christen, assistant area coordinator in the north area, said a dorm will be selected from that area by next week.

John White, assistant area coordinator in the Corps area, said a dorm had not yet been selected for a drill in that area either, but the dorm selected would be one of the 12 male dorms.

Sasse said a system for fire drills has been discussed in previous years but no one decided to examine the problem until this year. He said one of the reasons fire drills have never been held on the campus is because some staff thought it wasn't necessary.

"They felt things were working fine," Sasse said. "So why change it?"

At the beginning of the fall semester, every head resident and resident adviser are given an explanation of the fire alarm system in their particular dorms. Staff members view safety evacuation films and learn how to operate fire extinguishers. Extinguishers are available in every resident adviser's room.

Building and evacuation procedures are posted in all dorm rooms but head residents and the resident advisers are not instructed how to conduct an evacuation.

Minor fires in residence halls have been attributed to residents' carelessness as well as to pranksters' mischief.

Trash chute fires have occurred in the Commons but building evacuations have never been necessary, Henry said.

Evacuation from Dorm 4 was necessary in August due to a fire which damaged one room.

Water supply predicted OK

By TERRI ZAWACKI
Battalion Reporter

Although West Texas and the Texas Gulf Coast are being threatened with a water crisis, authorities in Bryan-College Station don't fear a local water shortage.

Bryan and Texas A&M University have an plentiful water-supply source, K. J. Koenig, assistant department head of geology, said. Both entities obtain their water from wells within the Simsboro Sands Formation which reach as deep as 2,500 feet below the surface.

And, College Station is presently in the process of developing capabilities to also draw water from the formation. Bennie Luedke, water and sewer superintendent of College Station, said the system should be completed within six months.

College Station currently buys over 85 percent of its water from Texas A&M, said Desiree Bohning, an employee of the College Station Water Department.

Koenig said the wells' water supplies shouldn't be affected by temporary dry spells unless this area undergoes 10 to 12 years of drought. Water is drawn to the source from rain and rivers that flow across it by a gravitational pull.

Orville Housden, water production supervisor for Bryan, said the 15 wells Bryan uses are able to supply the amount of water needed now. And additional wells will be added as they are needed, he said.

"I don't expect a problem with the water for a long time," Housden said.

Gerald Scott, manager of engineering and energy for the Texas A&M Physical Plant, agreed. Although water is being pumped from the formation at a rate faster than it can be replenished, he said he also doesn't see a problem for many years.

Scott said it was his understanding that what might have appeared to have been a water shortage in College Station last summer involved distribution rather than supply.

The pipes in the water distribution system are sized for a certain quantity of water. When water is used in excess, the pipes are unable to handle the flow even if water is available because of a severe drop in pressure.

However, Luedke said he thought the situation was due to a lack of water.

An official at the Texas A&M Physical Plant who wished to re-

main anonymous said that when a problem occurred in the University's water system last summer, Texas A&M cut back College Station's supply.

Housden said that Bryan didn't have any difficulties with their water supply last summer.

One problem which affected Texas A&M's water system last summer occurred when a train derailment broke a water line.

A recent study on the water distribution system at Texas A&M recommends installation of larger pipes and the addition of new pipelines for more efficient distribution. Plans to change the distribution system have not been made.

The only source of the world's water supply is rain, but only a small fraction of it is used as rainwater. Over one-quarter of the water used in the United States is taken from underground reserves like the Simsboro Sands Formation.

Reagan economist to keynote meeting

Dr. Arthur B. Laffer, the originator of supply-side economics theory — the cornerstone of Reagan's economic program — will speak at an economics conference today at 1 p.m. in Rudder Theater.

Laffer will present the keynote address at the fourth annual Conference on Leadership in Free Enterprise Education sponsored by Texas A&M's Center for Education and Research in Free Enterprise to be held at the University today and Saturday.

The economist is director of the University of Southern California's Center for the Study of Private Enterprise and a member of the Los Angeles Times board of economists.

During 1972-1977, he was a consultant to the secretaries of treasury and defense. He presently serves on the policy committee and the board of directors of the American Council for Capital Formation in Washington D.C.

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