

# State and Local

## Sinking dorms?

Haas, McFadden to get partial reconstruction

By BECKY BARRET  
Reporter

The rumors are flying about Haas and McFadden Halls. Many residents say the dormitories are sinking, some feel they're falling apart and a few think the dorms eventually will be torn down.

But according to Glenn Ferris, the housing operations supervisor, these rumors are untrue, although he says there is a problem.

"The heavy rainfall and nearby sprinkler systems have caused the soil underneath the dorms to expand and rise, causing mildew, pipe damage and flooding problems," Ferris says.

The soil beneath the two women's dorms has completely buried many pipes that were originally exposed, Ferris says.

In some cases, steel lines have been sheared in half, he says.

As a result, extensive mildew and occasional flooding have occurred on the first floor of the dorms.

After a heavy rainfall, one room in McFadden Hall flooded up to a foot in a closet, damaging some of the residents' shoes and other personal items.

Michelle Leighton, McFadden's first floor resident adviser, says, "At first we thought the water was coming in through the window, but we finally realized that it was seeping up from under the carpet."

Both dorms also have extensive cracking between the rooms, allowing rain to enter and settle, and causing some ceilings to leak.

Built in 1979, Haas and McFadden were the first modular-type dorms built at Texas A&M. Each module was constructed separately and then stacked on another.

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Ferris says that, of the six modular-type dorms on campus, Haas and McFadden are the only two needing reconstruction.

The problems of the dorms were first reported in 1982, he says, but due to a lack of funds, renovation has been delayed and is scheduled to begin late next spring.

In a memo last January, B.E. Woods, the engineering and design

supervisor of the Physical Plant, said it was obvious that the original construction of the grout joints between each room was, in some cases, far below that called for in the plans and specifications of the dorms.

Woods suggested relocating the existing sprinklers, constructing a new concrete retaining wall and mowing a strip around the perimeter of the buildings to stop the flow of water.

Three feet of soil beneath the dorms must be excavated by hand, Woods wrote, and all the underground piping and insulation must be replaced.

Wood also recommended that all the defective grout joints between the modules be replaced and re-banded and then painted to match the wall texture.

Ferris says the estimated cost for the renovation of the two dorms is \$230,000 and is expected to be completed by next fall.

"Because the damage to the dorms is exterior, we definitely don't have to shut the dorms down," Ferris says. "We hope to work around the residents with as little inconvenience as possible, doing the bulk of the work during the summer."

## Vending machines burglarized

By BRIAN PEARSON  
Staff Writer

Some people collect stamps. Some people collect doorknobs. Some people collect keys.

Recently, some of those who collect keys have used them to steal money from coin-operated machines at Texas A&M.

In three separate incidents, during a period from Sept. 26 to Oct. 9, \$34.20 vanished from three coin-operated machines on campus.

Detective Bill Wade of the University Police says none of the machines showed any sign of forced entry. He says a key had been used in the incidents that occurred in the Sterling Evans Library, Zachry Engineering Center and the Commons snack bar.

Sets of keys are stolen from the people who stock, maintain and collect money from vending machines, copier machines and bill-changer machines, Wade says. Sometimes those people lay their keys on top of the machines and may turn around and walk off.

"By the time they come back, somebody has already beat him to them (keys)," Wade says.

Because some keys can open more than one lock, a person has a chance to steal money from more than one machine.

"The key is common if you know what you're looking for," Wade says. "It's just a matter of getting a set of keys and going around until you find one that works."

Some of the keys that open coin-operated copier machines on the A&M campus also can be used to open similar copier machines on the University of Texas campus, Wade says.

He says there are no suspects in the three latest incidents.

Burglary of a coin-operated machine is a class A misdemeanor, which carries a maximum fine of \$2,000, a maximum prison sentence of one year or both.

What can be done to stop the thieves of these machines?

"Change the locks and hope that they can't get a hold of a master key," Wade says.

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