

Viewpoint

COUR. 2/2/77

Cooperative Conservation Can Avert a Dry Disaster

Water is the word on everybody's lips these days, and for good reason: It's running out.

San Mateo County reservoirs, which can hold 78 billion gallons, now contain only 36 billion. It is best to have at least 60 billion gallons in reserve, but even those 36 billion are running out.

In anticipation of an emergency, the San Francisco Water Department has started to monitor south San Mateo County water use. If a 10 per cent cutback is not achieved through voluntary measures within 30 days, we may face water rationing. Already the Public Utilities Commission has applied for a 20 per cent rate increase for all customers, in an effort to reduce consumption.

Voluntary measures can go a long way. Every time we use water, there is usually a more conservative way to do so. Such practices can save gallons at a time.

The normal method of showering, for example, usually consumes about 25 gallons. Turning the water off while soaping and then turning it on again to rinse uses only four gallons.

There are other examples of conservation: We can save 10 gallons per minute by watering lawns minimally. With a toilet tank displacement bottle only five gallons of water are flushed, compared to a usual six. Short-cycle dishwashers use only seven gallons; full cycles use 16. Washing dishes by hand with the water running wastes 30 gallons, but washing and rinsing dishes in a pan or sink takes only five. Needless to say, washing machines and dishwashers should only be used for full loads.

Personal hygiene habits use gallons and gallons of water, but we can stay just as clean by: not letting the water run while brushing teeth, using a minimal amount of water in the bathtub, and filling the basin for shaving or washing hands rather than leaving the tap on. Those simple steps combined can save more than 50 gallons.

Each person practicing all the methods we've suggested can save 150 gallons. If each of the 2 million users in our water district took those steps, the resulting savings would soon equal the present amount of water in the San Mateo County reservoirs.

Water is one element that literally touches every living thing. Only conscientious conservation will avert a dry disaster.

--MC

Board Was Wrong

Bel. Cour. 5/25/77
—When the Belmont School District Board of Trustees met Monday, May 16, what had been thought of as a regular agenda item was conspicuously absent: that of public comment.

—Considering that the meeting was one of the best attended in a year—the room was so packed that many in the audience were forced to stand—and that the main agenda item, a statement on teacher-district relations by the Belmont Faculty Association's chief negotiator, was sure to draw widespread comment, the deletion of any

District Makes Cuts To Save Resources

BEL. COUR. 3/23/77

The Belmont School District is taking active measures to conserve water and energy, according to Ken Weston, business manager.

“Various procedures have been implemented to cut down the usage of our diminishing resources,” said Mr. Weston. “We have installed water-savers in all toilet tanks, discontinued washing down sidewalk and gutters and we have directed our custodians to be on a constant lookout for leaking faucets, sprinklers and such.

“Some water fountains will be shut off on weekends when they are not needed. Although the

district will be cutting down on irrigation watering, playing turf will be minimally maintained for school and community recreation programs.

“During the gasoline crisis two years ago, a number of bus stops were combined or eliminated and routes were shortened. As a result, fuel costs have been cut by 20 per cent.

“We will be working with the Belmont Water District and other agencies to investigate new ways to cut down on our use of water and energy,” said Mr. Weston, “and we hope residents of Belmont will do the same in their homes.”

opportunity for the public to speak was nothing short of remarkable.

—The explanations for the elimination of any public comment period have been as mysterious as the elimination itself. Several representatives of the board and district have suggested that public comment was cut off out of a fear that the practice was illegal, in that a member of the public might bring up a topic that hadn't been listed on the agenda and thus force the board unlawfully to discuss business without giving the public advance notice. Another has noted, that, after all, very few people had ever used the public comment period, anyway and that it was frequently an “awkward period.”

—Such explanations might be satisfactory to the school board, but they are unlikely to mollify anyone in the standing room audience who wanted to comment on the quagmire between the district and teachers who felt he or she was being silenced by the board's action.

—And, indeed, they have every right to be dissatisfied. Perhaps, as has been said, the decision to eliminate a period for public comment was made well before it was known that the BFA would address the school board, but are we to believe that the board couldn't have reversed its decision once it found the teachers would address it?

—Perhaps the board members truly were afraid the public comment session was illegal and feared, as one member suggested, they might be sued if they used it last Monday night, but this is even harder to swallow. As a regular practice the Belmont City Council, Planning Commission, and Fire District all have an agenda item for either public comment or additional business and none have felt the fear of a lawsuit. Under the circumstances, it is more plausible to suggest that the board was more afraid of comments from citizens present at the meeting than of lawsuits from citizens who were absent.

—Even granting the school Board's sincerity, its attempt to eliminate any opportunity for public comment on the progress of negotiations and between teachers and the district was politically stupid and generated unnecessary bad feelings. This paper hopes the Board clears up any doubts it might have regarding the legality of the public comment period immediately and never again give cause to doubt that it wants to hear the public speak.

—CH

Suggestions Not Satisfactory

Belmont To Devise Own Rationing Plan

Belmont Library
1110 Alameda
Belmont, Ca. 94002

BEL. COUR. 3/23/77

Even though the Bay Area Water Users Association (BAWU) has developed a test ordinance to restrict local water use, the Belmont Water District will probably develop its own plan, said Manager Harold Heidrick.

The model ordinance, accepted Monday, March 21, will be voted on in numerous Bay Area cities, but Mr. Heidrick said Belmont district directors are looking for a program that doesn't have to be "policed."

The problems with BAWU ordinance is that it would require too many employees to police and administer the program, he elaborated.

OBJECTED

Manager Heidrick has already objected to the San Francisco Water Department plan, which sells water to Belmont and other Peninsula users, to have a 25 per cent cut back based on figures for the same billing period last year.

Since Belmont has added 259 customers since last year, this would be "discriminatory" to private water users without curtailing large users' rates or affecting areas with little or no growth, said Mr. Heidrick.

He cited the fact that the San Francisco Airport would not really have to cut back drastically, whereas the private user would be hurt.

PAY AS YOU GO

Instead, Mr. Heidrick is tending towards a "the more you use the more you pay" rationing plan that would be, in effect, "self policing."

He also hopes users will "curtail more in the summer so we can have water in the winter months."

But the San Francisco Water Department has in effect, "ignored our climatological and industrial limits and our growth. They propose a penalty rate against their retail

customers, a discrimination which this district objects to strongly."

29 PERCENT CUT

Mr. Heidrick said Belmont users already reduced their water use by 29 per cent over last year's February figures.

The model ordinance drafted by BAWU lists 11 "non-essential water uses" directing customers to: repair leaks, reduce irrigation of landscaping by 50 per cent; stop water uses which cause flooding or runoff; stop new irrigation services or expansion of existing systems; stop hosing vehicles or buildings; stop filling swimming pools; stop hosing sidewalks, walkways or other outdoor hard surfaced areas and stop water use in decorative fountains.

SUGGESTIONS

The ordinance suggests restaurants serve water only on

request, that alternatives to water be found in construction, that new service connections be allowed, but that no landscaping be permitted during the drought.

Non-residential customers are directed to reduce consumption by 10 per cent as compared to the same billing period in 1976.

Industrial, commercial and governmental agency customers are to reduce non-process water use by 25 per cent.

A 50 per cent water reduction is called for in irrigation and outside water use.

Written applications for exceptions can be made to the agency, the plan suggests.

Penalties include installation of water flow restrictors and eventual discontinuance of water service if abuse continues.

5/12/77
S.M. TONES

Belmont Water Letup

The Belmont Water District Tuesday night modified its allowance of water to customers slightly, with a program that will allow more water to larger families without imposition of the penalizing higher rate structure.

Under the regulations as they now stand, 100 gallons a day is allowed for watering plants and shrubs and other outside items and 150 gallons of water a day for households of three or less people.

Those with households of more than three can go to the Water District office starting next week, and in the office make a written application. They will then be allowed, without rate increase, an additional 37 gallons per day per person, up to households of 10 people.

The effective date will be the date of the application. Cards for applications are expected to be ready Monday.

Water District Drops Tax Rate

BEL. COUR. 8/24/77
The Belmont Water District Board of Directors voted Monday night to lower Belmont's property tax rate.

The board voted to lower the rate to \$.045 per \$100 for the year 1977-78 from its present rate of \$.052. Because Belmont property value assessments rose by an average of 22.3 percent, total tax payments will rise somewhat.

The board will meet Thursday, August 25 at the district's offices to discuss the budget for the coming year. If a budget isn't completed at that session, the board will meet again Tuesday, August 30 at 8 p.m.

2 Million Yes, 500,000 No Say Feds to City Officials

BEL. COUR. 4/5/77

While the Belmont Water District got a \$2,063,000 grant to replace old and obsolete water mains which may mean 50 new jobs, the city was turned down in its application for \$500,000 to build storm drains in the Sterling Down area.

The water district grant was accepted and now must be approved by the Public Works Capital Development and Investment program. But the city, hoping to stimulate new jobs was turned down under the Public Employment Act.

City Manager Jim DeChaine expressed bafflement at why one grant was approved and

the other rejected.

"No one understands why they get approved and why they get turned down. It's all a very subjective kind of thing. What can I say? One was approved and one wasn't," he said.

The City of Belmont is still waiting to hear whether it qualifies for a \$300,000 grant to repair sewer mains in the downtown area and complete the trunk line from Sixth and Ralston to O'Neal and Kedith streets.

The \$2,063,000 for the water district will pay for replacements to old mains, especially in the older sections of town and the bayside area.

The project is expected

to start March 1, according to Water District General Manager Harold Heidrick.

The upgrading will result in better water flow, according to Mr. Heidrick, and may represent a savings to customers who have had to bear the costs of repairs and renovations.

The program has two conditions attached: that the improvements do not provide potential for more industrial development on O'Neal Street and that it does not serve any area where threatened and endangered species live.

The project could mean 50 new jobs, 30 of which must be filled by minorities, Mr. Heidrick said.

Water Situation Bad, Conservation Planned

BEL. COUR. 1/26/77

The San Francisco Water Department has asked all users of the Hetch-Hetchy reservoir to cut back voluntarily on water usage by 10 per cent. This move includes Belmont residents.

In a decision last week, the department decided to try a voluntary program before limiting water usage.

"We can have a flood between now and summer and it wouldn't help," said Belmont Water District Manager Harold Heidrick.

A meeting has been set for Monday, Jan. 31 for all

users in the system to discuss setting rules. The Bay Area Water Users Association (BAWUA) committee will write the guidelines "for the whole system," Mr. Heidrick said.

"Belmont's got a pretty good head start," he added. The local water district has been urging people to cut back on water usage, to install special shower heads to save water and to install bottles in toilet tanks.

Right now this area is 40 per cent below normal rainfall, Mr. Heidrick explained. While Hetch-Hetchy has a capacity of 320,000 acre feet, the current level is 35,665 acre feet. In May, after the snow melts, it should be at 104,384 acre feet. But by January 1978 experts expect the level to be at 17,087 acre feet.

"It doesn't look good," the manager said.

"We are affected (by the shortage)," he said. "The board was aware of San Francisco's action." Therefore, the Belmont board delayed taking any personal action until the committee comes up with suggestions.

Cutback Causes Concern

Citizens Search for Solutions to Shortage

Bel. Cour. 3/16/77

Residents here, it appears, made some effort to cut back on their use of water by avoiding long showers, watering lawns and flushing toilets.

In a telephone sampling, a number of residents said they have tried to curtail their use of water, mainly by not letting water run down the drain.

Almost all of the 15

people called said they have avoided flushing their toilets and many had started using buckets to drain out bathtubs and sinks, using that dirty water to nourish houseplants and wash down cars. Only one family called said they had continued to water their lawn — and even they had cut back on how long they soaked the grass.

TRYING TO FIND WAYS

"Because we are part kennel and part hospital, we have to wash things down," said Greg Hanson, manager of McManus Kennels on Old County Road. "We have stopped washing things down with a hose and we have started scrubbing them down with a broom and mop."

"We are trying to figure out some way to store

'grey' (dirty) water instead of using clean drinking water," he stated.

Elizabeth Rhodes of Mezes Avenue rattled off a whole list of cutbacks currently used around her home.

TRYING TO SAVE

"We do not flush the toilet each day, we use a bucket of water in the sink to rinse the dishes, water once a week in the garden,

cut down on showers and save the first runoff from the shower for the garden and to flush the toilet," she listed.

Besides that, Mrs. Rhodes said, they don't let the water run and try to use the dishwasher and clothes washer only when necessary.

"And I was the one who used to tell everyone to rinse their dishes," she

laughed.

At the Pilgrim Kitchen Pies Bakery on El Camino Real, a bucket of hot water is kept in the sink so employees don't turn on the tap each time they have to wash their hands.

NO WATERING

Ethel Taylor of Sunnylope hasn't done any watering at all this year,

and doesn't intend to.

"I think everyone is trying pretty hard. It

seems like they are doing pretty well," said Mrs. Taylor.

Opal Newhouse and her

husband live in a trailer court, she explained, and their use of water has always been lower.

DON'T REALIZE

"A lot of people don't know how bad the drought is," she stated. The Newhouses drove through northern California, and "A year ago, it was bad. This year, it's terrible."

Therefore, the couple uses more paper plates and "we try not to wash dishes more than once a day."

"We can get by real well," Mrs. Newhouse summarized.

Other residents have found that coffee or tea are good for watering houseplants and one man reported that because his family uses a mild dishwashing soap their dirty dishwasher is used in the garden — with no apparent harmful effects.

SUDS SAVER

One Belmont woman said she has a washing machine with a suds-saver that empties dirty water into a basin, then back into the washing machine for

another load. With clothes that aren't too dirty, she said, the same water can be used for three or four loads.

Residents have cut back on water use by 9.3 per cent in January, officials at the Belmont Water District reported, but they will have to find more efficient ways to save water with the San Francisco Water Department now demanding a 25 per cent cutback.

Water District Directors

Planning for Conservation

Bel. Cour. 1/12/77

The Board of Directors for the Belmont Water District may have to enforce "Rule 13" to conserve water, it was decided at a Jan. 6 meeting.

Rule 13, which has been on the books since 1957, allows the district to "exercise reasonable diligence to appportion its water in the manner which appears most equitable" in the case of a shortage. The directors decided

they would establish a definite plan of action at the next January meeting, in case Belmont does not get as much water as it needs.

Apparently the 2.8 inches which fell on New Year's weekend was not sufficient. The district is already handing out water-saver kits which include plastic bottles for the toilet tank and discs for shower heads to help conserve water.

A campaign to hand out the kits, and study their effectiveness is currently being conducted in the Hallmark area.

The kits are available free at the district offices. Directors also decided to send representatives to Seattle in mid-January to discuss the terms of a recent \$2,063,000 grant to replace old water mains.

S.M. TIMES 3/29/77

Wells May Relieve Belmont's Drought

The old wells of the historic Twin Pines property recently acquired by the City of Belmont may be revived to combat this year's drought, the City Council revealed Monday night.

One well appeared ready for immediate use. Thus, the city staff was instructed to check into an old pump to see if it can be made operative right away.

Water from the wells will be used to keep the profusion of flowers and shrubs growing throughout the property, a Belmont landmark, in top condition as the state's greenery withers this summer.

Twin Pines lies along a natural ravine and beside a creek. During its years as a convalescent hospital, gardeners developed an enviable variety of rare and natural plants, trees and shrubs throughout the 22-acre tract.

Most of the wells available are understood to be on the property.

While park and recreation aides were unsure as to just how many wells there are, and their condition, they indicated that there are six wells in all, presumably covered over today.

Frank Billante, parks and recreation director, said today that he understands the major well produces enough water to supply the entire Twin Pines property and was so used for many years.

There are existing pipelines from that time, he said, and some may be used for irrigation. Otherwise, he said, he hopes to achieve sufficient pump pressure to tie the wells into new city irrigation lines on the property, utilizing back-flow valves and thus supplementing the city water, which may be sharply rationed or limited.

Billante said that it is the city's hope not only to irrigate all the gardens and shrubbery of the Twin Pines property but to pump well waters into city trucks for irrigating other city projects, such as the dividers along Ralston Avenue

and the Belameda park area.

City aides admit Belmont may become the lone garden spot of the Peninsula if the drought becomes severe.

Billante said that while five other wells have been located, some have caved in and may have to be redug. Separate pumps may also be needed in these wells if they are renovated, he said, feeding

directly to trucks to transport water.

Billante said Belmont has a "tremendous" landscaping investment to protect, easily running into the tens of thousands of dollars. "It is an ongoing project," he said.

S.M. TIMES 7/27/77

Water Rate Hike Due for Belmont?

A rate increase for Belmont water users may be authorized Thursday at 8 p.m. when the board of directors of the Belmont County Water District meets at its headquarters.

The subject, titled "rate adjustment," is on the agenda for discussion.

Belmont, like other communities which buy water from the San Francisco Water Department, was handed a 43 per cent increase in its water cost July 1 by the utility, which

cited increased costs against a decrease in water use due to rationing.

The district also will be looking at its total budget, as it attempts to keep pace with drought-effect problems.

Also on the agenda is discussion of a new contract with Redwood Shores, its past contract having expired, and a discussion of complaints of the Knolls of Belmont Association seeking relief from increased water bills.

Belmont Water District

S.M. TIMES 7/24/77 Lowers Its Tax Rate

The Belmont County Water District Monday night lowered the tax rate from its present 5.02 cents to 4.5 cents by a vote of the trustees. It amounts to a 10.36 per cent reduction.

A spokesman said today that the board tries to keep the tax income in the \$60,000 to \$65,000 range. The new rate is expected to bring in \$62,500 as compared to \$65,600 in the past year.

The district has an assessed valuation of \$154,891,820 on which to levy the tax. Funds are used to pay for upkeep of hydrants and other such facilities in the district.

Water District Passes Budget

BEL. COUR. 9/5/77
The Board of Directors of the Belmont Water District voted last week to approve a \$1,017,000 budget and to raise water rates 4.9 per cent.

The increase, from 48 to 52 cents per unit for the first 10 units, will result in a rate 28.5 per cent higher than prior to April 1. The penalty rate for those who exceed the 10-unit limit

was raised to \$1 per unit, nine cents more than the old penalty rate of 91 cents.

A unit is 748 gallons.

The district's budget called for a reduction of \$5,522 in expenditures from the previous year's budget. Revenues fell by \$25,660, but the district will make up the deficit with its rate hike and the use of reserves.

Rationing Not Needed

BEL. COURIER 3/30/77
Since Belmont residents have cut back 28.6 per cent over last year's water use figures, no method of rationing will be started, announced Harold Heidrick head of the Belmont Water District.

"People have been cooperating beautifully," since the program was started last summer, he said.

Belmont was the "lead agency" to start such a program, the director observed.

Free water restrictors and other items are available to Belmont residents.

Wayne Turxillo, special water rate consultant hired for \$3,500, has been

working for several weeks to design a new rate structure for the district that will not require special "policing" the manager added.

S.M. TIMES 4/11/77

Belmont to Charge For Excessive Water

The Belmont County Water District is about to send all 6,300 customers a letter asking voluntary 25 per cent reduction in water consumption and explaining that April 1 the San Francisco Water Department imposed mandatory rationing and a 25 per cent cut in supplies to Belmont and other cities.

The district directors March 31 imposed stringent charges on excessive use,

and upgraded all water rates. A customer can use as much as he wishes, but he will have to pay high "conservation rates" for the water.

All water rates were raised. However, after the first 20 units of water, over a two-month period, for which 48 cents per unit is charged, the rate rises to 91 cents for the next 20 units.

Anything over 40 units is billed at \$3 a unit.

"That way we won't have to police the city," a spokesman said. This rate schedule applies to residents, who number about 5,100 of the total customers.

Commercial and industrial users are told to cut their water use to 70 per cent of the consumption used last year for the same months. This is billed at 48 cents for each unit.

Consumption over that, from 70 to 90 per cent of the original or last year's consumption, is billed at 91 cents a unit. Anything over that is \$3 a unit.

Apartments and multi-family facilities are given a 48-cent-per-unit rate for the first five units of water per apartment. (A unit is 748 gallons, or 100 cubic feet on the meter.)

Public authority customers, such as schools and the city, are being billed, as of April 1, at 48 cents per unit for 70 per cent of last year's consumption providing they used no more than 1,000 units per month. All excess units are billed at \$3.

S.M. TIMES
1/28/77

BELMONT REDWOOD CITY

Harold Heidrick, superintendent of the Belmont Water District, reported a campaign to conserve water has been underway for several months.

The district will continue to distribute plastic bottles to be placed in toilet tanks as long as they last, he said, but after that consumers will be asked to place plastic bottles in the tanks themselves.

Shower restricter disks are still available at the district's office at 1513 Folger Drive, Belmont, Heidrick said.

Also being distributed by the district is a "Save Water" pamphlet published by the California Department of Water Resources, telling people how much water they should use and how to save water.

In Redwood City, Roy McIntee, water department supervisor, said literature on water conservation is being distributed at the water department's billing office in the City Hall and being given to field personnel for distribution.

"We are trying to get the word out through word of mouth and through the news media as fast as we can," McIntee reported.

He said the pamphlets have not been sent out with water bills because the department bills bimonthly and it would take more than a month to get them to most users.

McIntee said the Redwood City department is planning to participate in a campaign to be launched by the Peninsula Association of Water Users.

'Flow' Cash in

Belmont

S.M. TIMES 4/14/77

Belmont, despite its projected use of city wells, has agreed to spend \$7,500 to cope with water curtailment.

The money will buy a regulator for water used on city property, sprinkler heads and other conservation devices.

Frank Billante, director of parks and recreation, said today that wells at Twin Pines will be in operation soon to supply water for that property and other city properties.

The new money, he said, will provide for areas in the city presently supplied with purchased water. About 30 acres have irrigation systems of this sort. Some are old, and the new sprinkler heads will throw less water further and more evenly. Some have no timers, and adding timers allows for evening and early morning use, saving water which otherwise would evaporate in the sunshine.

At Twin Pines, where a pump is being repaired, a well that "never runs dry" is being readied to supply about 60 per cent of the 17 acres. Purchased water will run in existing lines to the rest.

Pump trucks will be filled at the well to take care of about 200 young trees planted in street dividers during the past two years.

Belmont has been told to curtail its water use by about 35 per cent. In some cases, it can cut usage 60 per cent and in others, 20 per cent, Billante said. Last year, Twin Pines used only purchased water.

A priority of full water supply, at night, is being given to Marina ballfield, in use by youth all summer six days a week.

Major Water Main

Break in Belmont

S.M. TIMES 11/7/37
A major water main fractured in Belmont two blocks south of the San Mateo line late Sunday afternoon and sent a flood of 40,000 gallons or more cascading down several streets, officials report.

Two Belmont Water Company employees raced to the scene. By the time they had shut down 12 valves and two pumps, water had roared down Ruth Avenue and adjacent streets to El Camino Real.

Fortunately, manager Hal Heidrick said today, most of the water poured into catchbasins and ran down the curbs. The nearest house below the break was on higher ground, steering the water into the street, he said.

The cascading water flooded a number of yards on Ruth Avenue, the water company reported, and according to one report poured into the living room of one house.

The flood occurred at approximately 5 p.m. It was 6:45 a.m. today before full service was restored to all Belmont.

Water Company employees barricaded the area as repair work continued today.

The longitudinal fracture of a cement-lined eight-inch main occurring below ground 20 feet off the intersection of Hillman Avenue and North Road cut water service to a large area of Belmont for hours, as the water burst through the surface and ran down the steep hillside.

"It cleaned out the catchbasins, anyway," Heidrick said today. "And it may have watered a few lawns for free."

Heidrick said that the gallonage loss should not affect Belmont's allowance of water from the San Francisco Water Company. Belmont normally uses about 2.7 million gallons a day, he explained, or about 40 percent, through conservation, of the old norm of 7 million gallons a day.

While it took an estimated 20 minutes (according to Heidrick) to shut the pumps down, repairs and water curtailment lasted for hours. Full service was restored by this morning.

Belmont Water Picture: Another Marin?

BEL. COAR. By CHARLIE HALL 9/7/77

Some carefully worded denials from San Francisco officials notwithstanding, Belmont Water District General Manager Harold Heidrick insisted last week that Belmont could be in fact be subjected to further water reductions in the next few months, cuts which he said may put the city "in the Marin category."

'CUT STILL CONSIDERED'

Heidrick, responding to a denial from San Francisco Water Dept. General Manager Kenneth Boyd that a reduction to 50 per cent of last year's water supplies was being planned for Peninsula cities including Belmont, reaffirmed his contention that such a cut was being contemplated.

Heidrick said that the San Francisco department's assistant manager Gene Kelleher told the Bay Area Water Users Association on Aug. 8 that his department would decide in early January whether to reduce Peninsula cities to 50 per cent of the water received 12 months before if adequate rains didn't fall during the

early winter. The rate would be twice the 25 per cent reduction that is currently in effect.

Heidrick said the San Francisco Water Department's statement, quoted last week in the Redwood City Tribune, didn't dispute his original remark.

"Boyd was very careful with his wording. He said that a cut wasn't currently being planned, and that's true. I didn't say a cut was being planned. I said it was being contemplated, and there's a big difference," commented Heidrick.

Heidrick said he feels a cut to 50 per cent of the previous year's supply is still being considered, and that such a cut, should it go into effect, could easily leave Belmont residents with water supplies during the winter months comparable to those of beleaguered Marin residents.

In recent months, Belmont has consumed roughly 43 per cent less than the previous year, but Heidrick said any notion that jumping to 50 per cent reduction during the winter would be easy is misleading.

In previous years large quantities of water were used on

lawns and gardens during the summer months, inflating the base figure on which the current 25 per cent reduction is calculated, but normal water use during the winter months is radically lower, marking the allotment for the coming winter correspondingly lower.

MOST SAVING OUTDOORS

"A lot of people have made their allotment easily just by letting the outside go to pot," Heidrick commented, noting that during the winter conservation habits will have to move indoors.

In addition to the normal seasonal fluctuation, if San Francisco reduced its allotment to 50 per cent of the previous year's total, Belmont's daily water supply per person during the winter would sink to roughly 55 gallons per person, Heidrick estimated. Marin residents, who have become something of a legend for the privations they've endured during the drought, currently receive 44 gallons per day.

Heidrick said that some actions by the San Francisco

district could aid the Peninsula's situation, whether a further reduction is ultimately approved or not. Chief among them would be to vary the extent of the reductions depending on the season, reducing more in the summer and less in the winter. "We have a greater potential for saving during the summer," he explained, adding that he considered the worst possibility a straight 50 per cent reduction without seasonal variations.

RATE HIKE POSSIBLE

Should a cutback be authorized, Heidrick acknowledged that Belmont residents would probably be slapped with another reminder of the lingering water shortage: increased rates.

Less water from the San Francisco department would mean less revenue for the Belmont district, and Heidrick noted that because of fixed costs, the district only saves \$.40 per dollar of lost revenue.

The district has already raised rates 28.5 per cent since April 1 to compensate for reduced water sales.

Belmont Prepares Third Water Pump

S.M. TIMES 9/23/77

Hal Heidrick, manager of the Belmont County Water District, said Thursday that plans were progressing to provide a third emergency pump connection to meet any possible disaster in the system.

Heidrick said today that there are two pumps available presently, along with a truck engine which can be connected to equipment mounted on a trailer. The third emergency pump will be mounted on skids, as it is too large for a trailer, and should be available by January.

In the event of a disaster such as an earthquake, the pumps could be used to pump from the tunnel which brings water from the Sierra. Presently, the two pumps can lift water from one storage tank to another in the hills. The third will bring it from the tunnel.

Water runs from the tanks by gravity.

If the alternate source of Sierra water, a pipeline that runs near Sequoia Hospital, remains operative, the two present pumps can tap that line. The third pump could tap either the pipeline or the tunnel.

Heidrick said verbal arrangements have been completed with San Francisco, the water supplier, through its Millbrae-based Peninsula division, to chlorinate the water should disaster strike.

All of Belmont's water comes directly from Hetch-Hetchy; none comes from Crystal Springs lakes.

Heidrick said there is an arrangement between California Water Service, San Carlos, San Mateo and Belmont for mutual aid in the event of an earthquake or other disaster. Belmont has unusually large water storage per capita for such situations.

Heidrick reported that the Local Agency Forma-

tion Commission (LAFCO) at its hearing Wednesday in Redwood City, had agreed to support annexation of the Bohannon properties on the Bayside, including the Holiday Inn and various industrial parcels. That will enable the district to round out the Belmont district boundaries to include customers already being

served. (Some of those customers have been receiving water from Belmont for 20 years.)

The matter now awaits forwarding to the Secretary of State by the LAFCO executive director, Sherman Coffman.

The question of transporting water to Redwood Shores for the City of Red-

wood City while the latter completes design and construction of its own transmission lines was put off until the meeting of Oct. 3. Terms and conditions are not yet complete.

Heidrick reported that 22 people were turned away from a training course for water distribution opera-

tors. It began Sept. 20 at the College of Notre Dame under district sponsorship. Forty-three are taking the course.

Heidrick announced a study of cost effectiveness of billing to see if utilization of the City of Belmont's new computer would be a good idea.

48 Per Cent Rate Increase Asked

BEL. CORR. 3/19/77

Belmont and other cities in suburban San Francisco may have to pay 48 per cent more for water by July 1. The amount of increase which will be passed on to customers is not known.

The department wants a 15 per cent increase to meet its budget and a 33 per cent hike to make up for lost revenue during reduced consumption.

The Bay Area Water Users Association includes agencies which buy water from the San Francisco Water Department.

Beginning next Monday, the association will formulate a model rationing plan, because each agency of the San Francisco department must design and enforce its own plans.

The San Francisco proposal will be used as an initial guideline.

The San Francisco plan includes a 50 per cent reduction in water allowed for irrigation; 25 per cent cutback in water for personal use; 10 per cent cutback in water for industrial use in production; and 25 per cent cutback in resale water use.

The plan includes a penalty system for those who exceed their limit.

Among recommendations for water cutbacks in the San Francisco plan are: no washing of cars, boats, sidewalks or other areas with hoses; no irrigation which isn't necessary to keep plants alive; no decorative foundations; restaurants should serve water only to

customers who request it; all watering is to be done with hand-held hoses.

Written warnings will be sent to customers who do not comply with percentage cutbacks. After the second offense, they will be fined and water flow restricted.

The San Francisco Water Department is seeking to pass an ordinance whereby

police can cite and fine persons caught violating a water consumption rule, such as washing a car.

The rationing plan will be the topic of a public hearing in San Francisco March 22. It will be passed to the San Francisco Board

of Supervisors March 28 and then to the mayor to sign.

Mr. Kelleher estimated

that water rationing for the city's customers will take effect May 1. Suburban users must formulate and enforce their own water rationing plans and will probably aim for a June 1 effective date.

The agencies agreed that a 25 per cent rationing plan is needed. The reduction will either be calculated on a comparison basis from

water used during the corresponding month in 1976 or average monthly water consumption in 1976.

How Fast Water Flows

	NORMAL USE	CONSERVATION USE
Shower	25 gallons (water running)	4 gallons (wet, soap, rinse)
Brushing Teeth	10 gallons (tap running)	½ gallon (wet brush, rinse briefly)
Tub Bath	36 gallons (full)	10 to 12 gallons (minimal water level)
Shaving	20 gallons (tap running)	1 gallon (fill basin)
Dishwashing	30 gallons (tap running)	5 gallons (use dishpan / sink)
Automatic Dishwashing	16 gallons (full cycle)	7 gallons (short cycle)
Washing Hands	2 gallons (tap running)	1 gallon (fill basin)
Toilet Flushing	5 to 7 gallons (full tank)	4 to 6 gallons (tank displacement)
Washing Machine	60 gallons (full cycle)	27 gallons (short cycle)
Outdoor Watering	10 gallons / minute (average hose)	eliminate

Water Cutback, Hike To Affect Residents

BFL. Cov. 3/2/77
The San Francisco Water Department, which supplies the Peninsula, has obtained the authority to demand a 25 per cent cutback in usage and is also looking for a 45 per cent increase to cover loss of revenue.

Belmont Water District Manager Harold Heidrick is concerned about how the cutback will be enforced and is currently meeting with the board of directors to develop a plan.

"This is kind of like a juggling act," he said. He said he is expecting the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to possibly grant a 40 per cent increase.

Mr. Heidrick said he has proposed a plan to charge private homeowners \$3.60 per 10 units of water (there are 750 gallons to a unit). Customers would be charged an additional \$1 per unit for the next five units and \$5 a unit for anything over 15 units.

He has also proposed a straight 20 per cent increase for commercial and industrial use.

"We hope to economically control the water and still give everyone an adequate supply," he explained.

The board has not discussed the proposal.

The PUC will meet March 3 in room 282 at the San Francisco City Hall on Van Ness to discuss rationing and cutbacks.

A March 22 public hearing will deal with the San Francisco Water Department's rationing plan and suburban re-sale customers.

But, Mr. Heidrick is unhappy with his plan, which is "going back" to the "unworkable flat rate" of the pre-Depression era.

He explained that it is difficult for a single person to survive on 50 gallons a day.

A family of five does not actually use a proportionately larger amount of water he explained, since

the dishwasher, washing machine and garden watering requirements don't really vary that much.

While water consumption was cut 9.3 per cent in Belmont during January, residents must find more ways to save additional water, the manager said.

The average family of four will have to save 87.5 gallons a day.

But, how water departments are going to enforce that has baffled Mr. Heidrick. His plan on rate increases should have some effect, he said.

But it will be hard in

cities with large industrial bases, that consume more water and in areas with a number of apartment dwellers, where individual meters are not installed.

Also, the figures are based on past usage he said, and what happens in a community that has added 400 more customers?

Belmont does have Rule 13, which, if invoked, could allow the district to "exercise reasonable control" in the apportionment. The district "may prohibit use" during times of emergency, but Mr. Heidrick said he is looking for a better definition of Rule 13.

New Rationing Program

Water Rates Increased in Belmont District

281. Cour. 4/13/77

Water, and the lack of it, is weighing heavily on California officials minds, and a number of cities and water districts are grappling with how to ration.

The board of directors for the Belmont water district have discovered a plan which is apparently radical and has attracted some media coverage throughout the state.

But to Manager Harold Heidrick the plan is the best way to go.

Starting with the next billing period, residents

PAYING MORE

Starting with the next billing period, residents will be paying more for their water and will be charged for the number of units they use each month.

Therefore, they can expect slightly higher bills if they use over the 20 units per month allotment. a unit is 748 gallons.

ANOTHER RISE ASKED

In the meantime, this is not the last increase in rates, directors warned customers. the San Francisco Water Department is seeking a rate increase for July 1 and if that is approved, all of their customers will have to follow suit.

But, Mr. Heidrick pointed out, the new rate system will cost residents 15 cents more for each unit.

there is an exceptions clause that can be granted by directors if they file a written request.

"Those who have (already) cut back are in pretty good shape," Mr. Heidrick said.

'MORE THAN GENEROUS'

"Actually, for the vast majority of people, the 20 units is more than generous."

Because of the bi-monthly billings, "people will not see this rate for a while," the manager continued. Those who "irrigate profusely" are going to be "greatly affected" while those who save water for household and personal use may not notice a large increase.

Residents will be billed 48 cents per unit for the first 20 units used, then another 91 cents per unit up to the next 20 used. After 40 units are used, they will pay \$3 each unit. this is based on bi-monthly billings.

Apartment dwellers will receive the first five units for 48 cents each, then pay another 91 cents a unit for the next five. They will be charged \$3 per unit if they go over the 10-unit limit.

INDUSTRIAL CUTS

commercial and industrial users will pay 48 cents a unit if they cut back 30 per cent for the same month last year. If they use between 70 and 90 per cent of what they used last year, they must pay 91 cents per unit.

If they use over 90 per cent of what they used last year, they will be charged \$3 a unit.

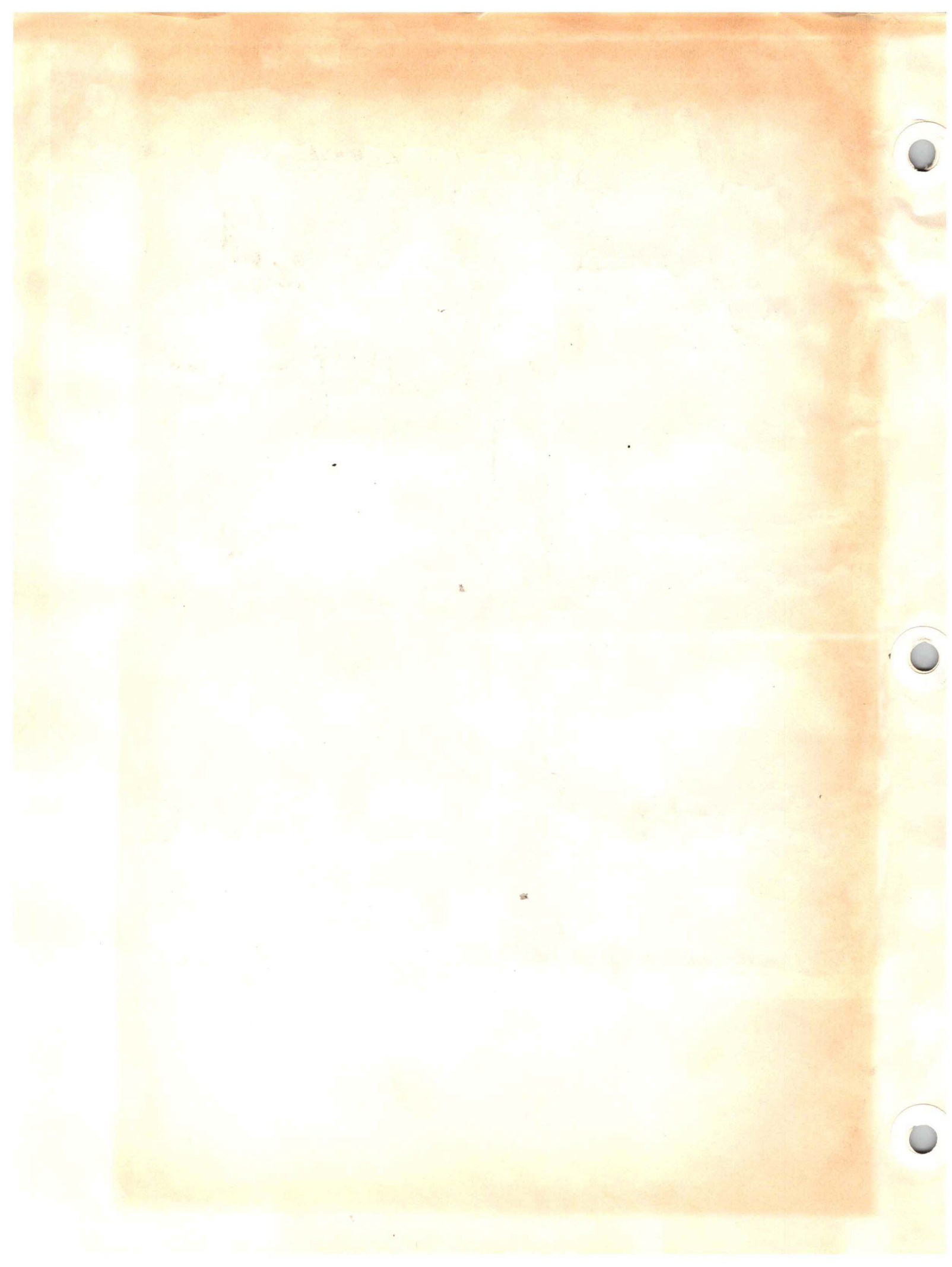
Public authority customers, including schools who use less than 1,000 units a month will pay the 48 cents per unit if they cut back 70 per cent, or \$3 a unit if they don't.

Those public authority customers who used more than 1,000 units per month will follow the same schedule as those listed above from November through May. But, June through October, they must cut back 40 per cent.

OTHER CITIES TRYING

Other cities in San Mateo County are looking at plans that would demand a 25 per cent cutback for residential use, a 10 per cent cut in industrial use, a 50 per cent cut in irrigation and outdoor watering and a 25 per cent cut in commercial use.

Belmont water users have been complying with district requests to cut back since last December, the manager pointed out. In fact, Belmont was one of the first Northern Californian cities to start a voluntary rationing program, he summarized.





SISTER MARY JUSTINE McMullen stands by an old well well had been hidden for over 40 years beneath an recently discovered at the College of Notre Dame. The immense ivy bush.

Old Well's Chance Discovery Lets CND Build Soccer Field

Bel Cove 6/1/77
 When the College of Notre Dame was faced with the water shortage, the people there came up with a unique solution: they dug their own.

Well, actually, they didn't do the digging themselves, but they did uncover a well that had been out of use for over 40 years, and it's good for more than just a drop in the bucket, too.

Over 45 feet deep, and able to refill once it's emptied, the well has enabled the college to go ahead with plans to build a soccer field which it had had to abandon because of the drought.

The well, which was totally hidden beneath an immense ivy bush, was totally unknown by anyone except some of the cam-

pus's old timers, until a 74-year-old nun who had first come to CND in the 1930's suggested "the old well" as a way of combating the water shortage.

The chance remark immediately caught the ears of Jim Smythe, the college's maintenance man, and the next day he had a crew scouring the back lawn behind Ralston Hall.

The search quickly led them to the ivy bush in the yard, and after a few strategic shearings to prune away the leaves, the college became the proud owners of one of the few old-fashioned water wells in the area.

The well has a completely intact rock casing, and even came with an old pump, although the college

is replacing it with a new one.

As an experiment the crew hooked up the well to the back lawn's sprinklers, and once it was satisfied that the well would refill, the school's plans for a soccer field were back in business.

How is it that a 45-foot well could go totally unnoticed in a time of severe water shortage?

The main reason, says Sister Mary Justine McMullen, the nun who first mentioned its existence, is that it was never used since the college was founded in 1922.

FORGOTTEN

Even when the sister came to CND in the 1930's the well had long since been out of use and fully buried from sight, and

gradually over the years it sank into total obscurity.

Over the years, the college had had no need for the well, drawing its water from Waterdog Lake. When CND leased the lake to Belmont eight years ago, it had no problems getting all the water it needed from the Belmont Water District until this year.

While the well had been totally out of use for as long as anyone can remember, Sister Mary Justine notes that there were still several people on campus who knew about it.

"A lot of the older people knew about it," she says, "but nobody ever thought to say anything about it."

There is, of course, the possibility that Notre Dame has other wells on its *back* (Continued to *page 6*)

B&L. Cour. 6/1/77

Lost Well

(Continued from page 1)
campus.

OTHER WELLS

Sister Mary Justine, for several years the Province's archivist and formerly the librarian at Notre Dame, says there was at least one other well but that the casing had apparently fallen in over the years, making it worthless.

She is also looking through all old records to see whether any other ready sources of water might be turned up.

And if Sister Mary Justine can find any photos of any other wells, the College is likely to make

use of them, according to spokesperson Alice Schammel.

Sister Mary Justine recalls that Ralston, a mining magnate who owned the property that currently forms the college until the turn of the century, was so advanced for his time that a few more of his hidden activities may just pay off in this time of shortages.

Barring some unseen intervention of fate, the water shortage will someday go away, but gas is likely to remain scarce.

And according to Sister Mary Justine, Ralston used to have his own gas

manufacturing factory somewhere in the hills, making it out of coal for his own use and that of a few neighbors.

Should gas continue to go the way of all commodities, CND might someday be sending search parties through the hills, but for the time being there won't be any posses for either the gas plant or any more water sources, says Alice Schammel.

"We'll look for a well if Sister Mary Justine brings us a photo of one," she says, "but we're not going to go on any Easter egg hunts."