

Campus' drinking water safe; DER officials assure

By Jerry Trently

Capitol Campus' water is safe to drink, according to Department of Environmental Resources (DER) Secretary, Nicholas DeBenedictis.

"Everyone would want this figure to diminish to zero.... But the water is certainly safe."

**Dave Mashek
Deputy Press Secretary,
DER**

DeBenedictis told a contingent of reporters at an October 31 press conference that contaminants believed to be fouling water at the Harrisburg International Airport (HIA) are not affecting water pumped from there

to the Capitol Campus.

Of eleven wells used by the airport, seven are currently shut down voluntarily as a precautionary measure, while four remaining wells continue to pump about one million gallons of water a day.

"These wells are supplying quality water to meet the airport and Pennsylvania State University extension campus needs, but there is little surplus," said Deputy Transportation Secretary Donald Bryan through a DER press release.

Should these wells become endangered, three wells located away from the airport and currently capped, could be considered possible new sources, a DER spokesman said.

The organic solvent trichloroethylene (TCE) was first discovered in wells at the airport last March when a reading of 93 ppb was recorded. The abbreviation "ppb" stands for "parts per billion" and relates to an amount of drops of TCE to a billion



Photo by Jerry Trently

Department of Environmental Resources Secretary Nicholas DeBenedictis answers reporters' questions on TCE contamination during an October 31 press conference.

drops of water.

The DER's Deputy Press Secretary David Mashek said the level was reduced to 13 ppb after water from all the wells was mixed together, but that a nearby well soon became contaminated, resulting in the closings.

Water from the four wells currently operating is mixed together and pumped through the distribution system to delivery points including the Capitol Campus, Mashek said.

Manager of Maintenance and Utilities Operations at Capitol Campus Joseph Kemp said the DER tests campus' water every month and relays the test results to him.

The HIA Authority also conducts a monthly test on campus' water.

Mashek said September's test results yielded a reading of 1.5 ppb. Results from an October test by the DER were unable to be

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\$98,000 proposal lifts hopes for new elevator

By Tony G. Perry

Help is on the way for the handicapped and mobility-impaired students of Capitol Campus. University Park has agreed to fund a \$98,000 project to replace the freight elevator in the Olmsted building.

According to Joseph Kemp, Manager of Maintenance and Utilities Operations, a combination passenger/freight elevator is currently being designed to replace the existing elevator. Work should begin on the structure by next summer, and will take in "excess of 30 days" to complete, Kemp said.

Kemp said a proposal for the change was sent to University Park last Spring.

The new vehicle will be designed to fit the existing shaft and the work will be done by an independent contractor.

Presently, the existing freight

elevator is the only means of transportation available for mobility-impaired students to reach the second and third floors and the basement level of the building. Users of the elevator

have complained about the vehicle. The "close" button must be held down until the large doors close completely for the elevator to become operational.

"People have been really

careless with the elevator," said Dr. Stanley Miller, Acting Provost/Dean. Miller noted that on at least one occasion he has had to go to other floors to "find the elevator" when someone has left the doors open.

A Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry test was performed on a Thursday because there is a "lower demand" for the elevator on that day, according to Dr. Jerry South, Director of Student Affairs.

The test, which was conducted by an outside firm, rendered the elevator unuseable for that day. And, although this may have hindered those mobility-impaired students who would otherwise use the elevator on Thursdays, the test was required by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

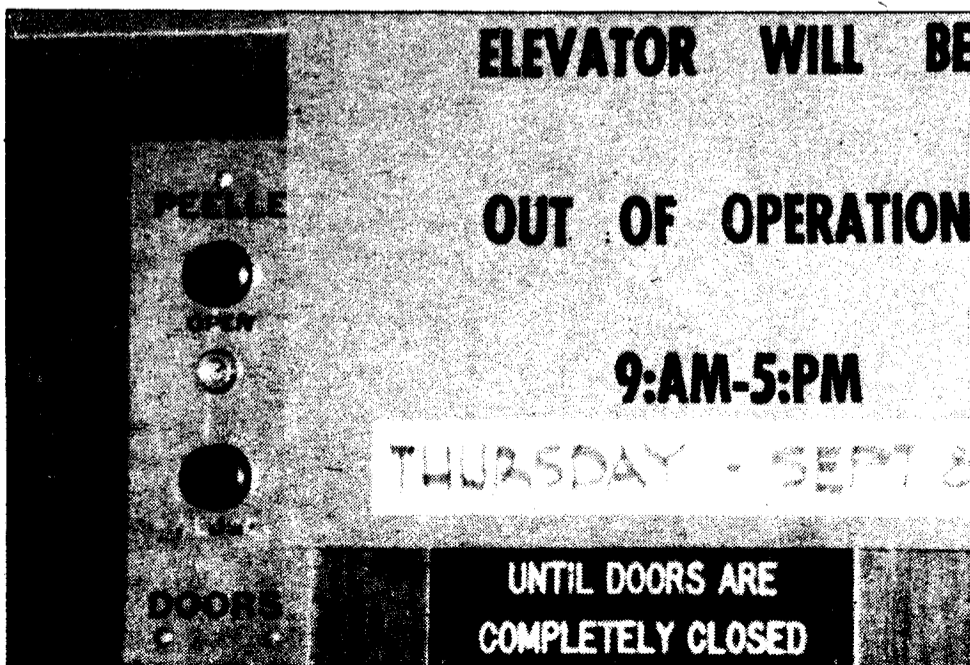


Photo by Jeffrey G. Shatzer

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