

Outdoor watering back on limits

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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Oberlin's mayor declared a Stage 2 water warning Thursday, meaning the city is now on water rationing using an even/odd outdoor watering system, but homeowners got more than an extra month of unregulated water use this summer.

In past years, the even/odd watering has started at the end of May or beginning of June. This year, with timely rains and an unseasonably cool start to the season, homeowners apparently hadn't been watering as much.

The triggers for a Stage 2 water warning include the city water

Water overused on three days

In the last week, water users in Oberlin have used more than 750,000 gallons, the trigger to go on water rationing, three times.

Under water restrictions, people with odd-numbered addresses can water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, and those with even addresses on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

Outdoor water can be used only between midnight

and 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. to midnight on the specified days. The city pumped:

- 748,000 gallons Tuesday, July 8.
- 758,000 gallons last Wednesday.
- 707,100 gallons Thursday.
- 603,000 gallons Friday.
- 766,000 gallons Saturday.
- 812,000 gallons Sunday.

tower falling below 50 percent of capacity, pumping lowers water levels within 10 feet of the screens in the city wells or the demand for

one day is above 700,000 gallons.

At a City Council meeting Thursday, Mayor Joe Stanley said the last trigger had been hit last Wednesday

when the city used 760,000 gallons and on Tuesday at 750,000.

It had been over the trigger level for a few days earlier in the sum-

mer, he said, but then it would go down. People have been lucky that the city was able to wait this long before the restrictions went into effect, he said.

Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener said the people have done a great job of conserving water. She said she doesn't see as many people in town watering.

With the declaration of the water warning, the council passed a resolution implementing the restrictions unannounced.

Until the warning ends, people with odd-numbered addresses, ones that end in one, three, five, seven or nine, can water on Tuesday, Thurs-

day and Saturday. Those with even addresses, ending in zero, two, four, six and eight, can water on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

Outdoor water can be used only between midnight and 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. to midnight on the specified days, said Mayor Stanley. That includes watering lawns and gardens, washing cars, filling swimming pools and any other kind of outdoor use.

According to the plan, emergency water rates can be imposed. People who need to use water to establish a new lawn or wash house siding prior to painting may get special permits from the city administrator.

Amber Waves

Men work fields

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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The 2003 Gleaner combine headed south, turned and made a pass back to the north, before coming to a stop to dump the harvested wheat into the back of a large truck parked in the field.

It was Friday afternoon, 100-plus degrees, and Richard Anderson and Paul Shields were working on a field a little less than a mile west of Mr. Anderson's home off the Rexford Road in far west Decatur County.

The two joined forces four years ago, sharing equipment and some of the cost to get their crops in each year. Mr. Anderson said he drives the combine in his fields and Mr. Shields in his. Whoever isn't combining drives the semi-trailer truck to the Decatur Co-op elevator in Oberlin.

The field the men were working in on Friday was Mr. Anderson's. He said they had started harvest Wednesday, July 2, but it rained and was 73 degrees the next day, which kept them out of the fields. Even on Friday, with the temperature well over 100, they found some muddy spots.

The field, planted with Thunderbolt wheat, got some hail damage this spring, said Mr. Anderson, but luckily, he'd taken out hail insurance this year. Although the wheat looked a little thinner because of the hail, he said, it still made a stand.

So far this year, he added, yields have been running 35 to 60 bushels per acre, better than farmers farther west are doing.

When the men finished with that field, he said, they'd be half done. All of his fields, he said, are pretty much within a five-mile radius of his house, which is five miles south of U.S. 36 along the Rexford Road, then a little to the west. Mr. Shields' fields, he said, are mostly south of town, around the Lund Covenant Church.

This is the fourth year the two men have worked together. They farm about the same number of acres, said Mr. Anderson, so they split the cost of the combine, equipment fees, breakdowns and other things, although each pays for the fuel used on his own fields.



IN HIS 2003 GLEANER combine, Richard Anderson (above) cut through a field of ripe wheat west of his house. Mr. Anderson (below) took a short break before he returned to the harvest field last Friday. — Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Mr. Anderson said his family has always owned a combine, but when Mr. Shields started farming, he hired custom cutters.

When Mr. Anderson's machine got older, the two talked and decided to look at buying one together. He said they went to an auction in Colby and bought the 2003 Gleaner, one of two machines being sold by a financial institute.

Mr. Anderson said he's been helping with the family farm as far back as he can remember, and his dad still helps him. Mr. Anderson said his parents, Elden and Detta Anderson, live just a mile north of him and his wife Maureen and their three children, Samantha, 15; Chris, 13; and Gabe, 12.

"I always wanted to be a farmer," he said.

When he was younger than his children are now, he said, he started driving farm equipment. Now his kids tell him that he was younger than them and they should get to drive. Mr. Anderson said, but they do take turns riding with him and driving the grain cart — before it broke down.

He said he thinks all three seem to be interested in farming, although he doesn't know if that's what they will choose to do.

After graduating from Decatur Community High School, Mr. Anderson said, he went to Colby Community College for a degree in farm and ranch management. (See MEN on Page 5A)



Crop looks good

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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The rumble of grain trucks rolling through town has slowed as wheat harvest winds down in Decatur County, and at least one elevator manager says the crop appears to be better than average.

Although the harvest seemed to get a slow start, with rain and cooler temperatures, once it got going, farmers seemed to work straight through until the end.

Last year in the first week of July farmers could sell their wheat for \$5.22 a bushel. This year in the first week of July the wheat price was \$8 per bushel, \$2.78 more.

At the Decatur Co-op elevator in Oberlin General Manager Kurt Anderson said harvest is about 95 percent complete in most areas, except maybe Danbury, where they are about half done.

With the amount of grain the elevators have received in the past few weeks, he said they are storing grain on the ground in Oberlin, Herndon and Danbury. Mr. Anderson said he isn't sure how many bushels of wheat the firm has taken in because no one has totaled the figures.

He said he didn't know anything on the yields yet, either, but he should by next week.

It seems harvest has been pretty much what people thought it was going to be, said Mr. Anderson. There haven't been a whole lot of comments.

The manager said the co-op locations are still staying open in the evenings, but not as late as they were when the majority of the farmers were cutting.

Janice O'Hare with Hansen Mueller Grain in Oberlin said she also thought harvest was just about done, although customers have a few fields left to cut.

Mrs. O'Hare said she thinks between the Oberlin and Cedar Bluffs elevators, they have brought in around 400,000 bushels.

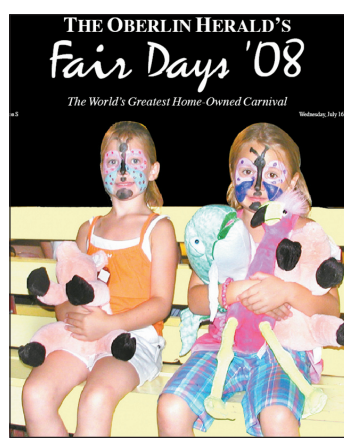
She said she hasn't really heard much on yields yet, although it doesn't seem like there were a lot of shockers.

Dan Grafel, co-owner of D&S (See CROP on Page 5A)

Fair special in the paper

Inside today's Oberlin Herald is the Fair Days 2008 edition, which includes the schedule for the upcoming Decatur County Fair.

The fair starts Tuesday, Aug. 5, and goes to Saturday, Aug. 9. The section also includes stories about the Twistover at the home-owned carnival, about some of the activities at the fair and pictures from past fairs and carnivals.



Hospital, city to share almost \$2 million

A rural Dresden couple left their estate, valued at a little under \$2 million, to the Decatur County Hospital and The Gateway civic center, leaving the hospital board and City Council to decide whether to sell or keep their land.

Elmo Lund, the lawyer handling the estate, and Warren Bainter, executor for Fred and Henrietta Bremer, met with the council on Thursday.

Mr. Lund said the couple left

land valued at \$966,000 and about \$1 million in personal property, including money, CD's, vehicles and other things.

Now, he said, he and Mr. Bainter need to know whether the city wants them to sell the land; what the City Council or hospital board want to do. When, asked Mayor Joe Stanley, does the decision need to be made?

Mr. Lund said they plan to meet with the hospital board Monday, and

if the council wants to send a representative to that meeting, it would be a good idea. If the two boards want to sell the land, he said, then they will have to decide whether to do it by auction, sealed bid or on the market.

The current tenant, Dick Vahling, had a year-long lease, he said.

Is it legal for a member of the council or hospital board to go to the Farm Service Agency and look at the yields and other information on

that land? asked Council Member Jay Anderson.

Mr. Lund said he thought that would be OK. It might also be good to look in depth at the appraisal on the land.

The land includes one quarter section of grass and six quarters of farm ground. Appraiser Mike McKenna had some suggestions about selling the property, said Mr. Bainter, including the possibility of either (See ESTATE on Page 5A)