

Dixie heat wave claims 13 lives so far

By The Associated Press

Atlanta is imposing its first water-use restrictions ever and industries are cutting operations in the Southeast, where a heat wave and record drought have shriveled crops and killed 13 people, more than a half-million chickens and thousands of fish.

Only local relief was in sight today for the region, with highs from the low 90s in North Carolina to the upper 90s from South Carolina to northern Florida and in Alabama and Tennessee, the National Weather Service said.

"Widely scattered thunderstorms are not really expected to punch any holes in the heat, or maybe a few tiny holes," said Pete Reynolds of the National Severe Storms Forecast Center in

Kansas City, Mo.

"They might be getting up to record territory again — 100 to 102, 103 by Friday — but mostly in the mid- to upper 90s," Reynolds said today.

Temperatures generally were in the 90s Wednesday despite scattered thunderstorms. The University of South Carolina at Columbia reported a 103-degree reading, while Athens and Waycross, Ga., reached 100 degrees.

Scattered thunderstorms dumped nearly 1½ inches of rain Wednesday afternoon on Dothan, Ala., and more than 0.75 inch on New Bern and Greensboro, N.C.

"You get a shower that lasts 15 or 20 minutes and the sun comes back out and dries it right back up," said forecaster Harry De-

Laughter in Columbia.

Only 8½ inches of rain has fallen in South Carolina this year, compared with nearly 16 inches by this time in 1933 — the driest on record when only 27 inches fell, said Wes Tyler, assistant state climatologist.

The drought has forced Bowater Inc., the nation's largest producer of newsprint, to announce plans to curtail some operations at its Catawba, S.C., pulp and paper mill, where 1,250 people are employed.

Bowater said the cuts are necessary because the Catawba River is too low, forcing the mill, which produces up to 1,300 tons of kraft paper pulp a day, to withhold release of waste water.

In northern Alabama, about

48,000 fish died this month in a stream, said Catherine Lamar of the Department of Environmental Management. "This type of fish kill is happening frequently all over the state. There's a complex (environmental) situation during a drought."

In the first six months of 1986, streams in the basin of the Apalachicola, Chattahoochee and Flint rivers are at their lowest levels ever from Lake Lanier in northeast Georgia to the Gulf of Mexico in Florida's panhandle, said the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Because of concerns about the Chattahoochee's water quality, Atlanta officials announced Wednesday the city next week will impose water-use restric-

tions, its first ever. The type of restrictions have not been determined.

Officials in Ellijay, Ga., where non-essential water use on any day but Saturday already can bring a \$50 fine, are planning cut-backs on water use for businesses including a poultry plant that employs 600 people. That action may be a month away, said Mayor David Westmoreland.

Water-use restrictions also have been imposed in numerous communities in the Carolinas, Tennessee and Alabama.

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