Low Water Use Helped Fire

Reduced outdoor watering and smaller-sized lawns contributed to the devastation caused by the fires in Oakland and Berkeley, Calif., according to Dr. James Beard, professor of soil and crop sciences at Texas A&M University, College Station.

Because of five to six years of drought, and "in the mistaken belief" that lawn watering is wasteful, many Californians had been convinced by local ordinances and official statements that they needed to severely restrict outdoor watering and even eliminate grass from their landscapes, Beard said.

He said, "When the fires began, they were fueled by dry landscape plants, many of which had replaced turfgrass, because they were viewed as water-saving.

"Turfgrasses are about 70 to 80 percent water, by weight, and even a moderately maintained lawn can serve as a fire barrier," Beard said it should now be obvious that Californians and others need to take "a close and careful look at the benefits turfgrasses can provide.

"The turf is the useless, wasteful, water hogs some people say they are," he said.

"They can, in fact, save lives, with minimal amounts of supplemental water."

As the area begins the clean-up and re-building process at a time when heavy winter rains can be expected to cause mud slides, American Soc Producers Association Executive Director Douglas Fender said turfgrass sod roots establish very quickly and stabilize embankments within a few days.

"Rain waters moving through grass will soaking soil more deeply and could recharge underground aquifers, rather than rush down a slope, forcing silt and sediment to loosen large areas that result in mudslides," he said.

He said, "When the fires began, they were more affected than courses from Minneapolis north, which have snow cover from late fall to late March or April will be more affected than courses elsewhere.

"Superintendents report that alternatives to mercury-based products have not worked effectively under those conditions."

University of Minnesota researchers are studying different management procedures to control snow mold.

**MOUNTAINS**

**IPM SEMINAR**

Reservations are due by Dec. 15 for a two-day seminar, Introduction to Integrated Pest Management, to be held Jan. 16-17 in Tempe, Ariz.

The seminar will present an overview of the concepts of integrated plant management with "practical, progressive suggestions for use in implementing a program."

Dr. Pat Vittum and Gail Schumann of the University of Massachusetts will teach the seminar.

They will discuss the politics of pesticides, general agronomic principles, and the limitations of IPM.

They will present environmentally safe maintenance practices for control of disease, insects and weeds, as well as discuss diagnostic aids, monitoring techniques and preventative versus curative treatments.

The seminar will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel-Temple.

The GCSAA will present 1.4 continuing education units, while the Arizona Structural Pest Control Commission has accredited the seminar for 12 hours.

It is being co-hosted by the Cactus & Pine GCSA and GCSAA. and people may register by contacting GCSAA at 913-832-4444.

**CAIN PASSES AWAY**

Earl  S. Cain, a longtime member and supporter of the Cactus & Pine GCSAA, died Oct. 15.

A Jackson, Tenn., native and World War II veteran, Mr. Cain was a member of the Roosevelt Council of Boy Scouts of America and John C. Lincoln Hospital and Health Center.

He leaves a wife, Carol Feffer, three children and five grandchildren.

North Central

**MERCURY BAN**

The Minnesota state Legislature has passed a bill that will ban mercury products as of July 1, 1994.

Mercury, lead, cadmium and hexavalent chromium are being banned from fungicides, dyes and paints.

Courses from Minneapolis north, which have snow cover from late fall to late March or April will be more affected than courses elsewhere.

Superintendents report that alternatives to mercury-based products have not worked effectively under those conditions.

University of Minnesota researchers are studying different management procedures to control snow mold.

**MAINTENANCE SHORT COURSE**

The 8th annual Ohio State University Golf Course Maintenance Short Course, providing general and basic information on turfgrass maintenance, will be conducted Jan. 13-17 at Holiday Inn on the Lane in Columbus, Ohio.

Designed for all golf course personnel, the course will emphasize agronomy, soils, entomology and plant pathology.

Registration credits from the Ohio Department of Agriculture for Licensed Pesticide Applicators will be given attendees, and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America will award continuing education units.

More information is available from Sue White at 614-292-7457. People may register through the Department of Conferences and Institutes at 614-292-4230.

**OTF SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Ohio Turfgrass Foundation will award nine $1,000 scholarships this year.

The OTF scholarship program, which has given $100,000, will be made at the OTF Conference and Show, Dec. 2-5 in Cincinnati.

One is given to a college freshman who commits to study turf. The Max F. Szturm Scholarship Fund has been established this year in honor of the golf course superintendent who greatly influenced the turf industry in the Cincinnati area.

Memorial scholarships are also given in the names of Dick Duke of ChemLawn and George M. Biddulph of the Northern Ohio Golf Course Superintendents Association.

Additional money is being awarded from the Ohio State University's College of Agriculture, Professional Instruction, Practice Time and Competitive Scholarship.

The scholarships are given annual to students for their leadership qualities, achievement, outstanding character, ability to write and speak well, interest in golf course management as a career, and superior performance as employees of a golf course.

The Scholarship Committee is chaired by Jim Heinze and the selections were approved by the board of directors.

South Central

**SOUTHWEST RGA GETS AID**

FAR HILLS, N.J. — The U.S. Golf Association, in an effort to encourage minority participation in all levels of golf, has awarded a grant to the Southwest Regional Golf Association to help develop the SWRGA's junior golf program.

The grant was presented to Jerry Redd, president of SWRGA, by Mark Passey, manager of the USGA's South Central Regional offices, during the USGA's annual Golf Classics Awards Luncheon, held in Wichita, Kan.

The SWRGA is an association of 13 clubs located in Shreveport, La.; Memphis, Tenn., Lawton, Tulsa, and Oklahoma City; Abilene, Tex.; Fort Worth, Longview, and San Antonio, Texas; Wichita and Kansas City, Kan.; Kansas City, Mo.; and Alhambra, Calif.

This grant will provide funds to initiate junior golf programs for 400 youngsters in SWRGA communities.

These junior programs will feature clinics, professional instruction, practice time at driving ranges, and tournament administration.

Lee B. Richardson, of Forest Park, Okla., a member of the USGA's Public Golf Committee, helped arrange for the grant.