

Florida's water

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Carmouche said. "But it takes a lot of manpower."

Wells were installed at the course in the 1930s. "They're pretty salty now," he added. "There's nothing like a good rainfall."

The Orlando area is dealing not just with drought, but also wildfires. "It seems like half of Florida is on fire," said Earl Leyton, golf course mechanic at the Dubsdread Golf Club in Orlando.

"I've even had a 1,000-acre fire out by my house."

Water bodies in the area are hurting badly, too. "I live over in Clermont," Leyton said, "and there's a chain of lakes out there that's no longer a chain. The rivers are all dried up. Lake waterlines are 300 to 400 feet from the docks. It's really a mess."

POWDER-DRY ROUGHS

Courses in St. Petersburg also are coping with drought stresses. "The course outskirts are basically powder dry," said Dave Kane, assistant superintendent at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort.

"In early March, we got nearly an inch," Kane said, "but then we hadn't had any since January. We're hurting. This is the worst drought period since they've kept records in this area."

The challenges continue to stack up. "Florida has a lot of sandy soil, so what little rain we've gotten so far drains straight down through," said Kane. "We do use effluent, and we can irrigate our greens, tees and fairways okay. But the problem is that the sodium content gets high. We need rain to flush it out."

SUPERS STRIVE FOR FLEXIBILITY

In South Florida, phase two restrictions continue to remain in effect even though rainfall conditions are fair. "Temporarily, we're in great shape," said Randy Randquist, superintendent at the Boca Rio Golf Course in Boca Raton. "Long term, we still have concerns about water restrictions."

"Lake Okeechobee is still real low," he said. "I believe the levels are around nine feet now, which is the lowest it's ever been for this time of year. Our real concern is when we get back into the dry season again — especially if restrictions are still in place. And that really hinges on Lake Okeechobee getting some heavy amounts of rain."

Parts of the 663-square-mile lake have actually caught on fire.

Superintendents in South Florida are negotiating with the SFWMD for more flexibility. "They won't make any changes to phase two restrictions," said Randquist, "but there is some indication that they may rewrite

some rules for a potential phase three situation to offer more flexibility."

Superintendents may be able to better manage when and how often they irrigate their courses. "If we can show a genuine reduction by using flow-meters, they may be more willing to rewrite those rules," Randquist said.

Drought conditions are expected to persist in the Southeast through August. ■

Danneberger launches Superintendents' Korner

By JOEL JOYNER

COLUMBUS, Ohio — T. Karl Danneberger, Ph.D., professor of turfgrass science at Ohio State University, has launched Superintendents' Korner, an Internet site for superintendents in the Midwest.

Located on the OSU Web site, SK is designed to cover issues and developments concerning

turfgrass in the region. Current topics, called "turfnotes," are listed on a regular basis and inform superintendents on both abiotic and biotic stresses that occur throughout the growing season.

"I launched it in April, and I think it has been well received," said Danneberger. "Whenever I make a new posting, I send out an e-mail to those on the SK list."

The site may be viewed at <http://hcs.osu.edu/karl>. Turfnotes published so far this year cover a range of topics, everything from red thread, mushrooms in aerification holes, necrotic ring spot and dandelions. Basal rot anthracnose, take-all-patch and dollar spot on bent/Poa fairways round out the list.



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