

NORTH FLORIDA

DIVOTS



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Now playing in the North Florida area, "The Drought of 81", consult your nearest rain gauge for nonexistent rain recordings. Some people may jest at this remark unless they happen to be a golf course superintendent.

Golf course superintendents in North Florida are now experiencing drought conditions that for years seemed indigenous to the southern regions of the state. Many are experiencing first hand the ramifications that go with long term dry weather conditions. One finds that the ramifications of a drought are far reaching and in some cases not always bad.

Rising electric bills due to increased running of irrigation pumps have many superintendents and club managers worried. Close watch on the rising number in kilowatt hours during a time when electric rates are already high is an expense that really puts a dent in the budget.

With irrigation systems constantly running, some courses have developed wet spots that in turn lead to the appearance of fungi. Weed control suffers from the constant running of irrigation systems. Some courses cannot afford to go without water for fear of damage to the turf. Turf stress during a drought preys heavily on the minds of superintendents. Raising the various heights of cut and aeration are some ways superintendents have sought to relieve turf stress. With water restrictions and cutbacks now in effect, sewage affluent systems are being discussed as a long term answer to some of our water problems. Even with

the advancements made in irrigation systems, the consensus of opinion is that no one or anything puts out water like Mother Nature.

With all the negative ramifications of a drought, golf pros and irrigation distributors are not that unhappy. Blue skies mean more rounds of golf played and lack of rain means more irrigation supplies and parts being ordered. Both of these things mean money.

During these dry conditions good attitudes and a high spirit of cooperation exist between North Florida Golf Course Superintendents Chapter members and the St. Johns River Water Management District. Mr. Bob Moresi of the St. Johns River Water Management District office attended the July 14 meeting and spoke to the Chapter. The superintendents were given a brief history of water management in the state of Florida. He also discussed the lens or bubble theory that accounts for Florida's water supply and tried to dismiss any notions of underground rivers from the Carolina's feeding into Florida. Enforcement of restrictions, registrations of new wells, and the metering of wells to record water consumption were also discussed. The meeting was very productive and educational to both parties from the many questions that were raised.

North Florida may be high and dry now, but through our Superintendents Chapter and the help of our state agencies we will work together to ensure that enough water is available to grow quality turf in our area now and in the future. ■

South Florida Soils

CLEWISTON, FLA.

DR. ANDERSON'S TOPDRESSING

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