

GCSAA FORUM TAKES UNIQUE APPROACH TO NATION'S WATER PROBLEMS

GCSAA's 53rd International Turfgrass Conference in New Orleans Jan. 28-Feb. 5 will provide what may be the year's most complete and comprehensive discussion of the nation's water problems. Two conference water symposiums will bring together 12 of the nation's leading experts on water and golf for a look at the future of the game in a water-short world.

According to Dr. Joseph P. Rossillon, executive director of the Freshwater Biological Research Foundation in Navarre, Minn., the United States may be headed for a water crisis rivaling the energy crunch which hit in 1973. The only difference, according to Rossillon, is that we may not have eight years to adjust to it.

For golf courses in several parts of the country, the situation already is critical. Courses have been forced to ration or completely cease using water as government agencies debate the best use of available supplies. The situation may become even more critical, according to Rossillon.

Besides Rossillon, participants in the first symposium Feb. 1 include Dr. Calvin Alexander Jr., associate professor of geology and geophysics at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis; Dr. William A. Thomas, a Chicago attorney who specializes in water and energy law; and Walter Wilkie, president of Wilkie Turf Equipment, Pontiac, Mich.

The second water symposium Feb. 2 will begin with a panel discussion by four golf course superintendents who recently have been forced to deal with restricted water supplies at their courses. They are Jack Martin, Shackamaxon

Country Club, Westfield, N.J.; David M. Bailey, Atlantis Country Club, Lake Worth, Fla.; Peter Pedrazzi, CGCS, Crestmont Country Club, Florham Park, N.J., and James G. Prusa, Pasatiempo Golf Club, Scotts Valley, Calif.

Panelists will focus on their experiences with government regulations, alternative water sources and water-conscious turf management techniques.

Also speaking in the second session are former United States Golf Association President Frank "Sandy" Tatum, Ed Seay, director of design for Arnold Palmer's golf course operations, and Dr. James B. Beard, professor of turf and crop physiology at Texas A&M University. Speakers will discuss ways a water shortage will affect turf management practices, golf course design and the game of golf itself.

The session will conclude with a discussion by GCSAA Executive Director James E. McLoughlin of efforts by golf's allied associations to position the game to cope with the problems it faces in this and other areas.

The water symposiums are two of nine education sessions scheduled during GCSAA's New Orleans Conference. Other sessions will deal with personal financial planning, golf course drainage, putting green speed, communications, tree management programs and cart management.

Conference activities also include the world's largest trade show devoted exclusively to golf course and fine turf management, a behind-the-scenes tour of the Louisiana Superdome, a full schedule of social activities and the Association's annual membership meeting. ■

Diagnostic Quiz: Bermudagrass

By DR. ROBERT DARST

and

DR. W.R. THOMPSON, JR.

Clues: Producers of hybrid bermudagrass often experience moderate to severe stand losses in both hay meadows and pastures. The problem has been around about as long as the hybrid bermudas have. Close observation of affected areas reveals that older leaves develop small tan to purplish-brown spots. Young plant tops appear lemon yellow or wilted. In severe cases, leaves (and sometimes the entire plant) may die. In research plots, consistent differences have been seen in earliness of spring growth, rhizome numbers (in early spring and in late summer) and ground cover plots receiving a balanced fertilizer versus without. Soil types can influence the time required to develop this condition and the degree of severity. What is the problem? For answer, see below.

Answer:

This is a coastal bermudagrass that is deficient in potash. In some cases, the deficiency becomes so severe that heavy stand loss occurs. Helminthosporium leaf spot often invades the affected pasture or meadow. Winter hardiness drops and rhizome production can be reduced drastically. Hybrid bermudagrass grown on some soils shows the condition sooner than on others. Those soils containing K-bearing minerals in the lower soil profile sometimes provide reserve K nutrition for a while. Even on these soils, however, the condition ultimately shows itself. Heavy K₂O applications (up to 300-400 lbs./A) will help bring back stands and return pastures and meadows to normal production levels. The condition can be prevented by balancing N and P₂O₅ applications with adequate K₂O.