

They were on the evening newscast.

Dramatic ground and aerial pictures of the fires in the Everglades burning off thousands of acres. There was a shot taken from the ground level at night that intrigued me. You could see the long line of flames against the darkness of the night.

From afar the flames looked like some gigantic hand saw and the flames leaping upward were the teeth.

Florida's drought poses challenges, opportunities

There were long fingers, then tiny short fingers beside one another.

The long fingers were made, I suppose, when the fire hit a thick clump of weeds and grass, and the short fingers were made as the fire swept along ordinary short weeds and grass. I thought about our association. The flames were like our members. The tall flames represent the members that are on fire for our industry and are doing everything they can (including water conservation) to promote the image of the golf course superintendent as a true manager and professional. The small flames represent the members that do not take an active part in our association or spend the time promoting the positive side of golf course management.

Right now we need every golf course superintendent in Florida to take an active role in overcoming a very

serious problem facing us: Florida's drought. Our population is growing at a staggering 5,000 per week. The building of houses and roads decreases our watersheds. The water crisis is here and it can only get worse over the next decade.

In 1780, Florida had 20.3 million acres of wetlands covering more than half the state. By 1980, the number had dwindled to 11 million acres.

Will golf courses in Florida survive the water crunch? If golf course superintendents pull together, then the answer is "yes." We will not only survive, we will prosper.

Superintendents, I have found over the years, are a rare breed that loves the land and everything that comes from it. The active will encourage the inactive

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and we will, I believe, learn how to live with restricted water use.

The Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association needs to fund research on drought and heat-tolerant grasses. Seminars should be sponsored so superintendents will know how to monitor their irrigation systems efficiently. Reports must be issued on the latest state-of-the-art computerized systems, variable speed, energy-wise



Dan Jones
Dan Jones, CGCS

AFTERWORDS

pump stations, low-pressure irrigation heads and the correct piping and spacing of irrigation heads to keep golf course superintendents aware of the fast-changing '90s.

Effluent water will be the answer for golf courses in Florida. It is available and being dumped in the ocean or Gulf of Mexico or pumped into deep wells. Every month, Dade and Broward counties alone dump 10 billion gallons of effluent into the ocean.

This is water that can be used for irrigation and, at the same time, it will help reduce the risks of contaminating our environment: Nature has given us grass as an excellent filter for the effluent.

The voices of the golf course su-

perintendents in Florida must become strong and unified to promote our need for sewage effluent. We must explain why healthy golf courses are

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critical to the economic well-being of our state.

Florida receives 25 billion gallons of water a day from underground rivers in Alabama and Georgia and

another 150 billion gallons a day from rain. We lose 107 billion gallons daily to evapotranspiration and 68 billion gallons flow into the ocean.

Florida has about a quadrillion (1 and 15 zeros) gallons of water in its aquifer. With 800 new residents moving to Florida every day, our water usage increases by 100,000 gallons a day. That's 37 million gallons a year, of which 35 million gallons will end up as wastewater.

By using sewage effluent, golf courses could help preserve our precious water for home use and prevent saltwater intrusion along the coastal areas. That is the good news. The bad news is we will lose it if we do not act now. Farmers, citrus growers and other groups are also looking for al-

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The Age of Science had arrived...

from page 12

And life became more enjoyable.

The men called Farmers became efficient.

A single farmer grew food for 28

Industrialists, Artists and Doctors.

And Writers, Engineers, and Teachers as well.

To protect his crops and animals, the Farmer

produced substances to repel or destroy

Insects, Diseases and Weeds.

These were called Pesticides.

Similar substances were made by Doctors to

protect humans.

These were called Medicine.

The Age of Science had arrived and with it

came better diet and longer, happier lives

for more members of Society.

Soon it came to pass

That certain well-fed members of Society

Disapproved of the Farmer using Science.

They spoke harshly of his techniques for

feeding, protecting, and preserving plants

and animals.

They deplored his upsetting the Balance of

Nature;

They longed for the Good Old Days.

*And this had emotional appeal to the rest of
Society.*

*By this time Farmers had become so efficient,
Society had given them a new title:*

Unimportant Minority.

*Because Society could not ever imagine a
shortage of food.*

*Laws were passed abolishing Pesticides,
Fertilizers, and Food Preservatives.*

Insects, Diseases, and Weeds flourished.

Crops and animals died.

Food became scarce.

*To survive, Industrialists, Artists and Doctors
were forced to grow their own food.*

They were not very efficient.

*People and governments fought wars to gain
more agricultural land.*

Millions of people were exterminated.

*The remaining few lived like animals,
Feeding themselves on creatures and plants
around them.*

*And this was called, "In Balance with
Nature."*

Dr. John Carew

This poem by Dr. John Carew, the late chairman of the horticulture department at Michigan State University, was first published as a column in *American Vegetable Grower* in 1970. It is reprinted here with blanket permission from the original publisher.

*Our water goal:
the right kind,
the right
amount, the
right place at
the right time.*

*The days of
unlimited water
use are over.*

from page 79

ternate sources of water.

Every golf course superintendent, golf pro, golf course manager and owner should write his representative in Tallahassee, the water management agency in his area, governing bodies of his city and county and the directors of sewage facilities to tell them of our water needs and our desire for sewage effluent.

If, after reading this, you do not think we

need to act now, talk to our peers in California. We are only five years behind them and closing the gap fast.

Our water goal: the right kind, the right amount, the right place at the right time. The days of unlimited water use are over. This natural resource is decreasing, and we need a plan to keep Florida green and growing. We must prepare for tomorrow by getting involved today.