

Water shortage theme of irrigation meeting

Maintaining grass and shrubs with scant water was the subject of the recent 15th annual Turfgrass Sprinkler Irrigation Conference at Lake Arrowhead, Cal., sponsored by the University of California Cooperative Extension and the sprinkler irrigation industry.

The theme was "Irrigation Technology for Tomorrow (and Today's Drought)". With golf courses in some areas cut to as little as 50 percent of the water they were using before, and Mayor Tom Bradley of Los Angeles calling for a 10 percent mandatory cutback in water use over the summer, the situation is becoming more and more serious in California.

William Wood, Jr. and Jewell Meyer, University of California, and Don Brooks of the Metropoli-

tan Water District put California's water situation into perspective.

Planning that has taken place in southern California the last 50 to 75 years has resulted in four aqueducts bringing water into that area. Because of the drought, two of these are out of operation completely, a third has been cut back half or more, but the fourth is running at a capacity higher than even originally planned, according to Brooks.

California uses about 37 million acre feet of water a year, Brooks said. This is only about half of its actual water resources. With the other half locked up in wild river status, questions about land use planning are coming to bear. Public interest will play an important role in California's future land use laws,

according to Wood.

Meanwhile, agronomists are showing how to become more water efficient. Don Parsons, Knollwood Golf Course, described the watersaving potential of Purr-wick greens.

Correct installation and performance of irrigation equipment was emphasized. This is very necessary in order to ensure efficient water use. How to manage with insufficient water was another key topic.

By showing how to look ahead to design for water shortages and using turfgrass cultural practices related to this, California extension service is educating its professional people to cope with drought now and to be prepared should it occur again. □

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