

Drought rears its ugly head

■ A long, dry spring resulted in some radical water restrictions in Los Angeles lately. This type of action by the L.A. City Council could be a portent for other parts of the country hit by drought.

"A new ordinance provisionally passed by the City Council will establish strict xeriscape requirements for all landscaping on commercial, industrial and multi-family housing projects in Los Angeles," notes a press release from the California Landscape & Irrigation Council. The release says that points are awarded to xeriscaping features incorporated into the landscape. Each new site plan must meet certain requirements concerning drip/trickle/micro irrigation, automatic irrigation controls, swimming pool and spa covers, non-living ground cover and recirculating water features, among others.

California Gov. George Deukmejian, who drafted a contingency plan for a drought emergency, has requested the public to water lawns only during the evening or early morning.

And California is not the only place in the country facing a probable water shortage. LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT technical advisor Doug Chapman says that spring rainfall measured less than one inch at Dow Gardens in Midland, Mich.—against a normal rainfall of more than four inches.

If spring weather is any indication, it will be a long, dry summer, so landscape managers should begin making their own "contingency plans" now.

EPA official sees higher prices

■ The Environmental Protection Agency's requests for additional data on lawn care pesticides could result in fewer and higher-priced chemicals, says Cathleen McNerney, deputy chief at the Policy and Special Projects Office of the EPA.

"Producers may raise prices in order to compensate for the costs of generating additional data," she told attendees at the most recent GCSAA conference and show. "They may also simply stop making the product, or they may choose to take it off the home market and restrict it to golf courses and other non-home uses.

"Products containing active ingredients which are only registered for use on golf course would be unaffected by any new data requirements."

McNerney said that the EPA plans to issue 15 new pesticide registration standards and 10 final standards. She also predicted that this year, 13 special review decisions would be made.

Her speech also referenced biological control agents including nematodes and endophytic grasses.

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