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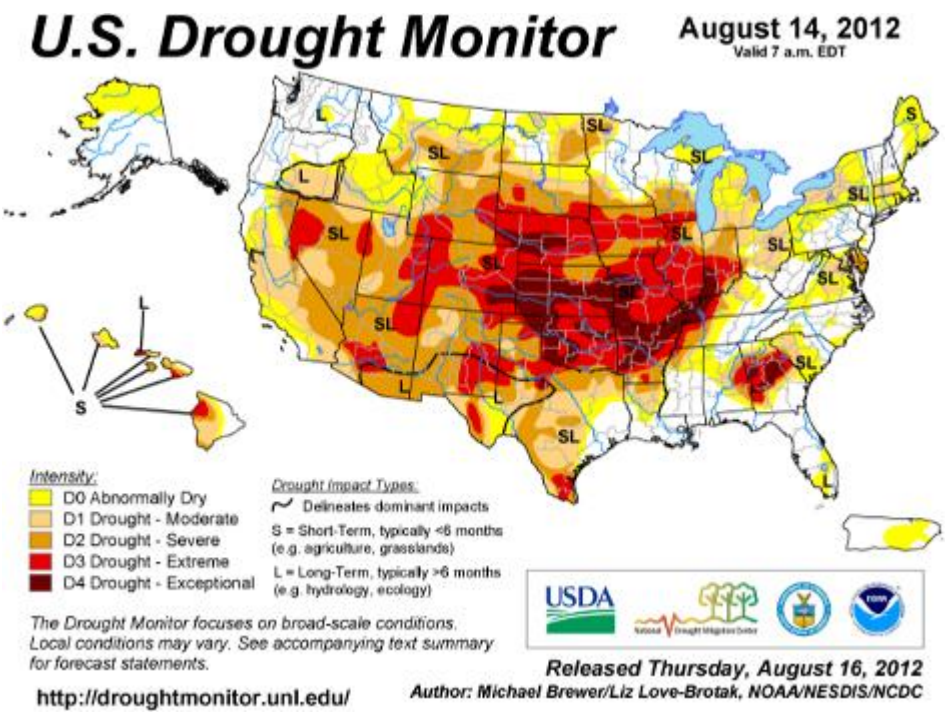
The Drought Is Impacting Courses Across The Country

USGA Green Section agronomists offer their suggestions to help your facility cope with extended dry and hot conditions.

by the Green Section Staff

While the drought of 2011 was largely in the southern half of the country, 2012 has brought severe drought conditions to more than half of the counties in the United States. The drought is impacting agriculture, the price of food and fuel, homeowners and golf courses.



As is the case with most weather-related issues, the severity of the drought varies widely across the country and sometimes even within a single state. With this in mind, the agronomic staff of the USGA Green Section agronomic staff has put together a series of regionally-based suggestions to help superintendents, course leadership and owners get through these difficult conditions as best as possible.

Please note: There are two links below pertaining to this presentation.

Video
The video is the best way to view the information provided in this presentation. This will allow you to see and utilize the many links to articles about drought, heat stress, and drought tolerant grasses. You will need Adobe Reader 9 or newer to view the video (click here to download the latest version of **Adobe Reader**). Also, the file is quite large so you may find it best to download the video to your local machine prior to watching it. If you attempt to stream the video be sure to allow a few minutes for it to load. **View the video presentations**.

Podcast
The podcast is strictly an audio file and can be played on any platform. It does not include the valuable links, but will allow you to hear the presentations and suggestions offered. **Listen to the podcast**.

What I Didn't Learn In School

School alone cannot completely prepare one for the challenges of the profession.

by Jake Schneider, assistant superintendent, Blackhawk CC, Madison, Wis.

After six-and-a-half years at the University of Wisconsin- Madison, it is hard to imagine any classes that I did not have the opportunity to take in preparation to enter the golf course management industry. In hindsight, wiser decisions when choosing electives might have been made, but thanks to some questionable class selection my knowledge of dinosaurs and gems is greater than it might otherwise be. Yet, there are probably other turf management professionals who have substantially more classroom knowledge than I do of all things pterodactyls or diamonds.

My classroom experience could not prepare me for the frustration and helpless feeling of taking the blame for what Mother Nature occasionally does to the golf course. A good example is winter injury to a putting green, especially when cool spring weather hinders the rate of turf recovery.

Such is the nature of a profession where so much is learned on the job. Don't get me wrong; I would not trade my formal education for anything, but chances are you know of a highly successful superintendent or assistant superintendent who has no college education or pursued a major totally unrelated to golf course management. Still, despite my bias, I believe the best foundation for a career in this industry is gained through earning a degree in a traditional turf management field.

Read the rest of this article

Ticks: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

Transmitted by a tick bite, Lyme disease is a growing threat.

by Jim Skorulski, senior agronomist, Northeast Region

Lyme disease has now been reported in all the states except Hawaii. There are more ticks in more places than ever before, including golf courses! This brings an ever-increasing risk for tick-transmitted diseases.

Lyme disease, caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi* and transmitted through the bite of infected ticks, is the most common tick-borne disease affecting humans and dogs in North America. First identified in Lyme, Conn., in 1975, this serious and debilitating infectious disease has since spread widely across the Northeastern, Mid-Atlantic, and North-Central regions of the United States as well as Canada. A rising number of Lyme disease infections have also occurred along the West Coast of the United States. Vectors most capable of transmitting Lyme disease to humans include *Ixodes scapularis* (deer tick, also known as blacklegged tick) and to a lesser extent *Ixodes pacificus* (western blacklegged tick). As these ticks expand coverage throughout North America, the public health threat from Lyme disease will continue to spread. The likelihood that you will come in contact with a deer tick or western blacklegged tick vectoring the disease while playing or working on a golf course is growing. For this reason, it is important to be aware of the disease and take a few precautionary steps that will help to keep you safe.

[Read the rest of this article]

Nymphal stage deer ticks are the size of a poppy seed. Photo courtesy of TickEncounter.

The World Amateur Team Championships

A marathon event unlike any other!

by John H. Foy, director, Florida Region

After a brief appearance more than 100 years ago, golf will again be in the Olympic Games in 2016. However, many are unaware that since 1958 there has been a biennial international competition for gold, silver, and bronze medals with the mission of "Fostering Friendship and Sportsmanship" through golf. The World Amateur Team Championship (WATC) shares many similarities with the Olympic Games, including its values of excellence, friendship, and fair play. From the standpoint of championship course preparations and management, the WATC has some unique challenges and is a marathon event unlike any other.

Just like the Olympic Games, each country participating in the WATC is introduced during the opening ceremonies. This is just one of the special features enjoyed by participants in this unique event. Photo by John Mummert, USGA.

[Read the rest of this article]

Regional Updates

The USGA Green Section agronomists see an amazing variety of issues and challenges as they visit golf courses across the country. Be sure to read the highlights of each region since many of the topics covered apply to courses everywhere.

Mid-Atlantic Region

This update includes:

Is the worst over? It is a question being asked all over the region. Stan Zontek gives his take on the rest of the season.

View the rest of this update

Southeast Region

This update includes:

Chris Hartwiger shares some interesting statistics to back up his observation that deep rough is trouble for golfers and maybe even the bottom line of your facility.

View the rest of this update.

North-Central Region

This update includes:

Only Green Section Senior Agronomist Bob Vavrek can sensibly relate a squished possum on the side of the road to the dead grass on your golf course.

View the rest of this update

Northeast Region

This update includes:

In the Northeast Region, Jim Skorulski explains why August 15 is a date that some might consider almost "magical."

View the rest of this update

Florida Region

This update includes:

Two USGA summer interns find out there is a lot more to caring for a golf course than turfgrass management.

View the rest of this update.

Southwest Region

This update includes:

Agronomist Brian Whitlark discusses the interaction of thatch in fairways and localized dry spots, and how to fix the problem.

View the rest of this update

Northwest Region

This update includes:

Golfers should feel privileged to fix a ball mark? It is a hard sell but Derf Soller gives it his best shot.

View the rest of this update.

Editor's Note

Corrections

The July 20, 2012 issue of the *Green Section Record* included the article entitled, "Understanding the Different Wetting Agent Chemistries." After publishing the article, we were informed that one of the wetting agent chemistries was misidentified. The updated article can viewed by clicking this link:

Understanding the Different Wetting Agent Chemistries

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