

Rainmaking bill vital, OU profs stress

United Press International
OKLAHOMA CITY — A state-supported weather modification program is needed to meet water demands of Oklahoma's growing population and to minimize effects of future droughts, officials say.

But funding for the rainmaking effort — which is being designed by state officials, University of Oklahoma meteorologists and a Tulsa firm — depends on a Water Development Fund bill that is stalled in the Legislature.

"It was all tied in with the Water Development Fund," said Harold Springer, chief of the engineering division for the Oklahoma Water Resources Board. "We had a lot of hopes for that money."

The bill calls for setting aside \$50 million a year until a \$400-million fund accumulates. The money would be used to finance bond sales for water projects around the state.

OU meteorology professor John C. Pflaum said meteorologists and officials have recommended a \$10-million weather modification endowment fund as the beginning of a comprehensive cloud seeding program.

"I'm not saying the whole state could be seeded for that amount of money, but it's certainly a very good start toward providing some rain in parts of the state where it's most needed," he said.

Seeding consists of releasing into clouds chemicals that promote the formation of raindrops, ice or snow crystals.

A brochure prepared by Pflaum and fellow OU professor Amos Eddy said the state's growth will increase the need for water.

"Oklahoma is a state experiencing rapid economic and industrial growth," the brochure says. "As demand for water increases, the state's vulnerability to drought becomes more critical."

The brochure said the groups concluded that seeding efforts should be coupled with expansion of storage facilities such as reservoirs, stock ponds and aqueducts because few clouds are available for seeding when droughts actually happen.

Pflaum said cloud seeding would not eliminate the need for other water projects for the dry western parts of the state.

"I don't think weather modification will turn western Oklahoma into a tropical jungle," he said.

Springer said if the \$10-million fund is not possible, the OWRB would like to fund a \$90,000 effort to gather data on summer cumulus clouds which are more likely to respond to seeding efforts.

But he said the way things are going the funding effort probably will have to wait until the next legislative session.

Pflaum said a state-controlled seeding program would be more desirable than some privately funded seeding efforts because of the possibility that the profit motive may take a front seat to citizen needs.

Pflaum said science has "evolved now to where we hope we have more effective methods of influencing the weather." And he said the longer a seeding program lasts, the more accurately its effects can be gauged.

Pflaum joins other meteorologists in questioning the method of using ground-based silver iodide generators to seed clouds. This has been used by some private weather modification firms hired by some western Oklahoma farmers.

"But I think that's better than not doing anything," he said. "It's certainly better to try something than to just sit around and watch the crops die."

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Farm worker pay 'insured' in Valley U.S. official says

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SAN JUAN — An official of the Department of Labor says his office has several people working solely to insure that Texas farm workers receive the federal minimum wage they are entitled to, and they have found very few instances of non-compliance by employers.

An American Civil Liberties Union attorney, however, said Tuesday the ACLU and the United Farm Workers union were preparing lawsuits against at least 100 Rio Grande Valley farmers charging violations of the federal minimum wage law.

The UFW says workers in South Texas citrus groves and vegetable fields earn an average of only \$2.45 an hour, while the wage law calls for \$3.35 an hour.

ACLU attorney Jim Harrington, who helped union organizer Cesar Chavez lead a six-day protest march against low wages last week, said the union scrapped its original plans to present the Labor Department more than 400 wage complaints against 100 different growers because the UFW believed the government would not properly investigate the complaints.

"We decided that it was worthless to take the complaints to the government and decided to go ahead and file suits ourselves," said Harrington, whose wife, Rebecca Flores Harrington, is the union's Texas director. He said the first probably would be filed this week or early next week.

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4 to 5 a.m. Saturday—
Sennheiser Phones \$28⁸⁸
HD-400's from West Germany are tops.

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Stereo Rack \$88
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Noon to 1 p.m. Saturday—
Dual Single- or Multi-Play Turntable \$99
Dual 1257 has Ultra-Low Mass tonearm, quiet belt drive system, long and short spindle. Was \$169!

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3 to 4 p.m. Saturday—
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The slimline Clarion SK-95's will fit most any car and fill it with good sound. You'll never see this price again!

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6 to 7 a.m. Saturday—
2-way Speakers \$58.^{ea.}
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