



## Fires Wipe Out 1,726 Acres

The North Carolina Forest Service, Elizabeth City District, reports that 223 forest fires in 1973 burned a total of 1,726 acres of forest land.

This Forest Service District covers nine counties in the Albemarle area. Listed are the counties and the number of fires and acres burned in each county in 1973 - Martin County - 29 Fires - 160 Acres; Bertie County 58 - 660; Hertford County 13 - 31; Gates County 15 - 185; Chowan County 14 - 98; Perquimans County 15 - 101; Pasquotank County 26 - 54; Camden County 24 - 194; Currituck County 29-235.

Forest fires are caused in many ways. The Forest Service breaks down the causes into 9 basic categories with sub-categories for each basic cause. Debris burning fires, one basic category, includes trash, brush, windrows, new ground clearing, and fields. This has been the major cause of forest fires in 1973 and in past years. Plans to reduce fires from this source in 1974 and future years are to prosecute continuous violators and to have a more rigid enforcement of burning permit laws and other forestry laws. Laws, enforced by the Department of Air and Water Resources concerning illegal trash and other burning which causes pollution, are expected to help in reduction in fires from this cause.

Fires from other causes seem to be spread out evenly in a normal pattern. There were more fires than usual classed under the basic miscellaneous category which were started by electric fences. Fortunately there were not many incendiary or arson type fires set this past year. Hertford County ranked first on the number of incendiary fires. There were no prosecutions for violations of burning laws in 1973.

The response of the general public, Volunteer Fire Departments, private wood companies, and fire suppression activities of the Forest Service kept the acreage burned down in 1973. This type of

cooperation is appreciated and is continuously needed in the protection of the 1,150,000 acres of forest land in this district. The N.C. Forest Service urges everyone to be careful with fire and to obey conservation laws. Please contact us for any assistance we can be to you.

### IN HOSPITAL

Mrs. Vivian Matthews is a patient at the Albemarle Hospital.

### SUNDAY GUESTS

Mr. and Mrs. W.M. Divers, III, and family of Chesapeake, Va. were guests of Mrs. Divers, Sr. on Sunday.

### RETURNS FROM HOSPITAL

Dilmon Young has returned from Norfolk General Hospital after undergoing surgery.

C. Wilson Spencer, now district conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in charge of Tyrrell, Dare, Washington and Hyde Counties, has been selected as the project coordinator for the new Mid-East Resource Conservation and Development Project.

Announcing the appointment, State Conservationist Jesse L. Hicks of Raleigh said that Mr. Spencer will begin his new assignment effective February 17. He will be headquartered in Washington, N.C.

"I am delighted that we have a young man with Wilson Spencer's abilities and background to take on this important job," the state conservationist commented. "He is well equipped to work with the RC&D council members and other leaders in Hertford, Bertie, Martin, Pitt and Beaufort Counties to obtain

the objectives of this RC&D project."

Wilson Spencer began work with the Soil Conservation Service in 1965 as a student trainee, and began full-time work with SCS in Clinton after receiving his B.S. degree from N.C. State University in 1966. During the SCS career he has served at Lumberton, Newton and Beaufort.

In 1973 he was instrumental in staging environmental "beach clinics" which helped coastal landowners solve erosion, vegetation and other conservation problems.

The Mid-East RC&D Project recently received approval from the Secretary of Agriculture for planning assistance.

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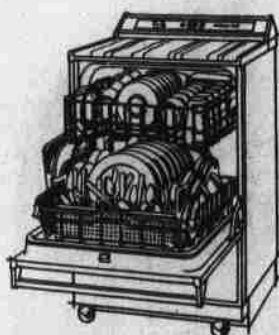
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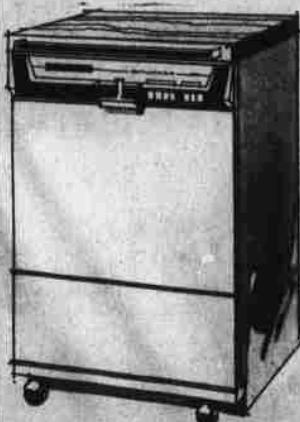
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