

FIRE HAZARD RODS AND P. PINASTER FUEL MOISTURE CONTENT.

by J. McCormick

One of the problems encountered in burning under P. pinaster is in knowing instantly the fuel moisture content. It does appear that a method of indicating this factor can be arrived at by the use of the standard fire hazard rod set. At Dwellingup an experiment has been established with this end in view and the results to date are encouraging.

A fine gauge brass wire basket was made 3" deep and 9" square. This was filled with P. pinaster needles and placed in semi-shade on a bed of P. pinaster needles. Beside this basket was placed a set of P. radiata fire hazard rods. The moisture content of both the pine needles in the basket and the fire hazard rods was reduced at two hourly intervals throughout the day.

The three drying trends illustrated were taken on the 13th, 14th & 15th April '66 one day after 85 points of rain and the Temp./R.H. ranges from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. were -

		Temp.	R.H.
Fig. 1	13th April	41° - 62°	100% - 56%
Fig. 2	14th April	42° - 64°	100% - 73%
Fig. 3	15th April	48° - 71°	100% - 49%

From these three daily samples the drying curves for both the P. pinaster needles and the fire hazard rods are markedly alike. The difference in moisture content decreases with the drying trend.

