



Science
Societies

In memoriam: William A. Jury

October 19, 2026

In Memoriam

William A. Jury
1946–2026



Dr. William A. “Bill” Jury (1946–2026) passed away on Aug. 10, 2026 at the age of 80 in Redlands, CA. He served the scientific community with distinction for decades. He was

elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 2000 and named a Fellow of SSSA, AAAS, and AGU.

Jury was born in Highland Park, MI, on Aug. 8, 1946. He earned his B.S. in Physics from the University of Michigan in 1968, followed by an M.S. (1970) and Ph.D. (1973) in Physics from the University of Wisconsin under the supervision of Edward E. Miller. He joined the faculty of the Department of Soil and Environmental Sciences at the University of California, Riverside (UCR) in 1974. He rose to full professor in 1982 and retired as Distinguished Professor Emeritus in 2008, having spent his entire academic career at UCR. Throughout his tenure, he held key leadership roles, including Department Chair, Director of the University of California Toxic Substances Research and Training Program, Vice Provost for Academic Personnel, and Interim Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost.

Jury made fundamental contributions to vadose zone hydrology and environmental soil physics, particularly in modeling chemical transport in unsaturated soils and protecting groundwater resources. He pioneered transfer function theory to describe solute movement through heterogeneous field soils and developed the “Jury” Chemical Behavior Assessment Model, a benchmark framework for evaluating pesticide and volatile organic compound volatilization and chemical leaching losses in unsaturated zone environments. His research also investigated finger-like unstable flow during water redistribution, spatial variability of physical properties, trace contaminant transport (such as selenium), and sustainable global water resource management.

Over his career, Jury authored or co-authored 225 peer-reviewed journal articles and five books, including seminal texts on soil physics and solute movement. In 2025, he was awarded the prestigious Kirkham Gold Medal Career Award at the 7th Kirkham

Conference in Fukushima, Japan. Beyond his scientific brilliance, Jury was an exceptionally dedicated teacher and mentor, receiving both the UCR Graduate Student Association and Faculty Senate Distinguished Teacher Awards as well as serving as the inaugural chair of the UCR Academy of Distinguished Teaching.

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