

Metamorphosis — Maintenance barn to maintenance facility

BY TIM SEVER

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As golf course superintendents are trying and succeeding in improving our professional image, it's time to also improve and update the image of the old maintenance barn.

Although this article is geared more toward the design and building of a new maintenance facility, there are areas that could be useful in renovating or upgrading of an existing facility.

The first thing you need to do in planning a maintenance complex is to be as up to date as possible on all of the local, state and federal regulations pertaining to this type of facility. Most of the time, you would take your layout to an engineer or construction consultant and let them put the finishing touches on your plan, making sure it conforms to all of the pertinent regulations. They will come up with a set of working drawings and a set of specs for the proposed builders.

Remember that you don't often have a second chance to design or build the facility. Take your time and think through all the different aspects of the facility, from adequate parking, equipment and fuel storage to office space. I'm no expert in the field of design, but I have been fortunate enough to have been involved in the design and construction of three maintenance facilities. If there is a single most important thing I brought to these facilities, it was convincing the ownership that this was a very important piece of the development puzzle. This is the hub of all maintenance that is performed on the project. It has to be efficient, well designed and well run, with safe operation as the foremost aspect of the facility.

With that said, I would like to touch on certain design criteria that should be considered.

Office, lounge and restrooms

It is important that each person on your office staff has a place to do his or her paperwork and reports.

The lounge should be sized so that it will allow the entire crew to sit and eat, or attend staff/safety meetings. It should have a minimum of a refrigerator, microwave and sink. We sized ours so that we could include lockers for employees. This keeps the jackets, rainsuits, etc., from laying around. We also have a TV and VCR in this area to help us in training and safety meetings. This is also the area where we keep our haz-com plan and other important information.

Restrooms should be designed to accommodate maximum staff size.

Equipment, small tools storage

The equipment storage area should be well thought out. Every piece of equipment should have its own place. Nothing is worse than having to move 2 or 3 pieces of equipment to get to the one you need. Also, the more equipment you can keep

under cover, the longer it will last.

Small tool storage is also in this building. We have a 15 x 15 caged area that can be locked and is adequately sized to store hand tools.

Mechanics office, shop and parts

These areas should be adequately sized according to your equipment inventory. The mechanic needs to do his paperwork, parts inventory, parts ordering, preventive maintenance reports and fuel reconciliation and monitoring reports. Most important, it should be an area that can be secured, or at least out of the main flow of traffic. Employee accessibility to this area should be restricted to eliminate potential liability and insurance risks.

Chemical, fertilizer storage

There are a couple of options pertaining to these areas:

Continued on Page 60

Practical Application III Fiddlesticks Country Club

LOU CONZELMANN, SUPERINTENDENT

Currently there are two beneficial nematodes available for the control of mole crickets: *Steinernema scapteriscus* (Proact) and *Steinernema riobris* (Lesco, Vector). I have not had experience with the Vector product, therefore I cannot comment on its performance. My experience with *Steinernema scapteriscus* began several years ago when Fiddlesticks Country Club became a site where research through the University of Florida was conducted using these nematodes. Through the years I have seen this product effectively kill many mole crickets.

The nematodes carry a bacteria which is released into adult mole crickets. After entering the nematode, the bacteria kills the mole cricket within a couple of days. They are most effective against adult mole crickets, so are best used in the spring and fall when adults are present.

I have seen mixed results with Proact applications. I attribute this to application methods. Since ultra violet radiation is harmful to the nematodes, they need to be applied at dusk or later. Also, the turf should be irrigated before and after application. Fertigation systems can also be used to apply nematodes. I haven't used the fertigation system for nematode application, but I'm beginning to do some experimenting with it. I feel that it may be an excellent method of nematode application.

As with chemical insecticides, nematodes need to come into contact with the mole crickets. Timing of application and thatch now come into play. Recently, I



Fiddlesticks

From Page 58

have seen some low pressure injection systems which may be a good option for applications.

Nematodes are environmentally safe. No protective clothing is needed for applications. They do not harm humans, fish, or any other animals. Hopefully we will be using many effective products in the future that have absolutely no negative affect on the environment.

Scouting and mapping can be an effective cost saving procedure for nematode applications. Mole crickets seem to congregate in the same areas year after year. Limiting treatment to these specific areas can provide acceptable control and be cost effective.

Beneficial nematodes have proven to reduce mole cricket populations while being completely safe to the environment. As we fine tune application methods and find a way to insure contact between nematodes and mole crickets, this will become a more popular method of control.

Soil microbial enhancement

From Page 56

increasing as we continue to research this exciting aspect of our profession.

Finding reliable information to assist you can be obtained by asking sales personnel to provide you with studies that support the effectiveness of their products. If you have access to the Internet, there are papers available through the Turfgrass Information File at 20676POC@MSU.EDU. Or, use a go-pher to find topics under agronomy, sustainable agriculture, biological research, or any other catch work you think might work.

Two additional sources are:

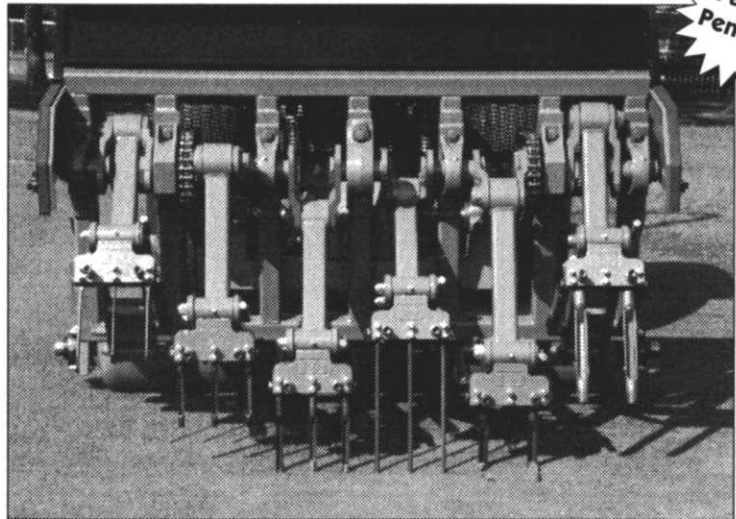
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