



*Did I say that it only rains hard when you lay down new sod? I lied. It also rains hard during special events. It invariably happens that in the haste to finish preparations for an event, not everyone checks with the superintendent before driving on the golf course and accidental damage is done. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

# ...And then there's Murphy's Law!

*A superintendent can plan on things not going as planned*

BY JOEL D. JACKSON, CGCS

My compatriots in this section have done an excellent job telling us about the similarities and differences of their daily responsibilities. I would agree that these descriptions are accurate at least 90 per cent of the time. They describe the relentless routine nature of our work required to produce consistent results for our members and guests. It is my task to portray items that fall into the other 10 per cent of our days. The weird things that do play a part in our "routine" days. Murphy's Law come to mind – if something can go wrong, it usually will, and often at the worst possible time! I present to you a collection of photographs of some of the things that can and do go wrong on a day in the life of a golf course superintendent.

In these photos, I have only scratched the surface of the unusual things superintendents have to take in stride on some days. Fortunately, superintendents are very gifted at solving emergencies and pulling off the impossible mission. Depending on your point of view, you may consider the routine or the unusual a typical day in the life of a golf course superintendent.



*Our crews spend valuable maintenance time doing things that all golfers should do as part of golf etiquette. These rules were not written to make superintendents' jobs easier. They were written as common courtesy to keep the course playable for all of the golfers. Repairing ball marks right after they are made keeps the green a lot healthier and smoother. Photo by Joel Jackson.*



*I've had two helicopter adventures. The first was to stand under a hovering helicopter as it dried out wet top dressed greens so we could drag them in and open the course for a shotgun tournament the next morning. The other is pictured here when a helicopter had to make an emergency landing on the course after blowing a hydraulic line over a green during a photo shoot. Photo by Joel Jackson.*





Superintendents are often called upon to correct flaws in a course design. Pine straw on a bare slope moves downhill in a heavy rain. That's not Murphy's Law. That's the Law of Gravity. Photo by Joel Jackson.



I wish I had a nickel for every unfilled divot on my golf course. I'd make money even though I have to pay someone to try and fill them all so the course will look and play better. Photo by Joel Jackson.



A drain basin in a depression in a pine straw area will get clogged by the moving pine straw. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Unfortunately, not all damage is accidental. A considerable investment of time, work and money can be destroyed in a few thoughtless moments! Photographer unknown.



An irrigation blowout. Usually an overnight occurrence that greets you in the morning with a flood, a mound or a hole and lost irrigation coverage to deal with. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Mother nature's blowout. A phenomenon common during construction and renovation projects. It never rains hard until you lay new sod down on a slope! Photo by Joel Jackson.





*A clogged drain basin produces an unexpected water hazard. Superintendents have been known to take off their shoes and roll up their pant legs and wade in to solve the problem temporarily. Eventually the sloping pine straw areas are sodded, and work turns to more important jobs, like grooming the turf. Photo by Joel Jackson.*



- Minimal damage to course.
- Minimal labor to replace bunker sand creates opportunity costs.

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