



Spray Program on a Public Course

Blanket Application is a Thing of the Past

Since we are a public golf course, we have to be careful and selective when making a decision to spray any chemicals, especially on greens and tees.

Fortunately our early morning players are regulars who understand what we are doing. I think the biggest change over the years in spraying is spot treatment of an insect, weed or fungus.

The overall blanket application has hopefully become a habit of the past.

I have at least three employees who can spot a potential problem starting to occur and report it to me.

Bob Farrington, who has been here 21 years, knows the course as well or better than myself. Bob and I have our Commercial Use Pesticide licenses and do all the necessary spraying.

Bob Keeth, a retired superintendent, works part time mowing greens, fairways and green and tee banks. He is another set of experienced eyes to catch anything happening to those areas.

Steve Brown, another employee who has been here over 18 years, has also learned what to look for.

All of our spraying is done with an 85-gallon tank and John Bean R10 pump mounted on a Jacobsen T2000 truckster. Our unit is calibrated to cover 50,000 square feet. We use 8004VS flat fan nozzles on a 15-foot dry boom with shut-off valves on each side unit.

We feel this set up gives us adequate water for good coverage and not much drift problems at 35 pounds per square inch of pressure.

When we calibrate for our 2-acre coverage rate on fairways for Primo or other chemicals, we have enough water per acre to meet most label requirements so we don't have to recalibrate very often.

We keep some granular fungicides and insecticides on hand so if it is too wet for our spray rig we can spot treat as needed.



Joe Ondo applies mole cricket bait only where needed. File photo by Joel Jackson.

Our chemical storage area is in a corner of our maintenance building in a separate room. The room has a cement floor, block walls and steel shelving for all our products.

We have been using a pesticide application log printed by FMC the past few years so all we have to do is fill in the blanks after each application. We also keep a separate daily diary of all work performed for our records.

Mix, load and wash-down is done on a cement pad next to our shop and all rinsate is sprayed back on the course on labeled target areas in fairways or roughs.

Some of the tank mixes that have been successful for us are Basagran at 1 ounce per 1,000 sq. ft. along with 2 pints of MSMA per acre for sedge and crabgrass. Sometimes we don't have to come back with a follow-up treatment, but if we do there's usually not that much to retreat.

When we had a larger weed problem, a mixture of 2 ounces of Sencor plus 2 1/2 pints of MSMA and 1 pint of 2,4,D with a spreader-sticker was very successful.

The last few years, we have been using one wall-to-wall application of Barricade pre-emergent herbicide on a fertilizer carrier in the fall. We follow up as needed by spot treating post-emergent weeds as needed. This has worked very well for us with good results.

I found I was having more transition problems in the spring when we used a pre-emergent while the turf was trying to recover from winter traffic, so we eliminated that application.

When a granular fertilizer is about to run its course on greens and tees, we will use 4 ounces/1,000 sq.ft. of Ferromec and 2 ounces/1,000 sq.ft. of iron to keep the turf going until the next granular application starts to work.

Serious hydraulic leaks are few and far between since we have used the red dye in all our equipment. If we do get a severe leak on the greens, we use Aabsorb oil which works fairly well or we just go ahead and replace the damaged strip with sod from our nursery.

Some new products for hydraulic leaks at the GCSAA Trade Show looked promising. I asked them to send me more information.

New chemicals and products are constantly changing our maintenance practices so call around and ask what is working best for other superintendents and give them a try.

*Joe Ondo, CGCS
Winter Pines GC*