

Warn them about the bad news, but leave them feeling good. By keeping members informed, they tend to feel more involved. As I write this, I got a call from a member who suggested that every day we rope off a different hole to give it a break from the cart traffic.

Other issues that have been discussed because of the changing times include the increasing regulation of water, fertilizer and pesticide use and our efforts to be more environmentally proactive. In years past our members would have not been happy to see our lake banks allowed to grow, but this year, in attempt to create a buffer zone, we did just that. With plenty of notification, the members understood why and actually supported the decision to do so.

Communication is always an important tool for a successful superintendent no matter what issue needs discussing. The bottom line: it doesn't matter what methods you

use to inform your members as long as you do it effectively. The more you communicate with management and members, the better understanding they will have about your operation. Over time it will improve your credibility and make them more confident in your abilities.

SUPER TIP for Your Topdressing Program

By Sean Sullivan, CGCS

As I was traveling the Far East (East Georgia) this past February, I came upon a new step in the topdressing program. The new step has been added only recently, because three years ago when I was working in Georgia, it was not being used. I was visiting the superintendent at Sea Island Seaside

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Course, and he was showing me all the wonders that money can buy. He cuts greens at .100 inches every day of the year.

Because of the low height of cut, a PGR program, and topdressing every week, I asked what kind of problems he sees with the sand and mowers.

His response was that they don't have any problems because they started spraying a product called Speed.

After brushing in the topdressing sand, and two or three rotations of the irrigation heads, they sprayed Speed at 1oz. per 10 gallons of water in the spray tank. That was it! The next morning when they mowed greens there was a significant reduction in the sand that was picked, and the sand didn't ball up on the rollers. I confirmed this with several superintendents in Atlanta, who used the same program, and had the same results.

When I got back to Billings, I researched Speed on the Internet.

Speed is a product from Precision Labs and is a nonionic siloxane surfactant. There is no mention of Speed's ability to hold down sand on the product label. So, I called technical services for Precision Labs and they confirmed that although the product was not labeled for topdressing programs, it will "trick" the sand into thinking it is wet and hold it down. They also said that the residual is two to three weeks.

They shipped me a case, six one gallon containers, from the factory and billed me through a distributor in Salt Lake City. The cost is \$62.50 per gallon. Each application to my greens costs approximately \$15.

I experimented with Speed and it did everything that I was told. I was not concerned about the two-week residual because it would take only a couple of days before the grass was above the sand. Speed can also be used as an adjuvant for pesticides and fertilizers. I have not experimented with other

siloxane surfactants to see if the results would be the same, and there may be another product that is less expensive.

I don't topdress my greens in the winter, and I don't know if you guys roll your greens every couple of weeks to keep them smooth. But it seems like if they were treated, the sand wouldn't move around when rolled.

This isn't an ad for Speed; I am simply letting you know that there is a product that helps with the topdressing program. It keeps the sand where we put it, and we don't pick up half of it with the next mowing. The reels don't get trashed out and my equipment manager is happier. We also don't have to send out extra help to knock down the piles of sand that come off the rear rollers.

EDITOR'S NOTE This article was submitted by Todd Lowe, USGA Agronomist Credit: Peaks & Prairies GCSA magazine, The Perfect Lie, August 2009 issue.

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