**New USGA service targets construction**

*By Peter Blais*

FAR HILLS, N.J. — The U.S. Golf Association (USGA) Green Section will launch its new Construction Education Program next month with Mid-Continent Regional Director Jim Moore as director. Moore is developing materials, web site and seminar programs that will be available at minimal charge to developers, superintendents, course owners, club managers, golf professionals and others involved in building golf projects.

"We know that many of the physical problems golf courses experience after opening occur because of things that were or weren't done when the course was originally built," Moore explained. "We want the courses to be involved up front providing good information for the players and for the new USGA service." "We know that many of the physical problems golf courses experience after opening occur because of things that were or weren't done when the course was originally built," Moore explained. "We want the courses to be involved up front providing good information for the players and for the new USGA service."

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sula CC] we spend about $250,000 a year on water. That’s a lot of money. We’re paying a quarter million dollars for something that’s having a detrimental effect on our turf.”

According to Ray von Dohren of the Carmel Area Wastewater District, the sodium level in the recycled water used by the courses ranges between 50 and 150 parts per million, a relatively low concentration that doesn’t bother fairway or other vegetation it irrigates. But bluegrass can be affected by about water with 75 parts per million sodium, said von Dohren. The water previously used on the golf courses — purchased from the California-American Water Co. — averages 51 parts per million sodium, according to a Cal-Am spokesperson.

Ironically, the greens are being adversely affected by water that is cleaner than drinking water in some parts of California. “The type of water we have would be fine for most golf courses around the country,” added von Dohren.

As a short-term fix, the Carmel Area Wastewater District has already invested $150,000 to inject gypsum into the recycled water. Gypsum, which is calcium sulfate, can carry the sodium through the shallow root zone of bluegrass and keep excess sodium from getting into the grass plant, according to von Dohren. Weeks said his group has been conducting frequent tests and even though the results aren’t definitive, he said, “I know the SAR (salt absorption ratio) is down, based on the calcium we’re adding.” Weeks said the gypsum injection will probably end up being the first step in a “staged approach” to deal with the problems.

Further, under contract terms set more than two years ago, the golf courses are allowed to use potable water for five to seven days at a time, if needed. Many courses have been doing so this summer to stem the problems. But while they wait for an engineering draft report — and a final plan by the end of this month — Zoller and other superintendents are concerned the problems could get far worse if the Monterey region suffers another multi-year drought, as it did in the late 1980s. “If that happens the greens will never get flushed properly,” said Zoller. “We assume that could lead to very serious problems. And if that happens, it would be resume-printing time.”

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