Dalton has helped him get to the top. We have provided Dalton with numerous learning opportunities that have helped him get to where he is today. He credits Paul Reising, who is currently at Prestwick Village in Milford, and former superintendent John Gray for the agronomic knowledge that he has today.

"Those guys were a big inspiration to me and we still keep in contact," said Dalton.

GROWING IN

Copper Hills, which has been built nine holes at a time over a four-year period, is owned by Curtis Wright who also runs an excavation company. Wright designed and built the golf course himself.

"The course is one of the toughest in Michigan," said Dalton. "It plays under 6,900 yards, but has a slope rating of 145."

TRACKING WORKERS

AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Working at a development that is still in flux means that Dalton has to work within a constrained budget.

"We have a little under $400,000 and since 65 to 70 percent of that is taken up by labor costs, I have concentrated on improving efficiency in that area," he said.

Dalton has formulated numerous "scouting sheets" allowing him to track workers and ensure productivity.

"When my workers arrive in the morning, they see their tasks for the day on the board and grab the appropriate route sheet," explained Dalton. "It lays out what he is supposed to do, the order that he is supposed to do it in, and the time-frame in which he is expected to finish." As a result, Dalton knows where his crew is at all times and can easily check up on them to see if they are behind or ahead of schedule. He said it is especially helpful in cases of emergency or equipment breakdown.

Dalton applies a similar formula to the "scouting sheets" he developed for his assistants.

"I have put the basics of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) into a four-page notebook," he said. "It is an easy reference for them to use when identifying insects and diseases and it allows them to record and track damage symptoms. It gives me a better sense of when I need to spray and helps me cut back on chemical use," he added. "We want to be as environmentally safe here as possible because we have homeowners."