

Binding contracts provide job security for turf managers

By JOEL JOYNER

ORLANDO, Fla. — Michael Caranci, superintendent at the Candlewood Country Club in Whittier, Calif., addressed the value of binding contracts between golf course turf managers and their clubs here at the GCSAA Conference and Show last month. The presentation was given during the Innovative Superintendent Session I.

“The main reason for signing contracts or devising agreements with clubs is to have security,” said Caranci.

A 21-year veteran of the profession, and a fourth generation golf course superintendent, Caranci knows the importance of having job security in the turf management industry. “I grew up in the household of a superintendent, and I’ve heard many stories of superintendents losing their jobs – in particular for things that were beyond their control. It’s just not fair,” he said.

Weather conditions, the economy, and disease and pests outbreaks are just some examples that have led to the termination of some superintendents. Caranci used an analogy between a turf manager and a physician to help make his point. “If a doctor loses a patient, the family will shake his hand and tell them, ‘Thank you for everything you tried to do.’ If a superintendent loses a couple of *Poa* greens during a heat outbreak, he’s given a pink slip,” he explained.

Criteria that qualifies turf managers for a binding work agreement include:

- Holding a degree in science
- Being well versed in golf course management and construction
- Managing irrigation systems (often computerized systems)
- Managing finances
- Managing labor, people
- Implementing all OSHA and EPA regulations
- Maintaining a pesticide license,
- Meeting continued education unit requirements for professional advancement.

MERCHANDISE YOURSELF

According to Caranci, the first thing superintendents need to do is merchandise themselves and have a good track record to show that they have been around for a while. “Once you merchandise yourself and establish yourself in the profession, let your employer know that job security is your main issue,” he said. “Don’t fall for being buttered up.

“When I presented my contract agreement to my employer, the president of the club at the time came in and shook my hand and said, ‘There’s no way we’d ever let you go.’ I said, ‘I know

that, but I still want a binding contract,’” Caranci continued. The superintendent signed a five-year contract with his club.

Using the resources provided by the GCSAA is a good start, said Caranci. “They’ve got guidelines for developing contracts,” he said. “I took their guidelines and adjusted them to my own

needs at my club.”

The superintendent also suggested contacting an attorney to discuss the verbiage of the document. “Review everything, and be rational about your compensation package,” he said. “Be sure that your non-compensation package is what you are comfortable with and that the con-

tract is applicable by law.”

TERMINATION CLAUSE

The most important section of the contract is in the area regarding termination, according to Caranci. In a binding contract, it should read something like – “The club may terminate this agreement without cause and upon 60 days of written notice to

the superintendent and then only upon payment of the salary amount due under the agreement for the remainder of its original term, plus a separate benefit that’s equal to one month’s salary for each year the agreement was in force,” explained Caranci.

“Now that’s a little bit of security,” he added. “It’s not a major league baseball contract, but it does provide security on your job.”

360 YARDS to BACKYARDS

DRIVE
75 DF HERBICIDE

Drive is a registered trademark of BASF AG. © 2002 BASF Corporation. All rights reserved.

The shortest distance between broadleaf and grassy weed control.

Drive 75 DF herbicide effectively raises the bar for postemergent weed control. A single, convenient application of **Drive** quickly eliminates a broad spectrum of both broadleaf and grassy weeds—from crabgrass and foxtail to clover and dandelion—in a wide variety of turf species. Then **Drive** keeps weeds under control for 30 to 45 days—in some cases for more than 3 months. **Drive** also offers exceptional seeding and overseeding flexibility—allowing you to seed many varieties of turf immediately before or after application. To learn more about how **Drive** 75 DF can help you in your drive for turf perfection, call 1-800-545-9525 or visit www.turffacts.com. Always read and follow label directions.

BASF
PROFESSIONAL
TURF



**We don't make the turf.
We make it better.**

BASF