MGCSA Continues To Be A Leader In The Green Industry

As long as I have been involved with the MGCSA, I am proud to say that our association has been the leader in the green industry and remains the leader. We have championed environmental issues, we have led the way in sponsoring research and we have been active in helping guide legislation. Unfortunately the State of Minnesota - Board of Electricity interpreted a new piece of legislation that will affect all golf courses in the state.

The Low Voltage license requirement stems from a 2002 revision of a two-decade old law. The reworded law requires personnel that install or perform maintenance work inside irrigation controllers to be licensed or work under the supervision of a licensed employee. One licensed employee can have up to two staff members working under the licensed employee. A tight timetable does apply to the initial testing process. The association has secured a training opportunity for our members and staffs. On March 12, at Edinburgh Golf Club in Brooklyn Park, there will be a training class to prepare for the State exam. You will have until April 30, 2003 to take the test. To take the test you must first apply for the application to take the test. I know, it is crazy, but the consequences of not testing are severe.

Beginning May 1, 2003, to be eligible to test for the exam you will be required to complete three years of approved experience or completion of an approved technical program. Forms for registration for the training class have been sent out. Contact Scott at our association office for more info.

The Green Expo was a short two months ago and from all indicators the conference and show was a success. Over 7,100 people were in attendance and with approximately one third representing the Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation. James Bade, MGCSA Conference and Education Chairman, did a great job of setting up this year’s speakers. Presently he is organizing 2004’s educational sessions. He values your input in selecting speakers. Please e-mail your ideas to James at jsbade@aol.com if you have a topic or facilitator you would like the membership to hear.

Having just returned from the GCSAA Convention and Show in Atlanta, I can only report from my observation that attendance was down as expected. The Opening Session featured former Ohio Congressman John Kasich. Obviously not well known outside of Ohio by the numbers in attendance, he had a good message in his belief in the American people. I know Atlanta was not the destination city people enjoy bringing their family to, but the majority of Superintendents were there to learn.

Why did our local Green Expo attract record numbers to downtown Minneapolis in January and the National had a drop in attendance? Obviously the combining of the MNLA and the MTGF shows dramatically increased the participants. However, the weather the past few seasons has impacted budgets, as has the downturn in the economy. Many of our members are being asked to reduce costs and make immediate cuts. Typically one of the first reductions is the travel and education line item. As President of your Association I pledge that we will hold the line on MGCSA costs and remain fiscally responsible

As I write this article, our country is becoming increasingly involved in a war with Iraq. Some of you may have sons, daughters, staff members, or know of others in the military that are stationed abroad or here. Our thoughts and prayers are with them as they are called into service. Please let me know if you have children stationed here or over seas. E-mail me at r Fredericksen@msn.com. It is my intent to develop a database for those interested, to be able to send their support to our service personnel.

— Rick Fredericksen
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