

# PEER-TO-PEER: BETTER TURF THROUGH NETWORKING

## Question for Superintendents: Do you allow your staff to use personal radios on the course for pleasure?

"Absolutely not! If you need a radio to do your work, find employment somewhere else."

- Kevin Clunis, CGCS  
Tanner's Brook Golf Course, Forest Lake

"At **Marshall Golf Club** I was originally skeptical about the use by employees of personal radios on the course during work, simply for the fact of not knowing if there is a problem with the equipment. I decided to run a trial period for use. It seemed to work relatively well. My staff was happy and the progress of work details seemed to improve. I have even went as far as to purchase a mobile radio so when the staff is working on a project or repairing an irrigation leak, they have the ability to listen to there favorite channel and detail to the specific task seemed to improve. I have put in restrictions such as volume as golfers approach and a probation period if use gets out of control."

- Kurt Hovaldt  
Marshall Golf Club, Marshall

"At **Windsong** I do not allow employees to utilize personal radios. This is for several reasons. First, as most of my employees are good at clearing the playing field when golfers are present, the golfers are not always the best at keeping shots within the playing field. I feel it is important to hear the warning call of "Fore!" from anywhere on the course. Second, I feel the ability to hear a machine running and recognize the sound of a properly running machine is important. If an irregular sound, a knock, a ping, a grinding sound is noticed and the operator stops further damage can be minimized. Furthermore, there is a distinct sound to a leaking hydraulic system. If an operator can notice that sound, how much damage can be reduced?

In my opinion the safety benefits are far too great."

- Scottie Hines, CGCS  
Windsong Farm Golf Club, Independence

"Have gone both ways at **Grand National** and I am now back to restricting radios and cell phones except during break and lunch time. It is my observation that radios and cell phones distract from

the task assigned. Also it is important to listen to your mowers and other equipment so the operator is aware of any sound that may indicate a problem. There are many morale boosters available that are more in line with responsibility required when operating machines."

- Del Taft  
Grand National Golf Course, Hinckley

"We allow radios and ipods at **Oak Marsh.**"

- Bob Porter  
Oak Marsh Golf Course, Oakdale

"I allow personal radios on the course at **Milaca Golf Club**, however, our club has a membership that is not very particular. We always pull machines off to the side and idle down to allow play, but a lot of the time we are told to just "keep going."

- Travis Kiel  
Milaca Golf Club,  
Milaca

Here at the **Ely Golf Club**, employees are banned from using portable radios and starting this year, they will not be able to use their cell phones. I have found from my own experience that operators are not paying attention to their job as much as they should be when listening to the radio. We have also had accidents and hydraulic leaks go unnoticed in the past where portable headsets were used. Was listening to the radio partly to blame for the incidents? Maybe and maybe

not. It is just a part of the equation that I felt needed to be eliminated. As far as cell phones are concerned, I feel that they are the MOST distracting device out there. The phone rings and before you know it, employees are talking on the phone for 15 minutes! Or even worse yet, they are text messaging while they are in motion on equipment. It will no longer happen on my time for which they are getting paid.


- Justin Gustafson  
Ely Golf Club, Ely


"I do let employees use radios on the golf course at **Edinburgh**. This rule was changed two years ago. Before that they were not allowed."

- Tom Fischer CGCS  
Edinburgh USA, Brooklyn Park

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## Peer-to-Peer-

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We have no policy against personal radios, cell phones or other personal devices at **Coffee Mill**. We train our personnel to be conscious of golfers, guests and other workers. We expect them to be aware of their surroundings and courteous at all times. We have had no incidents of damage to turf or equipment and no comments of unprofessionalism.

- Jeff Normandt  
Coffee Mill Golf Club, Wabasha

"I allow them at **Birnamwood**."

- Dan Hill  
Birnamwood Golf Course, Burnsville

"We allow personal radios at **Dacotah Ridge** but all wires are to be run under the shirt so nothing can get snagged. Absolutely no cellphones are allowed on the course. The one stipulation that we have is if anyone is seen being distracted because of personal radios everyone loses the privilege for a week. This keeps everyone in check and I also believe the use of radios helps the crew from getting bored with certain jobs.

I encourage the use of headphones made by Peltor. They have a radio built into safety earmuffs. Killing three birds with one stone!

No wires and hearing protection and keeping morale up!"

- Tony Rahe  
Dacotah Ridge Golf Club, Morton

At Somerset C.C. we allow radios, i.e. headsets. But if they become a distraction or a time waster we will take them away for a while. We take away everyone's so the lesson is learned. The thought of losing radios is a good motivator. They need to be listening in the morning and ready to perform the task at hand. Cell phones are a no no outside the maintenance area.

- James Bade  
Somerset Country Club, Mendota Heights

Prestwick's policy always has and always will be while I am here that personal radios are off limits. For me, it's a safety issue as well as an equipment issue. If they get plugged by a shot while a golfer is screaming "fore" and couldn't hear due to loud music in their ear, it opens up the club to a lot of potential problems. Equipment operators need to be able to hear how their mower is function-

ing. While most wear ear protection, they can still hear the basic operating sound. You can't hear a clicking out of adjustment reel to bedknife or a squeaking bearing or even a low oil buzzer if you have Van Halen blasting your ear drum!

- Dave Kazmierczak  
Prestwick Golf Club

NO!!!!

- Walt Braunig, Jr.  
Thompson Oaks Golf Course, West St. Paul

I do allow personal radios most of the time. One issue I have had is the employee can't hear if there is a problem with reel-to-reel contact, i.e., hitting a stone or adjustment. One employee with an ipod kept operating a piece of equipment that had a bearing going but continued on because he couldn't hear it over the music. An employee without a radio heard it and stopped him. The damage was \$700 instead of perhaps something less costly. The radio/headphones at least have some hearing protection provided the music isn't too loud!

- Tom Johnson  
New Richmond Golf Club,  
New Richmond, Wisconsin

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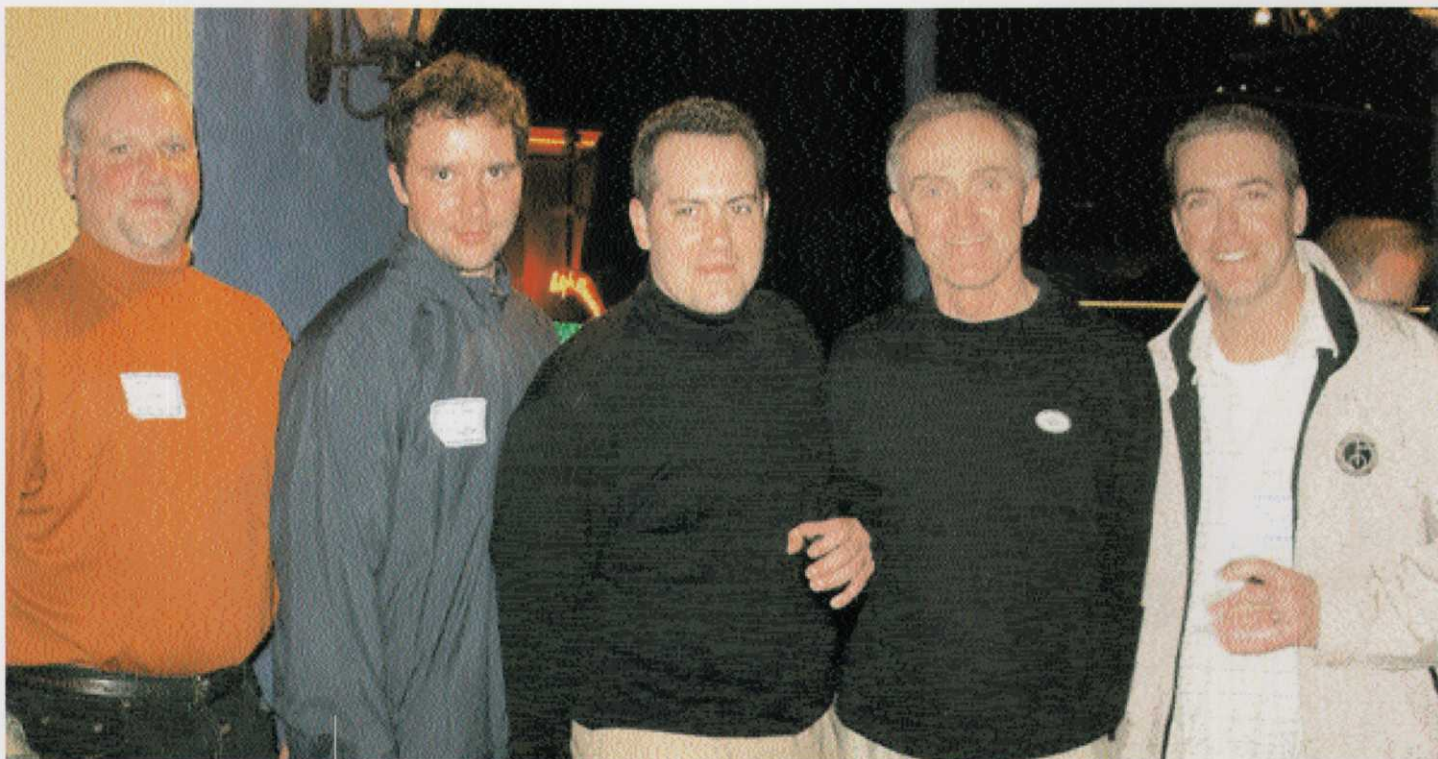
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**A Minneapolis Golf Club reunion at the Hospitality Night in Anaheim.** Pictured from left to right are Richard Skjonsby, Assistant Superintendent, MGC; Nathan Peters, former 3rd Assistant MGC, now Assistant at Burl Oaks; Sebastian Schultz, former intern at MGC from Hamburg, Germany, now an Assistant Superintendent in Germany; MGC Superintendent Dale Caldwell, CGCS and Tom Herzog, Assistant Superintendent, MGC.

## Peer-to-Peer-

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I have always looked upon radios or cell phones as a person-to-person situation at **Southbrook**. Some workers can handle them and some workers can't.

- Brian Peterson

Southbrook Golf Course, Annandale

We have always allowed personal radios at **Monticello Country Club**. One thing we do emphasize in our employee meetings is that they are a privilege, not a right.

It has caused some frustration on my part, getting the attention of an operator; however we have never had an incident or accident. We did fire an employee over it one time because he was stealing batteries from other people's lockers to feed his machine. I felt if he couldn't be trusted for batteries, he certainly couldn't be trusted for the big stuff.

- Rick Traver, CGCS

Monticello Country Club, Monticello

At **Tartan Park** we do not allow personal radios to be used during the work day. We require our employees to use hearing protection with any loud equipment and feel the personal radios are a direct contradiction to those practices. That said, we have recently had a change of thought about employees carrying cell phones on the golf course. Last year one of our temporary employees called in a grass fire that would have otherwise gone unnoticed, and as a result, no one was hurt and minimal property damage was sustained. Although we discourage personal use while working, we encourage the employees to carry cell phones for emergency purposes.

- Jeff Hanson

Tartan Park GC, St. Paul

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The photos below illustrate the difference in particle size and uniformity between the Andersons small and mid-size fairway fertilizer and a competitor's product. Notice one nutrient segregation with Andersons mid-size due to uniform particle sizing versus significant nutrient segregation with competitor.

Andersons 25-3-9 + 2% Fe (150 SGN)



1 lb. of N per 1,000 = 175 lbs/acre = 3.7 particles per sq. in.

Local Competitor 15-5-10 (215 SGN)



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The matrix shown below demonstrates a dramatic increase in particle coverage (PPSI) by using smaller particle products versus increasing the rate (lbs.) of a larger particle product.

Pounds/Acre	Particles Per Square Inch Matrix 20-3-20 Fertilizer with 65% Nutrateno					
	SGN 125	SGN 150	SGN 175	SGN 215	SGN 240	SGN 300
100	3.9	2.3	1.4	0.8	0.6	0.3
125	4.9	2.8	1.8	1.0	0.7	0.4
150	5.9	3.4	2.1	1.2	0.8	0.4
175	6.9	4.0	2.5	1.4	1.0	0.5
200	7.9	4.5	2.9	1.5	1.1	0.6
225	8.8	5.1	3.2	1.7	1.2	0.6
250	9.8	5.7	3.6	1.9	1.4	0.7
300	11.8	6.8	4.3	2.3	1.7	0.9

Avg SG (g/ml) = 1.11

The illustration below shows the effect of using a non-uniform fertilizer product. Note the severe skewing and banding of different nutrients.

Uniform Particle Distribution  
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