

In the Crosshairs

pro-ak'tiv

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proactive (pro-ak'tiv) Having an orientation to the future, anticipating problems and taking affirmative steps to deal positively with them rather than reacting after a situation has already occurred.

For those of you who don't feel proactivity with legislators/regulators (one and the same?) is in our best interest, just look to the east to see what has happened and is happening in Wisconsin. Similar to Minnesota, phosphorous is not banned in the state, but its use requires a soil test showing a deficiency. In addition, they have passed an administrative rule (NR 151) requiring a nutrient management plan for all entities that fertilize a minimum of five acres of turf. The rule excludes agriculture operations, sod production and community gardens. Non-compliance can result in fines from \$10 - \$5,000/day plus possible restoration / remediation costs and investigative/prosecution costs. Each day of non-compliance is a separate offense! The purpose of the rule is to protect water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment losses from agricultural areas, municipalities, large turf grass areas and transportation facilities. NR 151 regulates the amount, method, timing and source of nutrient applications on

turfgrass and is based on maintaining healthy turf at 70% cover. Check out the University of Wisconsin Turf website at: <http://www.turf.wisc.edu>. There is a great deal of information on NR 151 available here and you no doubt will be asking questions as you wade through this program. There is no shortage of gray areas!

Why is NR151 important? The Midwest precedent has been set. It is just a matter of time before this type of legislation shows up on our doorstep. How we respond will determine our fate. If you don't see this nanny-state regulation as a potential problem let me ask you - where does it end?

Thank you to those attended the March Mini-Seminar at North Oaks GC. There was some very good information shared by Drs. Carrow, Leinauer and Horgan on water conservation measures and the current situations in the southern U.S. I feel it is necessary that we, as an association and a leading member of the Green Industry in Minnesota, must deal with this issue now rather than later. That is why your MGCSA Board is forming a water conservation committee to get us on track. Several members have already stepped up and volunteered to serve on this committee. If you are interested contact Scott Turtinen or Rick Traver to get your name on the list.

I remember a conversation I had with James Bade right after he became the MGCSA President two years ago. He expressed his desire to initiate some action relative to our role in water conservation at the state level. My response at the time was less than enthusiastic, luke-warm at best. We live in the land of 10,000 lakes! Why should we be concerned about water? In the last two years, with the droughts in the south and the changing political climate, I have seen the light...the same light that visionary James Bade saw two years ago. Do you see the light?

I have received many inquiries on the uses for VinylGuard on the golf course. Most are using it to cover fiberglass bunker rake handles and flagsticks. We applied the product to our rake handles last year and will use the product this spring to cover our ball washer mounting posts. The product is available in many colors, sizes and finishes. The VinylGuard website is: www.vinylguardgolf.com. Philip Cowen is the President of the company and all contact information is available on the website. Where did this idea originate? A member of TurfNet.com came up with the idea and shared it with other members online. The company VinylGuard Golf soon followed.

Our Editor of *Hole Notes*, Jack MacKenzie, CGCS, asked me to take a look at Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFL's) as an additional expose' on the environmental issues we face here in Minnesota and across this great country of ours. So here goes. To put this in proper perspective, over the past several years I have changed out 95% of the bulbs in my home to fluorescent lighting. For some unexplainable reason I jumped on the CFL bandwagon headfirst.


My family prefers the "natural" light version of this bulb and I will be the first to admit it takes some getting used to. The light

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In the Crosshairs-

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is a bit harsh initially and appears to have a slight blue tinge to it. With time your eyes become accustomed to it. These bulbs are definitely more expensive than incandescent lighting. I generally purchase them on sale in multi-packs at one of the big box stores for around \$2.00 - \$2.75 apiece. The manufacturers claim 8,000 to 10,000 hours for average bulb life. I have replaced at least six bulbs in the last 18 months that were nowhere near 8,000 hours of use. What is going on here? My research revealed - on the downside:

CFL's contain about 5 mg of mercury. That equates to 100-600x less than the amount of mercury contained in a fever thermometer.

Some people are unable to adjust to the "different" qualities of light emitted by a CFL.

CFL's are considered hazardous waste and should be recycled and not thrown in the trash. Check with your county hazardous waste collection center for recycling options.

CFL's require 30 seconds to 3.5 minutes to warm up to maximum light output and energy efficiency.

Repeated on/off cycles during the course of a day will shorten lamp life (I believe this is the reason for my reduced lamp life).

CFL's cannot be used with dimmer switches unless their packaging says "dimmable".

On the upside:

CFL's use 30% of the electricity required by a filament bulb of the same light output. Consumer Reports lists average savings for a 60W equivalent CFL at \$5.00/bulb/year if used an average of three hours/day.

Life expectancy is listed between 6 and 10 years (average of three hours per day) depending on the brand of bulb.

Quality is improving while pricing continues to drop.

Currently, compact fluorescent lamps definitely offer a "green" alternative for lighting your home. Hopefully recycling options will catch up with increasing consumer usage.

* * * *

(Editor's Note: If you have a rebuttal, addition, or comments on any In the Crosshairs column, feel free to submit to the Hole Notes magazine for publication. After all, isn't that what makes America great?)

It's in the Hole....

Assistants: It's Important To Submit Your External Education Approval Codes

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