



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### *Relax: Spring Will Get Here Soon Enough!*

*By Paul Diegnau, CGCS*

As I write this column, I have several weather-related items bouncing around in my head. Winter has been slow to relinquish its grip on the upper Midwest this year...or so it seems. I think the mindset of many owners and operators is such that they have come to expect a ringing cash register in March. Many fellow Superintendents are bouncing off the walls in anticipation of some outdoor time. Current economic times are tough but to expect a March opening is a flawed thought process brought on by unseasonably early and warm springs of recent past. Historically speaking, average Minnesota golf course opening dates have fallen roughly between April 7 and April 15. Having a birthday in the middle of April, as I do, I can recall enjoying multiple celebrations with frozen crystals falling from the sky. Current conditions are not abnormal. RELAX! Spring will get here soon enough.

**I have heard multiple reports and viewed photographs of damaged playing surfaces at different facilities around the state.** If you lucked out and suffered little to no damage, count your blessings. Whether ice or snow mold related, it is never fun starting out a golf season nurturing damaged turf. Let us hope for a warm spring to aid in the recovery of our playing surfaces.

**Several MGCSA members had suggested that we should conduct a survey with our membership regarding the successes and failures of the multitude of snow mold fungicide combinations** experimented with this past winter. Due to the numerous variables associated with fungicide applications and site-specific turfgrass at each golf course, the BOD decided not to create a survey on this topic. Luckily, though, the UM contracted with UW-Madison to set up snow mold trials at the Les Bolstad University of Minnesota Golf Course this past winter. Close to 60 snow mold fungicide combinations were tested on their ninth fairway. According to Dr. Brian Horgan, the site was very active with disease, as one might expect after such a winter. Hopefully, many of you reading this now will have attended the April 12 Field Day at the Les Bolstad University of Minnesota Golf Course and could see for yourself what worked and what didn't. If you were unable to attend, Brian assures us that the collected data will be published in a future edition of *Hole Notes*. Stay tuned.

**I recently came upon a Noernet conversation from Wisconsin** that I thought I would share with you, being neighbor states have a tendency to follow the other's activities. It appears that the state of Wisconsin DATCP (Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection) will be enforcing new phosphite labeling requirements this year. The end game of such a move will require phosphite products to carry EPA pesticide labels and we all know how that affects product pricing. Enjoy your cheap pythium protection products for now, as I would not doubt the winds of change could blow from the east.

**Finally, make sure you read** Editor Jack MacKenzie's column on Page 30 of this issue about water usage by our industry, and specifically, in the state of Minnesota. Over the last several months, Jack and I have been working on a state document for our industry titled *Minnesota Golf Course Water Stewardship Guidelines*. You may believe that living in the "Land of 10,000 Lakes" makes us immune to the water shortages experienced in the southwest and, more recently, the southeast section of our country. Don't be fooled by this false sense of security. Increased water resource regulation is coming - even in our state. The leadership of the MGCSA has chosen a proactive path for our association. Thank you to those members that have contributed content for this publication. We welcome your thoughts on a plan that addresses methods of regulation. After all, this will be OUR document.

*-Until next month,  
Paul Diegnau, CGCS*

HOLE NOTES (ISSN 108-27994) is published monthly except bi-monthly November/December, January / February for \$2 an issue or \$20 per year by the MGCSA, 217 Minnetonka Av. S., Ste. D, Wayzata, MN 55391. Scott Turtinen, publisher. Periodicals postage paid at Wayzata, MN. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to HOLE NOTES, P. O. BOX 617, WAYZATA, MN 55391.

# HOLE NOTES

Official publication  
of the MGCSA

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