

How To Control Voles On A Golf Course

By JACK TRIPP

La Crosse Country Club, Wisconsin

This is the type of vole trap we use. They are put out after the golf course closes in the fall and filled with Ramik Brown which is a waterproof bait used in orchards, etc. The purpose of the 2" PVC is so other animals can not get to the bait. Ramik Brown can be purchased. We have around 125 traps for 64 bunker banks and other areas. About 1 cup of bait is put in the trap when they are put out in the fall. The reason for the orange cap is so they can be refilled during the winter if needed. A 25# box of bait lasts an entire season.

The picture is not real clear, but the two horizontal ends are cut at around a 45 degree angle to make a "roof" over the cut end to help keep rain from entering the opening. I think each horizontal piece is 12" long and we make our vertical pipe about 18" tall. The bait mainly stays in the pvc tee area.

Other animals will occasionally try to



mess with the PVC bait traps. Coyotes in our case will rip a couple apart each winter.

La Crosse Country Club is an Arthur Hills design so we don't have a lot of high flashed sand. The bunker banks are grass. We place the traps on the edge of the trap about 5" in from the sand. We have been

putting out the traps for 15 years so have a pretty good idea where damage might occur. Damage normally occurs where you have the largest accumulation of snow in the trap bank valley. Most of our bunkers only take 1-3 traps. On our 20,000 sq. ft bunker on #9 fairway I think we put out seven traps.

You don't have to space them real close. The voles seem to find the bait. Also the traps are put out when the course is closed so there is normally several weeks for the voles to find the traps and die before the snow comes.

I will also mention they make Ramik Green which is the same bait which comes in single dose packets. The Ramik Green may be a little more expensive, but makes it easier to refill traps in the middle of the winter. You can throw the single packets more easily in a backpack to carry around through the snow.

Good Luck!

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Avoiding the Slippery Slope:

THREE ICE MELT MISTAKES AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

By SANDRA GAHLINGER

Courtesy Housekeeping Solutions Magazine

Most people welcome the season's first snowfall. It is often associated with the start of the holidays, winter activities and breathtaking scenery, but rarely is it associated with safety and ice melt. Unless you are part of a custodial crew, who often perceive this winter wonderland as a mess...snow, ice, blizzard, thaw and refreeze.

Ice melters are necessary for certain climates. In fact, different climates and conditions require different ice melters. If you follow the tips and information below, you'll avoid three mistakes people make when choosing and using ice melting products.

MISTAKE 1

Waiting Until the Last Minute

Remember the story about the ant and the grasshopper? Well, the story of ice melters is similar. The time to think about ice melters isn't when the snow starts falling, but the truth is that many custodial crews are apparently more like the grasshopper when it comes to ice melters.

According to Don Kellermeyer, president of Kellermeyer Company in Toledo, Ohio, "When the snow starts to fall or on the first day of a big storm, the phone will ring off the hook."

He emphasizes that the time to think about ice melt is before you need it, preferably in the summer. Most distributors keep supplies on hand until the season is clearly over, but if cleaning departments haven't put in the order, you probably aren't going to be first on the list to get what you need.

In fact, most distributors advise customers to make arrangements with manufacturers or distributors that have "early-buy" programs and offer deals for booking early. Look for a company that doesn't require you to take all the stock up front, but will ensure that all your needs are

met.

Cleaning managers not only should buy ahead of time, they need to treat surfaces ahead of time. Ice melt will be much more effective if the surfaces are pretreated before an icing event.

The benefit of pretreating is that you won't need as much product in the long run because it prevents ice from bonding to the surface. Experts say that pretreatment also reduces the amount of ice melt needed as it is not necessary to bore through existing ice because it will have

"A good rule of thumb: Ice melters should be stored in airtight containers in humidity-controlled environments. In other words, keep them away from moisture and air."

begun to melt at the surface prior to accumulation.

Manufacturers recommend applying ice melt before, during and at the end of ice storms. According to experts, depending on the outside temperature, snow falls and turns to ice immediately upon hitting the ground, or - if it's warmer outside - snow falls, melts, and turns to ice when temperatures fall. So, depending on the temperature, ice melt should be applied when the ice is beginning to form.

Staying on top of the situation means potential cost savings in terms of not only product, but also labor.

MISTAKE 2

Using the Wrong Product or Misusing the Correct One

Using the wrong product may result in unmelted ice, as well as overuse of product.

Experts comment that if you're using too much ice melter, you may have the wrong product. The rule here is: know thyself...or rather, know thy winter weather conditions. This is necessary when choosing the correct product.

One manufacturer commented that besides overuse, the biggest mistake most ice melt customers make is buying products which are not ideal for their specific ice melting needs.

Kellermeyer says that the mistake many customers make is thinking "all ice melters are the same," which is, of course, not true. There are a variety of ice melters. There's rock salt, calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, potassium chloride, urea, triple melts, and blends.

Kellermeyer says, "Each product does different things." Here's a hint, chances are, if you're overusing, it may very well be that you are using the wrong product.

When choosing a product, it's important to know that

each ice melt variety has its own unique melting temperature. That's why you need to choose a product geared to the weather conditions and temperatures in your area.

"Products such as salt, potassium chloride, urea, calcium chloride, and magnesium chloride...can be used in straight concentrations with each having its own unique eutectic (melting) temperature," says Kellermeyer. "Ice melt blends combine different concentrations of the above ingredients and are manufactured to melt ice and snow according to individual customers needs and climactic variables."

He explains, "The main difference between products such as salt or calcium chloride is the difference in melting temperatures. For example salt melts ice down to approximately 22 degrees, and

(Continued on Page 15)



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REdiscover



Slippery Slope-

(Continued from Page 13)

calcium chloride can melt down to -35 degrees. Salt will melt for an extended period of time whereas calcium chloride will melt quickly but may need to be reapplied as it will runoff and become ineffective. Blended products use a combination of the above ingredients for maximum effectiveness."

For example, a custodial manager in a warmer climate bought the more expensive calcium chloride to melt ice. The added expense was unnecessary seeing as it will never approach the temperature range of -35 degrees. A salt based blend with a small addition of calcium or magnesium chloride would be more suitable.

The reverse situation would be a customer in a northern climate trying to use straight salt to melt ice when the temperature is below zero. In this situation, a ice melt blend that contains higher concentrations of calcium chloride or magnesium chloride would be preferable.

Custodial managers should choose a product based on how it will be used and the climactic needs of the area. But, experts say, some clients still choose their

ice melter based on what is cheapest, even though using the cheapest product available may not save departments money.

Kellermeyer, for example, says they sell a lot of rock salt. "It's the least costly ice melt to use but not cost effective." It may not do the job you need it to do and may require more product, which will end up costing more money.

Experts warn custodial managers who make purchases this way. Often times, you get what you pay for, and then some.

Some say that by using a cheap rock salt blend during the winter, departments are leaving the door open to expenditures for years to come in the form of repairs to landscaping, concrete and expensive floor finishes, not to mention the possible damage to waterways and surrounding ecosystems. Any short-term savings will be eclipsed by long-term expense, say experts.

MISTAKE 3

Improper Storage

Take care of your ice melt products so they can take care of you.

Experts emphasize that proper ice melter storage will depend on the composition of the product. A good rule of

thumb: Ice melters should be stored in airtight containers in humidity-controlled environments. In other words, keep them away from moisture and air.

According to experts, chlorides will draw moisture and will degrade and harden the ice melt product. But, if you have product left over at the end of the season, Kellermeyer says that as long as the bag hasn't been opened, you can leave it as is. Again, any open containers must be completely sealed as exposed ice melters attract moisture and can lead to a product that's akin to concrete.

Cleaning departments are also encouraged to keep bagged ice melt in air tight containers and covered with a dark wrap to keep the bags from becoming brittle from ultra violet exposure.

Suggested rules of storage for ice melters:

- + Protect them from humidity/moisture and sunlight.

- + Store them in the original or sealed bag - must be air tight.

So, order your ice melter ahead of time, make sure you get the one that's right for you, store it properly and enjoy a (relatively) hassle-free, ice-free winter season.

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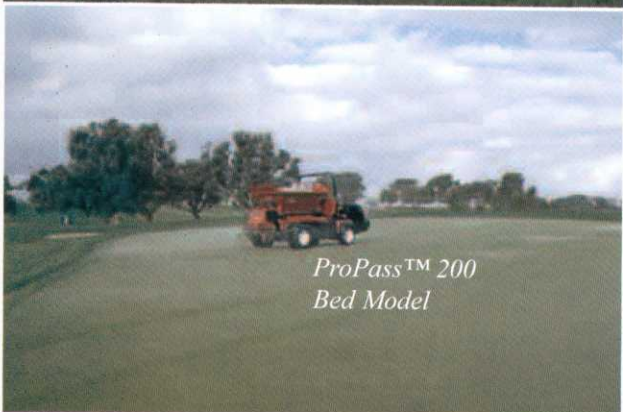
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BEN WALKER, Somerset Country Club, St. Paul, tees off on the 184-yard, par 3, 14th hole at The Classic at Madden's Resort during the 2010 MGCSA Harold Stodola Research Scramble on September 20.

MGCSA MEMBERSHIP REPORT

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*Respectfully submitted by,
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Presented by: The Minnesota Turf and
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Tree care, golf course, turfgrass, landscape and garden center professionals will all benefit from attending the entire program as means of gaining a comprehensive understanding of organic issues and practices.

8:00am – 8:30am: Registration

8:30am – 8:45am: Welcome and Introductions

8:45am – 9:45am: **A Review of Organic History and Techniques**

In this session, attendees will learn about the history of the word organic as it pertains to our farms and yards. Both the benefits and the drawbacks of using organic techniques will be discussed while looking at specific organic pesticides and fertilizers and comparing them with their synthetic counterparts.



Dr. Jeff Gillman is an associate professor in the Department of Horticultural Science at the University of Minnesota. He is the author of three books including *The Truth About Organic Gardening*, *The Truth About Garden Remedies*, and *How Trees Die*.

9:45am – 10:00am: Break

10:00am – 11:00am: **Organic Tree Care: Integrating Organic Programs into Commercial Tree Care Services**

This presentation will focus on biological and organic/natural treatments to manage the health of woody landscape plants. This will include a review of available organic and natural based products and their performance against common landscape pests. A general discussion of cultural treatments to maintain plant health and avoid stress induced plant pests. Emphasis will be placed on organic treatments for soil management

Bruce Fraedrich is the vice president of research at the F.A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company and the Director of Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories. His research interests include diseases of landscape plants, tree risk management and planting and establishment of landscape plants. He received a masters in Forestry from Duke University and Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from Clemson University.

11:00am – 12:00pm: **From Tomatoes to Mulch to Compost: Consumers are Expanding their Green Horizons**

Today's backyard gardeners, home landscapers, and do-it-for-me homeowners are hearing 'go-green' and sustainability messages from all sides. They want to do the right thing, but often have trouble figuring out what fits for their own yard, garden, and lifestyle. As the world's largest marketer of consumer lawn and garden products, The Scott's Company has a unique position from which to develop manufacturing practices and new products that meet the industry and home gardener's "green" aspirations.



Claudia Groth, *Naturals Specialist* for the Scotts Miracle-Gro Company, has been working with home gardeners for over 30 years in the Pacific Northwest, bringing her technical expertise to the development and marketing of today's natural/organic products, as well as traditional consumer fertilizers and pest controls. She has a masters degree in plant science and a bachelors degree in agronomy.

12:00pm – 1:15pm: Lunch

1:15pm – 2:15pm: **An Organic Golf Course**

Attendees of this seminar will learn about the process of how the Vineyard Golf Club became the nation's first organically managed golf course. Successes and challenges faced during the first eight years of operation will be discussed, evaluated and compared. Attendees will learn a variety of strategies and approaches designed to decrease synthetic pesticide use without sacrificing course conditions and playability.



Jeff Carlson, the golf course superintendent at The Vineyard Golf Club, has spent most of his career working on golf courses in environmentally sensitive coastal locations of the United States and Europe. Carlson is one of the only superintendents to be nationally recognized both for his work on a public course, The Widow's Walk Golf Course, and then a private course, The Vineyard Golf Club. The Vineyard Golf Club, which has been recognized as one of the only organically conceived, constructed and maintained golf courses in the U.S. Jeff received the GCSAA President's Award for Environmental Stewardship in 2008.

2:15pm – 2:30pm: Break

2:30pm – 3:30pm: **The Use of Organic Fertilizers & Biostimulants on Turfgrass**

Consumer desire for all things "organic" is on the rise. Many questions remain unanswered about organic lawncare, including the definition of organic. In this seminar, we will discuss the challenges and opportunities to developing an organic or organic-based turfgrass management program. Attendees will learn more about the differences among organic fertilizers, biostimulants, and weed control products with suggestions on how to cost-effectively incorporate some of these tools into their management programs.



Doug Soldat received his bachelors and masters degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the Department of Soil Science before completing his Ph.D. at Cornell University. Doug is currently an assistant professor in the Department of Soil Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, specializing in turfgrass and urban soil management. His research, teaching, and outreach programs are focused on improving nutrient and water use efficiency in the urban landscape.