

**GREENING**

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Creek. "We're using integrated pest management," he says.

"We go out and determine what's necessary instead of applying pesticides on a programmatic schedule. As a result, there's no leaching. We've never detected any nitrates going into the water supply. We use water sparingly. There's a computerized irrigation system on the course that's sensitive to weather, so we're only replacing the water that's evaporating."

"Golf courses don't necessarily have to be a bad neighbor to a river or stream," says the Coyote Creek Riparian Station's Mike Rigney, who is helping to develop a watershed management plan for San Francisquito Creek.

"As long as there's no contamination from herbicides, I'd rather have a golf course next door than a housing development or industry," he says. Rigney points to other "green" Stanford course management efforts, such as landscaping with native vegetation, leaving tree snags in place, creating protective berms around small drainage areas, and composting with

grass clippings, techniques he says benefit the creek's riparian habitat. Indeed, one prominent New York state wildlife protection group has such faith in the habitat potential of golf courses that it has developed a sanctuary program to help course managers enhance habitat, conserve natural resources and protect environmental quality.

Beyond its possible value to wildlife, Harivandi says golf course vegetation, particularly in urban areas, can reduce pollution, glare, noise, dust and heat build-up. Golf courses can also serve as wastewater disposal sites. Harivandi says 15 to 20 Bay Area golf courses currently irrigate with reclaimed water, and that number continues to grow. "Besides reducing the need for fresh water, reclaimed water also has quite a bit of nutrient value, so superintendents can reduce the amount of fertilizer they use," he says.

Many dispute the claim that golf courses can provide a net benefit to the environment. "I think you'll always have some problems because in effect, you're creating an exotic landscape over many acres to achieve what people

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**Tips from the USGA  
A Farewell Letter**

*by Paul Vermuelen  
USGA Agronomist*

During my travels over the past eight months, I have learned to appreciate the importance of clear communication on the topic of environment. Advocates of a pesticide free environment have accused pesticide users of unnecessarily endangering the lives of people around them. To boldly state that these criticisms are either warranted or unwarranted would be in my opinion an oversight by the turfgrass industry. What is needed to appropriately address public concern is valid scientific research that either favors or condemns the continued use of pesticides on an individual basis.

Golfers all across the United States have responded to this need for clarification by giving their financial support to several leading universities. I would like to invite everyone (Superintendents, General Managers, Green Chairpersons, members of the Board of Directors, Sales Specialists, etc.) to one of the following regional conferences where the results of this support will be shared:

March 15, 1995  
Sharon Heights Country Club  
Menlo Park, CA

March 24, 1995  
UC - Riverside  
Riverside, CA

April 5, 1995  
Spanish Trails Country Club  
Las Vegas, NV

April 6, 1995  
Arizona Country Club  
Phoenix, AZ

If you have not received a registration form for the regional conference in your area, please contact our office and we will send one along ASAP.

This is also my last opportunity to express my gratitude to all those that have educated me during my travels on the west coast. On March 1st, I will be reassigned to the Mid-

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**USGA**

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continent Region under the direction of James F. Moore. My replacement here in the Western Region will be Michael Huck, Agronomist.

Mike is a former Superintendent who has faced a myriad of challenges during his years in California. He started at Industry Hills Golf Course in the early 1980s on greens constructed to USGA specifications. In the middle of his tenure the facility was converted from domestic water to reclaimed water. This conversion prompted many changes in the course's management due to the nutrient and soluble salt content of the new irrigation supply. While converting to reclaimed water was memorable, per-

haps the greatest challenges at Industry Hills were the encroachment of *Poa annua* in the greens and the seeping of methane gas through the soil from the decaying landfill underneath the property.

After his successful years at Industry Hills, Mike moved to Mission Viejo Country Club. At Mission Viejo CC, also known as Mission Impossible by many Orange Country golfers, his first order of business was to install a new state-of-the-art irrigation system. To ensure that no stones were left unturned, Mike had every leading model of sprinkler head tested for distribution uniformity. Having determined which model worked the best under his own conditions, the new irrigation system was de-

signed and installed using that model's optimum triangular spacing.

After Mike's departure from Mission Viejo Country Club, he joined the ranks of Southern California Golf Association. At the Association's course in Murrieta, Mike directed the maintenance staff through their first summer without the use of temporary greens.

In closing, I want to thank everyone for having made my years on the west coast so enjoyable. And in the future should you find yourself in Champaign, Illinois, where snipe hunting is legal year round and all the children are unarmed, please stop in and say hello.

Best wishes,  
Paul Vermuelen

**NAUMANN'S NORCAL NEWS**

**Carl King** at Delta View Golf Course in Pittsburgh recently completed rebuilding 10 greens, six tees and constructing seven lakes. The course was also lengthened. All construction was performed by **Roger Larson...**

**Jess Pifferini** and the Spanish Bay Golf Course staff should be extremely proud. They were just named the 1994 National Winner for the Environmental Stewardship Award given by GCSAA in the resort division. Last year they won the same award but just for the west coast.



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