

Turning Wood Into Heat

Black Hall Club
Phil Neaton, superintendent

Old Lyme, Conn. 06371

Issue

Black Hall Club is a parkland golf course with an abundance of trees. A tree management plan has been initiated to improve turf conditions, restore playing corridors and improve the overall condition of the tree plantings. This program generates a significant amount of wood each season and one challenge has been finding ways to remove the excess. Although a substantial amount of the harvested wood is utilized by golfers and staff, a significant number of logs were being hauled away from the property at high cost.

Action

Instead of hauling excess wood away, a decision was made to use it as a fuel source to help heat the maintenance facility. To make this possible, a wood and propane outdoor furnace was installed as part of the new maintenance facility. The furnace heats water that is pumped through a radiant heating system in the floors of the new building. Propane is a backup for when wood cannot be loaded into the stove. Using wood to help heat the building reduces fuel costs and eliminates the cost of hauling wood off the property.



A wood and propane furnace utilizes wood harvested from the golf course to help heat the maintenance facility.

Results

Purchasing and installing the wood and propane furnace cost \$13,000. Superintendent Phil Neaton believes that cost has already been recovered through annual savings of \$4,000 in heating fuel and \$1,500-\$4,000 in hauling costs. Using wood for fuel does require some labor because it has to be cut and split, but that work is performed when the staff cannot work on the golf course.

Neaton says there were no significant challenges to installing and using a wood and propane furnace beyond the initial cost of the system. Course officials are extremely satisfied with the project and would absolutely do it all over again. The furnace has been dependable and effective and provides a useful way to dispose of wood harvested from the golf course. The wood and propane furnace has been a great solution for Black Hall Club and should continue to work well.