Shooting par for maintenance equipment

As in golf, attention to detail means success in the maintenance game.

Today's golf courses are constantly placing greater demands on the superintendent trying to maintain top playing quality. To meet these demands, proper administration, programming, sufficient budgets, manpower and responsibility are necessary in addition to modern equipment.

A PGA report appearing in the newsletter of the Golf Course Superintendents of New England suggests a certain variety and quantity of equipment is necessary to provide adequate care to the majority of 18-hole courses, depending on the degree of maintenance (see table).

The report broke the equipment into three sections: greens and tees; fairways and roughs; and general equipment. Under each category, a list of equipment and quantity was provided. Lists for the three categories included mowers, aerators, thatchers, fertilizer spreaders and more.

Other recommendations

The report also addressed a number of other equipment categories. For miscellaneous hand equipment, the report recommended getting axes, burners, crow bars, a duster, cup cutter, wheelbarrow, ladder, sod edges, sod lifters, shovels, rakes, funnels, a spade, picks, forks, jacks, pruners, tree saws, animal traps, pumps, gas cans, scales, pullers, hoses, bamboo poles, soil testers and a soil probe.

The report suggests various repair tools should be handy for work on all power equipment, plumbing drains, electrical equipment, sewers, roadways, cement and concrete, water systems, painting and wood working repairs, etc.

The shop should also be equipped with tools, the report stressed. Such tools as a lapping machine, air compressor, steam cleaner, table saw, grinders, vises and work benches are recommended.

Irrigation equipment is of course necessary, with each course determining the pumping station and number of heads necessary.

The newsletter also touched on a few necessities for a maintenance building. The building should have a superintendent's office, storage rooms for herbicides, fungicides and fertilizer, and sufficient storage space for all equipment. An additional storage building, the report states, is essential for storing and mixing top dressing material, which should be kept dry. The report recommends storing at least a two-year supply at all times.

Maintenance staffing

For an average 18-hole course in the Northeast, the report recommends a year-round superintendent and assistant superintendent, a year-round mechanic and two year-round laborers.

Three laborers should be hired at the outset of the outside maintenance program, the report suggests, and should be carried through the end of the fall maintenance program. In addition, three laborers should be hired as summer help.

Proper training of all employees is necessary for proper equipment operation and maintenance program implementation.