

Bulb Time

by Kathy Gass, Ass't. Horticulturist
U. of I.

Fall is rapidly approaching as we turn the calendar from August to September. Some of the popular activities that take place in the fall include football games, raking leaves and planting our spring flowering bulbs. Bulbs may be planted when the soil temperatures are below 60 degrees Fahrenheit, which generally occurs in September and early October. If by chance the bulb order comes in late, planting can still be successful up until the ground freezes solid.

Bulbs provide an attractive addition to a home landscape, with the best shows being 12 or more bulbs planted in a cluster. These may be along walk ways, under trees or shrubs, or amongst ground cover. Whatever area you choose, make sure the soil has good drainage.

Depth is important when planting. Larger bulbs such as tulips or daffodils need to be planted 6 to 8 inches and spaced 6 inches apart. Smaller bulbs such as crocus, muscari or squill need to be 3 to 5 inches deep from the soil surface and spaced 3 inches apart. A general rule of thumb is to plant 2 to 3 times as deep as the diameter of the bulb. When putting the bulbs in the soil, plant with the pointed side up. Add some bone meal and 10-10-10 fertilizer to encourage strong plants and good rooting. A handful of bone meal to each square foot of rooting area, and 1 rounded teaspoon of fertilizer per square foot will do.

Fill the holes halfway with soil once the bulbs are placed in them. Then water well. After the water has drained away, finish filling the holes with more soil and soak again. Add mulch to the top surface for insulation throughout the winter.

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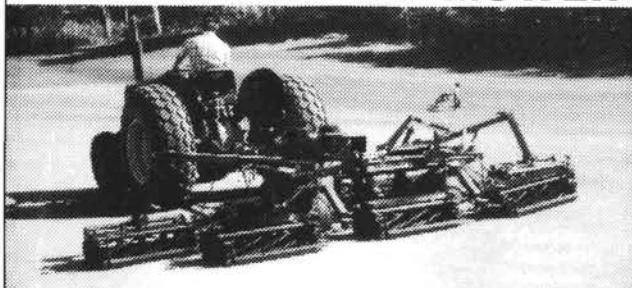
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Trade Secrets

by Paul Voykin, Briarwood C.C.
Deerfield, IL

A few years ago I installed a "Phone-Mate" recorder in my office for those members who live in Chicago (30 miles south of Deerfield) and who wish to know, very early in the morning during an inclement weather situation, the golf course condition, and cart status. It's been a huge success!

I have now become a bit more creative in my weather report to them in the wee hours of the morning. For instance, instead of the usual ... "Hi, this is Paul (or P.V.). The course is closed because of three inches of rain", or whatever, I now say something like this. "Good morning, this is P.V. You have a fragile environment here with billions of living plants called grass, and I am charged by you with their protection and well-being. The ugliness of cart damage does not go well with our wildflowers, trees, and beautiful turf mowed at different heights. So, for today, the course is open but **no carts all day**. Please give me your support." Sometimes my message goes like this. "Good morning, this is P.V., your Conrad from 'The Heart of Darkness'. Every day it's the same ... rain, more rain, and monsoons, and the jungle drums keep beating ... 'Close the course, close the course', but not today. Everything goes; carts all over. Have a nice time." (Sad to say that afternoon I had to close the course again because it rained like everything.) Anyway, most of the members have been delighted by my P.R., but a small percentage, of course, are ready to shoot me.