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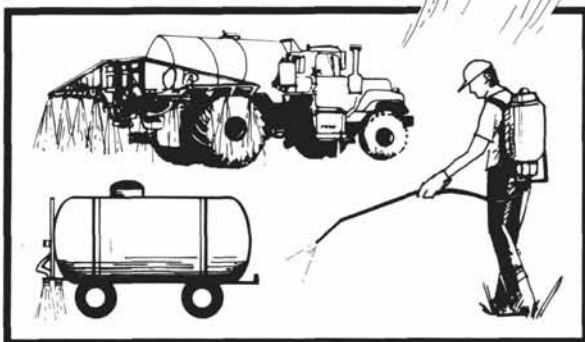
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## Superintendent's Best Friend

by Gordon Witteveen, Ontario, Canada

Early morning golfers are a Superintendent's best friends. They understand through firsthand observation all the effort and hard work required to create a finely manicured golf course. Early morning golfers get up with the birds, trod through the dew, play under sprinklers, putt on half-mown greens and tee off with the markers to the side. They put up with fertilizer spreaders on the fairways and chemical sprayers in the rough. They don't mind the buzz of rotary mowers or the whirr of greensmowers nor the clanging of aerifiers. Early morning golfers don't mind any of these deterrents because, besides their love for golf, they also enjoy the rising sun over the sparkling brook, reflections in still waters, the stealth of a scurrying rabbit and, occasionally, a bounding deer seeking shelter in a thicket.

There is a common bond between greens staff and early morning golfers: they share the knowledge that all this beautiful environment is theirs while the rest of the world toils in air conditioned offices, dank factories, or is still asleep under musty covers. This is the real joy of the early morning on the golf course: to be alive and to be surrounded by all this beauty.

The second group of golfers who come to the course in the morning are the ladies. With the husbands off to work and the kids on the way to school, the spouses and mothers head for the links to play their round of blind bogey, to beat the pro or to participate in the throw-out tourney. Although Ladies Day is officially on Tuesday, (Thursday would be better- less chance of rain, better conditioned golf course) in practice every day is ladies day with the exception of Saturday and Sunday when men's play dominates the schedule. Now, as we all know, ladies take their golf much more seriously and they are far less tolerant of maintenance equipment than the unorganized early morning golfers. Lately we have had some concerns expressed by the Ladies about the chemical drifts from sprayers as we treat the turf for weeds, fungus disease or insects. Spraying is generally done early in the morning to stay ahead of the golfers as much as possible and to apply the chemicals before it gets windy. Unfortunately, this is precisely the time when most Ladies play golf.

Picture a spray rig coming down the fairway, bellowing a great cloud of mist, with the strange looking operator dressed in disposable white overalls, rubber boots and gloves, goggles to cover his eyes and a respirator to protect his breathing. The average golfer quickly concludes that this is a dangerous place to be golfing in bermuda shorts and open necked shirts. It must be explained that exposure to chemicals, just like radiation at Chernobyl, is a matter of degree. The operator on the spray rig may be enveloped in a cloud of spray for most of eight hours and for several days at a time, whereas a golfer may only catch one or two whiffs during an entire round of golf. I venture to say that the air on golf courses, in spite of spray programs, is much less hazardous than the air in a smoke filled clubhouse grill. Last year 35,000 persons in Canada died from lung cancer, over 80% of it caused by either primary and secondary cigar or cigarette smoke. To the best of my knowledge, no deaths were reported as having been caused by either the drinking, eating or breathing of Killlex, Daconil, Benomil, Round-up, or Diazinon, all common chemicals used regular on our turf. Just

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(Supt's. Best Friend cont'd.)

the same, golfers should take precautions because it is always better to be safe than sorry. Stand aside when the sprayer passes and try to be on the leeward side and, for heaven's sake, don't lick golf balls. If pregnant women have been advised by their physician not to smoke or drink during their period of child bearing, I would advise them to stay off the golf course while the turf is being sprayed. I would give this advice to my wife, although I hope she is not pregnant.

Golfers should have faith in their Superintendents and their green staff. Many Superintendents are now college graduates with degrees and diplomas in agriculture. They are just as concerned as their fellow men about the environment, perhaps even more, because they are aware of the mistakes that can so easily happen and that can be so disastrous. Superintendents and their assistants must be licensed to apply pesticides by the Department of the Environment. We cannot purchase or apply chemicals unless we are licensed. We apply chemicals only when it is absolutely necessary and usually well below the recommended rate. We try to spray early in the morning when there is no wind and before the golfers get to the course, but you arrive so early now. Sometimes we get caught in a sudden breeze but we have to empty the tank in case the liquid solidifies. This may cause a little drifting but the job has to be done and we can't close the course. Our ultimate objective always remains — to provide the best possible golfing conditions at a reasonable cost for the great majority of our golfers. At the same time, we want to continue to protect the beautiful environment which surrounds us, even for the golfers who come out later in the day.

## Mechanics Need Motivation

by Tony Rzadzki, Asst. Supt.  
Cantigny Golf Club

While attending the Turf Conference in Springfield last December I had the pleasure of sharing some conversation with John Maguire. John, as many of you know, is the president of the Chicagoland Golf Course Mechanics Association (CGCMA).

John is in trouble and he needs some help.

It seems that the same thing that happens to many young organizations is happening to yours. Ninety percent of the work needed to run the association is undertaken by two percent of it's members. John and two other members are managing all of the responsibilities of a hundred member organization. John told me quite frankly that he is getting burnt out!

In 1986 I helped John get the CGCMA started and was a member for almost two years. The work that I did was minimal compared with the load that John must now carry. He has continued and has brought the CGCMA to a nationally recognized organization. That is quite an accomplishment in four short years.

Now he is asking for help. He needs ideas, attendance, and support from you, the members, and superintendents as well. Volunteering can sound like a dirty word to some people, but you would be surprised at how rewarding an hour spent organizing a meeting or letting the mechanics use your facility might grant.

So come on guys, let's give one guy a break and see what happens. He started a dynamic group. Let's not lose hold of this valuable resource.

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