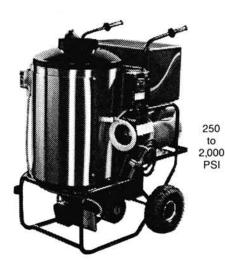
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Winter is the Time to Aerate

by Tony Rzadzki, Supt. Cantigny Golf Club

Cantigny Golf Club is one of the few golf courses in the Midwest that uses effluent water as a source for irrigation water. The lowest and one of the largest lakes on our course is our reservoir lake that feeds our whole irrigation system. We have a pipeline connected to the nearby Wheaton sanitary district which feeds us all of the water that we need at a very nominal cost. But, effluent water does have some problems, the worst of which is the constant almost day to day infestation of algae.

For the past two years we have had an outside contractor monitor our lake on a weekly basis and apply aquatic herbicides as needed. Last year we also purchased white amur fish to help us combat the algae problem. But we felt that this was not enough so we decided to aerate our lake and try to cover all the bases.

What had been happening throughout the golf season is the algae would build up in our screens at the pump house. It would also start to coat the bottom screens in our sprinklers out in the field. This would cause the sprinklers to turn on but not shut down or not turn on at all. In 1988 we installed two bubbler type aerators near our pump house intake pipe. Dave Schlagetter was our irrigation man at that time and he pulled the air lines out in a row boat. Boy, I felt sorry for him. It turned out to be quite a fiasco between the air lines, weights, ropes, and two guys crammed into a fourteen foot john boat. He eventually got the small system installed and it's been working flawlessly since.

Dave's work in 1988 helped to relieve our problem, but our reservoir lake is quite large and has many small bays and "dead" stagnant areas where the water does not move at all. These areas also happen to be near the island tee and island green of our eighth hole. So when an algae infestation would begin these locations were affected first and looked quite unattractive.

So last fall we decided to install four more bubblers and locate them at these dead zones. The one big problem that I could see was that our furthest bubbler location was about two hundred yards away from our compressor. To try to lay out this amount of air line on a par three golf hole during the golf season in a row boat would be a difficult proposition at best. Even to do it after we closed the course would be quite a chore with the cold water and air temperatures that we get in late fall.

So, who not wait until we get a deep freeze and the lake is frozen over! This way you can walk right out on the ice and place your air lines exactly where you want them. Sure, it's cold outside so walk up the lake bank and sit in the truck and warm up. Byron Ambrose is our assistant superintendent in charge of irrigation and that's exactly what he did. As he pulled the line out over the ice and attached the bubblers he tied his weights on to pull the line to bottom of the lake. He made a difficult project quite easy.

Last spring as the ice melted you could see the weights and air lines slowly settling in. Eventually the ice broke and the lines sank to the bottom. We turned the compressor on and the bubbles began rising.

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(Aerate cont'd.)

Two things to remember if you decide to install a system such as ours in the winter time. One, allow enough slack in the line so when they settle your bubblers will be where you want them to be. Two, make sure that you have enough weights on the line. You'd be surprised how that light line can float once it has air in it.

Our lake is still under contract and monitored weekly, but I would say that our herbicide applications have decreased this year even during this hot, dry season. Our white amurs have grown from ten inch fingerlings to two pounds and our lake still is attacked by algae blooms. All in all the battle is still raging for control of our lake and it looks like we're winning this war.

Study Will Aid Environmental Researchers

A new study on pesticide and fertilizer use will help guide scientists reviewing the environmental impact of golf course management. The study, which documents chemicals typically used to control weeds, insects and diseases on America's courses, is being provided to the United States Golf Association's (USGA) Environmental Research Committee thanks to funding from the GCSAA Scholarship & Research, Inc., a nonprofit science and education foundation.

"This survey and subsequent report continues GCSAA's commitment to working closely with the USGA in turfgrass and environmental research," said Stephen G. Cadenelli, CGCS, president of board of trustees of GCSAA Scholarship & Research. "The information from this report will assist researchers who are carrying out work funded by the USGA by providing them accurate data as to which materials are being used on America's courses."

Cadenelli added, "Obviously, we share the USGA's commitment to sound environmental management of our nation's golf courses and are pleased to assist them in any way possible.

William Roberts, CGCS, vice president of the board of trustees and a member of the USGA environmental committee, said that "it was critical to know exactly what chemicals we should be studying rather than just making assumptions. This report allows us to efficiently direct the researchers' efforts and to get the most from the investment USGA is making."

GCSAA Scholarship & Research commissioned the report from the Center For Golf Course Management, the marketing research division of GCSAA. The study, which is based on a nationwide survey of golf course superintendents, examines insecticide, fungicide, herbicide and fertilizer usage in terms of the type of golf course, region of the country, type of turfgrass, and exact products used. The USGA Environmental Research Committee will pass the information along to various independent researchers involved in pesticide and fertilizer fate studies at universities around the nation.

