

Contingency Planning

by Glenn Bereiter
Steeple Chase Golf Club

In early January of this year, a seminar sponsored by GCSAA on environmental considerations in Golf Course Management was presented at Oak Brook Hills Hotel and Resort. A number of subjects were discussed during the two day seminar, including benefits of a golf course community, groundwater contamination, policies concerning wetlands, legal liabilities, Community Relations and Perceptions, Contingency Planning and many more.

The area that I would like to explore a bit further in this article is that of Contingency Planning. Actually, an entire seminar could be devoted to developing, implementing and updating a Contingency Plan. Since attending the seminar in January, I have read numerous articles dealing with the importance of developing and implementing a contingency plan. This is an area like Underground Storage tanks, or Rinse Pads, or Community Right to Know, that is part of the compliance package that you haven't heard much about, until recently. While gathering information required for the plan, the Fire Department, Police Department and Hospital all mentioned that this will be the first copy they will have received from a golf course.

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So, what is a Contingency Plan? Basically, it is a plan that outlines what you as a superintendent, and your employees will do during a potential crisis to reduce confusion and prevent a major accident from occurring. How many of us have taken the time to consider a worst case scenario at our golf courses involving a fire, a chemical spill at the club, or during transport off-site, or an explosion? Who would be responsible to call the police or fire departments? At that point is a decision made that a situation is too large to handle internally? If the area is to be evacuated, what is the quickest route? Who would direct the traffic, both out of the parking lot and out on the street?

If a fire was to start at your facility, where is the nearest hydrant, and what is its thread size? Does the fire department know, and have they been to your facility recently to see the layout so they can react quickly and as efficiently as possible?

If there was a pesticide spill, do you have, in your maintenance facility the necessary equipment to clean it up? If not, who is your Hazardous Chemical Clean-up Contractor? What equipment do they have available for clean-up and what is their response time?

All of these questions and many more are answered when you complete an Emergency Contingency Plan. I'm sure that we are all responsible professionals in this business, but a crisis can happen to any one of us. I feel we owe it to our employer, our employees, the community and the environment to develop a Contingency Plan. Once it is completed, send copies to the proper agencies, train your employees regularly, and periodically update it.

There are nine sections to the outline we received in the information notebook at the seminar:

1. Emergency Coordinators and Alternates list.
2. Response Agencies.
3. Response Agreements.
4. Facility Maps.
5. Area Map.
6. Product Inventory.
7. Emergency Equipment Inventory.
8. Emergency Procedures.
9. Plans on File List.

Section 1 — Emergency Coordinators and Alternates List. Primary Emergency Coordinator/Name, Address, City, State, Zip Code and Phone Number. Alternates List/Two members of your staff along with the same information as above. Key Employee/A contact who is available at night, on weekends and holidays. Their name and phone number is needed.

Section 2 — Emergency Response Agencies. List the following agencies and their telephone numbers: Fire Department, Police Department, Sheriff Department, EMS/Ambulance, Doctor, Hospital, Poison Control Center, Local Emergency Planning Committees, Illinois Emergency Response Committee, State Emergency Disaster Agency, National Response Center (1-800-424-8802), CHEMTREC (1-800-424-9300), Chemical Manufacturers, Electric Company, Gas Company, Cleanup and Containment Specialists, Attorney and Media (Radio and Television).

During an emergency phone call to any one of these agencies be sure to include: your name and call back number, location, description of occurrence, name of chemicals involved and class, extent of injuries, potential dangers to the environment and neighbors.

(continued on page 19)

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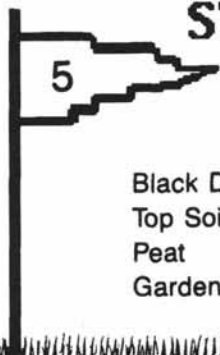
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Section 3 — Response Agreements. With Police: Traffic Control, command location, evacuation route, security assistance and radio frequencies. With Fire Dept.: On-site fire control, determine environmental impact. With Physicians: Knowledgeable on toxic chemicals and health effects. With Clean-up Contractor and Alternate: List name, address, phone number, equipment available, response time and who is on call.

Section 4 — Facility Maps. This section requires two sketches to be made. The first is a drawing of the facility and immediate surrounding areas: items of note — fire hydrant location, chemical storage area, gasoline tanks, fire extinguishers, gas and electric shut-off switches, and any other pertinent information.

The second drawing will show site run-off and control areas. Sketch the drainage patterns using arrows, drains, sites at which potential run-off could be blocked, storage areas of materials that could be used to block run-off, lakes, ponds, streams, etc.

Section 5 — Area Map. We bought a topography map of our area, highlighted the golf club and copied just the area that we needed to show the surrounding area, major highways and neighbors.

Section 6 — Product Inventory. List the pesticides that are on hand during the peak months of the season and the quantities. Also list the shop products such as solvents and lubricants that pose a potential hazard during a fire or explosion. Include bulk containers and packaged products, and the way the fire department would want you to treat these products should a fire start. The location of these products should be on your Facility Map with symbols in the legend so they are easy to recognize.

Also, include protective clothing required (self-contained breathing apparatus, etc.), containment methods and special handling procedures.

Section 7 — Emergency Equipment Inventory. Two lists make up this section. The first is all of your on-site emergency equipment. Including eye wash, emergency shower, gas masks and quantity, protective clothing (boots, gloves, hard hats, etc.). Other emergency equipment, intercom paging system, portable radios, fire extinguishers, absorbents (bags, charcoal, clay, etc.), first aid kit, tractors, pumps and trencher.

The second list is that of emergency equipment and supplies that your clean-up contractor has, or has access to (dump trucks, bull dozers, pumps, barricades, etc.). Also in this section note the location and types of your water supplies. Hydrants, ponds, streams, etc. Verify hydrant thread compatibility, water pressure and flow rates. (The fire department has all this information).

Section 8 — Emergency Procedures. This section contains the information that is going to be most important if a disastrous condition should arise. The procedures that your employees will follow and that have been outlined by the police and fire departments, local hospital, the state or local emergency response teams, concerning a spill, explosion, off site spill, fire or other condition. Also, include directions of the evacuation plan, both primary and secondary routes. Outline actual emergency procedures your employees will follow in an emergency.

A. Write down what you are equipped to handle, and what you cannot, with regards to a fire, spill, off-site spill, accidents.

(continued on page 20)

(Contingency Planning continued)

B. Once emergency personnel has been contacted, who makes the initial phone call? Where is the primary staging area? Who will be the primary coordinator at the accident site and relay information and direct staff personnel? Who is responsible to direct emergency vehicles to the accident site, and also keep traffic clear at the club entrance to expedite the emergency equipment? All other employees should be positioned for help at the accident sight. It is important that all key employees understand their roles in crisis situations so they may act without hesitation.

C. Evaluate program and make revisions.

D. Draining program reviewed every year with new and veteran employees on a specific date each year.

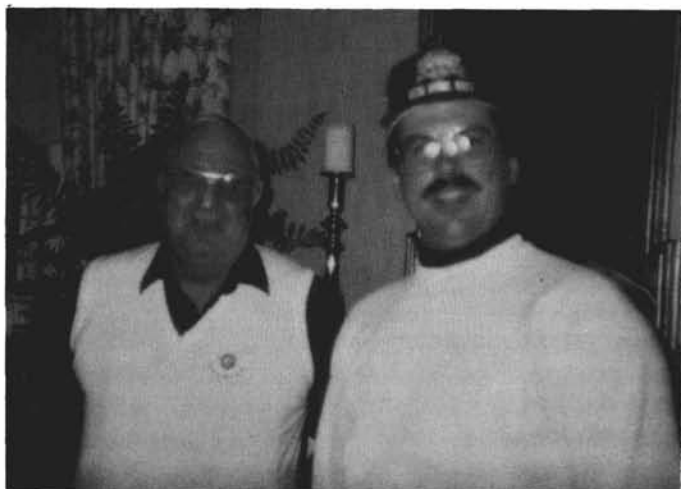
Section 9 — Plans on File List. Send a copy of your contingency plan to the police department, fire department, sheriff's department, local hospital and the local emergency planning commission. There should be a space for the accepting agency to put the date received and a signature.

This is most of the information contained in the outline we received. You may choose to add more if you wish. By completing this plan and sending it to the proper agencies, you have made them aware of your good intentions toward compliance and increased their knowledge of your facility. By reviewing this plan with police and fire departments, and your employees they will become more familiar with their responsibilities and be able to react intelligently during a crisis.

The following is a list of some telephone numbers to help in gathering information for your Contingency Plan.

For a topography map — Illinois State Geological Survey, 1-217-333-4747. For a list of clean-up and containment specialists call either 1-800-424-9346 (Information on hazardous waste & Superfund), or 1-800-535-0202 (Chemical Emergency Preparedness Program). Explain to them the information you need and they will help. Your local fire department can help with information as to how they want you to treat certain emergencies and hydrant information. Radio frequencies for police and fire departments are available in a Scanner Frequency Book at Radio Shack, or from a friend who scans as a hobby.

This information may take several weeks to gather. Good luck.



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Need a map?

The United States Geological Office is map central for the USA. There are dozens of maps showing great detail of Illinois. Satellite photo maps, topographic maps, hydrologic maps, and even road maps! You can get these by county, by areas smaller than counties, for the whole state or for groups of states. Maps can serve as more than good wall decorations. Your golf course is an integral part of the state's geologic and geographic features. Knowing its relationship to its surrounding areas is important.

There are two ways to obtain government maps: direct from the US Geological Office or through map stores. You can address your questions directly to the USGS Maps Sales, Box 25286, Denver, CO 80225. Request a catalog of published maps and an order form. Most Illinois map stores can be of help in obtaining the maps that include your golf course.

