

the Bull Sheet

Official publication of the MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS.

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On Course With the President

Said Thoreau, "A single gentle rain makes the grass many shades greener. So too our prospects brighten on the influx of better thoughts". So, too, do the prospects of the new golf season brighten with each day.

Or do they?

The GCSAA Mortality Study will cause anyone who takes the time to read the printed matter and accompanying data to take pause and ponder the possibilities. The very real possibilities. What may be inferred from the published material? What is really there and what is not? With a broad scope of thought (not easy to come by these days) the mental picture should be of the wide angle variety, and not necessarily limited to whatever compounds might be encountered only on the golf course. They will see the references to the trends and begin to seriously consider the possible consequences of any long term exposure to any material. That is **any** exposure to **any** material at **any** location. But, no doubt, the focus will be on materials for use on and applied to golf courses and that focus shall be most intense. My guess is that it's because the golf "community" is easy to target and arguably is the most vulnerable.

So be it. We all know that we, as Golf Course Superintendents, are among the most careful and most educated of any applicator of any material. We judiciously and sparingly treat the turf, waterways, ornamentals, and trees of our golf courses with the correct amount of material at the correct time.

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We are very comfortable with the implementation and practice of virtually every facet of Integrated Pest Management. Many of us consider ourselves to be stewards of the environment. We continue to tell ourselves that very fact, and, in fact, we do a hell of a good job telling ourselves just how good and conscientious we are. But it doesn't seem like anybody else is buying the notion. That will do us no good if the populous thinks of these (our) vaunted golf courses as nothing more than toxic material sinks, pay no attention to the amount of care and conscience with which the materials were and are applied.

It is probably inevitable that we, as Superintendents, will be on the receiving end of a wide variety of pesticide issue and mortality study related questions. Let the inquiries come but be prepared! It helps to be ready with a little "spin" of your own. As the questions come forth from the golfers and the Paul Harveys of the world broadcast their version of the news, have the accurate answers and statistics at hand. Let the people know what we know and how the studies and statistics may be used to further clarify an old, old issue. Prepare yourselves well for the onslaught of questions, know your material and it's content, and have some salient thoughts in mind.

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(On Course With the President continued)

It's all about sharing accurate information and keeping the correctness of the issue at the forefront. Accuracy is of paramount importance and being very familiar with the early conclusions of the GCSAA Mortality study. People will ask, we know they will, and well they should. My phone has already been ringing, "About that Superintendents study???"

Prepare yourselves well for the onslaught of questions, know your material and it's content, and have some salient thoughts in mind.

So ... may the gentle rains of Spring bring on the warming and nourishment of the good earth. And may the grass grow lush and verdant and those many shades greener, and may we all have better thoughts of golf as the days brighten on the influx of the warm, soft rains ...

I wonder, to what extent Thoreau pondered golf and golf courses ... mortality studies ..., and such.

I think I'll go ponder things for a while on the practice tee.
ATF



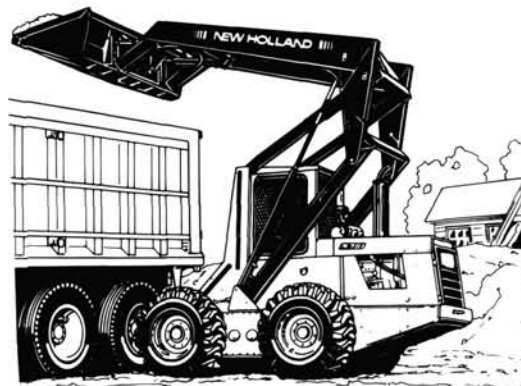
A Useful Tool

by Bruce Williams

A useful tool I have used for dealing with members' lawns and friends that have questions about their turf is a simple and inexpensive soil test. I don't use this for the golf course but it works well for the homeowner. The test is called the Lawn and Garden Soil Diagnosis Kit and is available through The Soil Doctor, 106 N. Cecil St., Bonduel, WI 54107. The phone number is (715) 758-2178. The cost for the soil test is \$10 and they will send you some empty containers for testing if you ask. Once again, I think this test is fine for the homeowner and covers all of the basics. If you want testing for Calcium-Magnesium, Boron, Manganese, Sulfur, or Zinc there is an additional charge of \$3 per nutrient per sample. There is also an additional \$10 charge for soil composition % sand, silt, and clay. So if you are looking for something simple with pH, potassium, phosphorus, lime requirements, and fertility recommendations then this is your simple answer.

(Taken off the MAGCS computer bulletin board)

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