

Hiring an Irrigation Consultant

Gary Hearn, Salt Creek G.C.

What's it! I am tired of night watering, dragging hoses, quick couplers, and dodging skunks. I am disgusted with inconsistency in water pressure and distribution, brown fairways, and priming a PTO pump. Boy! I need a new irrigation system. Where do I start; let's try with an irrigation consultant.

Define "consultant": "a person who gives expert or professional advice." An irrigation consultant, as defined by the trade, is an independent person or firm who specializes in irrigation system design and management. In general, they offer complete professional services including: analysis of existing systems, feasibility studies, master planning, detailed plans and

specifications, staking of sprinkler locations, construction observation, water management and programming of irrigation schedules.

There are normally three phases to an irrigation consultant's procedures:

1. Design
2. Bidding
3. Installation

Phase I, Design

The consultant spends considerable time analyzing the layout of the course and the management aspects of its operation. Given the opportunity, the consultant would want to know your likes, dislikes and preferences regarding irrigation system options. The consultant stays current with all developments in the irrigation field and can recommend state-of-the-art equipment that fits

your irrigation situation. The consultant, through investigations of your situation, makes intelligent choices for your irrigation system and should avoid the choice of sub-standard materials and equipment or equipment that may be overly sophisticated for your needs.

A typical golf course irrigation consultant's services should involve analysis of your existing system. If there is no existing system, the consultant will look over the course to determine, with the superintendent's input, what areas require watering and what areas may not be watered, what to use as a water source, soil conditions where wet and dry areas are located, course boundaries, locations for pumps and controllers and availability of electrical supplies.

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Armed with all of this important information, the consultant custom designs an irrigation system engineered to your wishes and your golf course. The consultant specifies the best product or products to accomplish what you agree upon. The irrigation system will be designed for efficient use of water and electrical power. All aspects of the new system will be compatible.

Phase II, Bidding

However, the consultant's job is far from over, and the next phase of consulting services is where the consultant is of the most help to you. The consultant assures the competency of the irrigation package when it goes to bid. Whether it be materials only, installation only, installation and materials or a separate pump station, the consultant's job is to make sure that all aspects

of the system and bid package are complete and complementary. At bidding, the consultant can also help you identify qualified suppliers and installers. The consultant makes the bidding process smooth, leaving you to the important work of maintaining the golf course. Once the bids are received, the consultant can help to evaluate the bids and bidders.

Phase III, Installation

The consultant can stake the sprinkler locations and observe the contractor's installation procedures to insure that the system is installed as designed and specified. A final test is required to make sure the system is installed properly and that all equipment, including the pump station, is operating properly. The consultant will also insure that you and other course personnel receive adequate training in the use of the

new equipment, that accurate "as-built" of the system are maintained, and proper operating instructions and maintenance schedules for all equipment are furnished and approved.

Still in doubt? Here are five reasons to choose a consultant:

1. Paperwork: taxing and time consuming to superintendent's schedule.
2. Liability: minimize potential liabilities, creating a smoother operation.
3. Mediation: unbiased opinions and tends to treat all parties fairly.
4. Alternates: redesign without incurring more cost to fit adjustments.
5. Priorities: client receives all important items that the irrigation needs.

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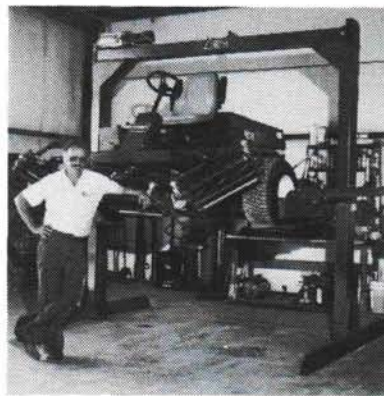


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drought of the summer of '95, the severe drop of temperatures in February, and then the very wet and cold spring of '96. Or did we have a spring this year?

.....
A note from Don Spier:

The Midwest is not only blessed with some of the finest golf courses in the world, we also have some of the finest scholars! Out of 47 applicants and 10 finalists, three of this year's Ciba Legacy Award Winners are sons and daughters of MAGCS members. Congratulations are in order for:

Megan Marie-Beth Leuzinger, daughter of Peter and DeeAnn Leuzinger, majoring in Speech Pathology at Northern Illinois University.

James C. Matchen, son of

Michael and Sue Matchen, major undecided, at Southern Illinois University.

Lauren A. Stewart, daughter of Roger and Susan Stewart, majoring in Science/Premed at Kenyon College.

Congratulations to these fine students and also to their proud parents.

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Assistant Superintendent needed at Bartlett Hills Golf Course, Bartlett, IL. Send cover letter and resume to: Lisa Fox, Personnel Coordinator, Village of Bartlett, 228 S. Main St., Bartlett, IL 60103.

.....
Genevieve H. Adank, widow of the late Jerry Adank, passed away on June 26 in Valparaiso, IN, at the age of 73. Jerry, the very popular, long-time Illinois Lawn representative, passed away in

1986. Mrs. Adank is survived by three children: Jerry (Jeanine), Roger (JoAnne), Janet (Mike) Whisler and six grandchildren.

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On July 10, Turf Products Ltd., was purchased by Echo-Systems. Wally states that there will be no changes as far as his customers are concerned. It will be business as usual with all of the same personnel

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In summary, remember, an irrigation consultant is an extension of yourself and the golf course. Don't be afraid to ask questions, and definitely give some of your ideas to help improve the golf course. Now you are ready to hire an irrigation consultant. ■

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