

# How Good is a Manufacturer's Warranty?

Jim Halloran  
Halloran & Yauch, Inc.

**W**e write this article to all members of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents to clarify and correct the perceived problem we have had regarding leaking PVC plastic pipe coupling joints on golf course irrigation installations.

We have been installing golf course irrigation systems for over twenty years and have built a strong reputation as a quality local contractor. Besides installation of new systems, we have remodeled many systems as well as performed heavy-duty repair work for most golf courses on

the north side of the Chicago area.

Four years ago, we became aware of the fact that two of the courses we had recently completed were experiencing leaking pipe coupling joints after a year or so in service.

While we searched for the answer to this problem, we blamed our installers. These were the same people that had installed many systems previously without any leaking problems. We did not associate the problem with the pipe manufacturer we were using at this time. The pipe in question was as specified, and the manufacturer was on the consultant's approved list.

We finished Bonnie Dundee Golf Course in June of 1995 and immediately started to have leaking joints. This was the first time that we connected the leaking problem with the product and not the installers.

In September of 1995, we replaced all of the fairway two-inch piping which cost us \$55,000 out-of-pocket. We appealed to the pipe manufacturer to help us in this project. They refused to accept the fact they were producing a faulty product that did not meet the ASTM standards for PVC.

Since 1995, we have installed other golf course systems using

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# Green Committee, Chicago District Golf Association

*Editor's Note: This is another article reprinted from Vol. 11, No. 2, February 1931, of The Bulletin of the United States Golf Association Green Section.*

Guy M. Peters

The by-laws of the Chicago District Golf Association, which was founded in 1913, provide for various committees, one of which is the green committee. The writer has been chairman of that committee since 1927, and has been reappointed as such for 1931, with Ben Stevenson as the other member of the committee. Some years ago the green committee maintained a central purchasing bureau and a professional greenkeeper who gave advice to the

member clubs in connection with problems in greenkeeping. In the earlier days the purchasing bureau was used by the member clubs and was instrumental in securing substantial reductions in cost of supplies. Later when the cost of golf supplies became more standardized it was found the member clubs could secure by direct purchase practically the same price as the purchasing bureau, and the member clubs thereafter availed themselves so little of either of these facilities that they were abandoned. Before the establishment of the turf gardens in the Chicago district by the United States Golf Association Green Section our principal activity was the holding of a joint meeting once a year of the chairmen of the green committees and the green-

keepers of the member clubs. These meetings consisted of machinery demonstrations in the afternoon and dinner in the evening, with a program of papers, usually by various greenkeepers, followed by the usual discussions. The meetings were popular and well attended. Our committee took an active part, in cooperation with the Mid-West Greenkeepers' Association, in securing the establishment of the turf gardens in the Chicago district by the United States Golf Association Green Section. Since those gardens have been established, our annual meeting has been held at the gardens, as part of the program of the United States Golf Association Green Section. This, in brief, is the extent of our activities. 

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another pipe manufacturer **and have had no problems** with leaking pipe or joints. However, we still seem to have problems shaking this enigma of leaking pipe.

We have found and documented through word of mouth that there are approximately 30 golf courses from Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin and Illinois with dozens of different contractors who have had this same problem involving the same pipe manufacturer.

In 1997, another local company, a distributor, and Halloran & Yauch, Inc. engaged Jenner & Block law firm to pursue this matter mainly to find out if we had enough evidence to proceed with a lawsuit or a class action case. They

think we have a case, but we must find a firm willing to take the case on a contingency basis due to the high cost of litigation. To date, we have not found such a firm.

We also hired a professional engineer who has expertise in the PVC pipe business. He discovered that the bell end of the PVC pipe was oversized and did not meet the ASTM standard. The bell and socket ends did not have an interference fit which is required by standard.

We realize that the sporadic leaking is a continuous reminder of an ongoing problem, and we hope this explanation will clarify the actual facts. The cause of this problem is a manufacturer's defect which they will not accept or reimburse for corrective measures.

Other manufacturers in the golf irrigation industry have had product problems, and most all have stepped forward to correct the situation. This pipe manufacturer refuses to do so voluntarily.

We have been a contractor/supplier/and supporting member of the MAGCS for many years and have made friends of most of the people we work with. We are going to continue to install golf course irrigation systems in the Chicago area and hope we can once again have your trust and confidence.

Please call me if you have questions regarding this report. 