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*"Where Meadow Goes,
the Water Flows"*

Oaks, Oak Wilt, and Golf Courses

by Rex Bastian, Tech. Services Coordinator

Oak trees are often among the most dominating landscape features of many golf courses in the Chicago area. Their presence can dominate the character of play on a given hole. Because the loss of an oak can create a major change in a course, superintendents should be aware of the possible threats to the oak trees under their care. Because oak wilt can become established on a course rather quickly, an understanding of its biology and management strategies is important.

Oak wilt is an aggressive, tree killing disease of oaks. It is caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum* and is closely related to the fungus that causes Dutch elm disease, *Ceratocystis ulmi*. The fungus enters the water conducting vessels of the sapwood through fresh wounds or through roots connecting healthy and diseased trees.

Oak wilt is an aggressive, tree killing disease of oaks.

When the fungus enters the vessel, adjacent cells develop balloon like structures that extend into the infected vessels and plug them. This disrupts the sap flow in the vessels and the foliage wilts and falls. The disease is a threat to all oaks, but trees of the red oak group (red, black, pin and scarlet oaks) are killed more rapidly than trees of the white oak group (white, bur, and swamp white oaks).

SYMPTOMS (RED OAK GROUP)

Early foliar symptoms are wilting, bronzing and shedding of the leaves at the ends of branches in the upper crown. The symptoms can spread through the crown very quickly, often within a few weeks.

Bronzing begins at the outer leaf edges and moves toward the midrib. The boundary between the green and discolored areas is usually very distinct. Along with the discoloration, the leaves often wilt. Both discolored and entirely green leaves fall from the tree in large numbers, but a few discolored leaves usually remain attached. As the disease progresses, fungus mats may be produced between the bark and sapwood. The fungus mats can exert enough pressure

Streaking of sapwood beneath the bark of infested branches is much more common on white oaks.

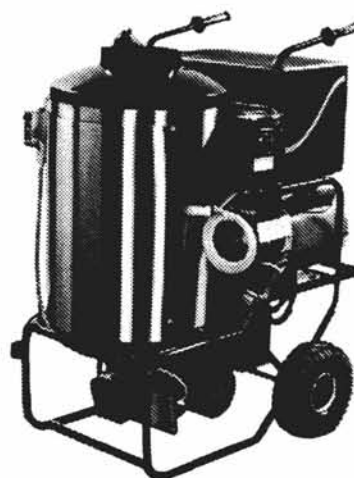
on the overlying bark to raise then rupture it. A fruity odor is produced from the mat that will attract sap beetles to feed on the mat.

SYMPTOMS (WHITE OAK GROUP)

Symptoms in white oaks are much more variable than in red oaks. Symptoms may develop in the upper crowns of white oaks as with red oaks, but they do not spread as quickly. Symptoms are often restricted to one or a few branches at a time. Members of the white oak group are seldom killed outright as those in the red oak group are. Leaf discoloration occurs, but the changes are often more gradual than with the red oak group. Streaking of sapwood beneath the bark of infested branches is much more common on white oaks.

(continued on page 16)

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SUGGESTIONS ON GREEN SPEED

Jim Connolly, USGA Green Section



One of the best statements on green speed can be found in the 1973 Manual for Championship Preparation by the USGA.

"The greens should not be rolled or cut to point where a ball could gain speed in putting down all but the severest slopes."

Furthermore,

"A player should be able to stop the ball at the hole."

The ball should come to rest within two to three feet of the hole when putting from above the hole. There are rare occasions where this may not be the case, perhaps on a green where the obvious strategy is to keep the ball below the hole, and only a miss-hit shot would end up above the hole.

These guidelines should be followed when setting cutting height and green speed. The speed should be set to represent the average of all 18 holes. If there is only one severely sloped green, the speed would not be set to this green. However, five or more greens with slopes and undulations would have a definite impact on overall cutting height/green speed.

I recently visited a golf course built in 1921 that has an average green size of less than 5,000 sq. ft. and more than nine of the greens could be considered "undulating". Many areas of the greens are not used for hole locations when cutting heights go below 5/32". When greens are cut so short that flagstick locations are lost you are essentially robbing the golfer of a good part of the game. This is a shame.

Large, flat expansive greens are most prone to lower cutting heights simply because of their design. Many golfers that complain about slow greens, especially on large greens, lack a quality in their game known as authority of stroke. John Jacobs, famous British instructor and former Walker Cup coach, describes this fault in golfers.

"We tend to wave it, coax it, steer it, drag it, jab it, twitch it-anything but hit it."

John Jacobs. Practical Golf

On this type of green, the emphasis should be upon smoothness because the distance of

ball travel may be longer. Imperfections along the line of putt will make it difficult to predict ball direction and roll.

Enter this season with these thoughts in mind and begin to manage the putting surfaces appropriately. Go out on the course with the green committee and go through the above steps. Examine each green and see if there are hole locations that have been sacrificed to the Speed God. Get them back.

The Green Superintendent greatly influences the game as a direct result of maintenance. He/She is responsible for preparing the course and making decisions that are best for the game.

The USGA Green Section Turf Advisory Service (TAS) is designed to assist golf courses in maintenance programs that bring out the best in a golf course. A visit to your course opens a forum for discussion and creates an atmosphere of open communication. I encourage you to support the USGA Green Section by subscribing to the TAS this year.

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Upcoming Events — Mark Your Calendar

- September 21** — MAGCS meeting at Shoreacres G.C.
September 27 — Northern Illinois ITF Golf Day at Riverside G.C. and Ruth Lake Golf Club
October 4 — MAGCS meeting at Bartlett Hills G.C.
October 20-22 — Technical Business Management seminars by the GCSAA, Willowbrook, IL
October 22 — Fall Dinner Dance at River Forest
November 10 — MAGCS Turf Clinic at Medinah C.C.
November 30-Dec. 1 — NCTE at Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, IL
Jan. 31 - Feb. 7 — GCSAA Conference, Dallas, Texas

September is DUES MONTH. Look for your notice and be sure to fill it out completely and send it along with your check.

Assistant Needed: Send resumes to — John Fulling, Berrien Hills C.C., P. O. Box 709, St. Joseph, MI 49035. This is a private 18 hole course, situated one quarter mile from Lake Michigan on the St. Joe River.

The Chicago Botanic Garden this fall is offering at the professional level, programs in the Continuing Education. For registration information, call the Education Registrar, Lee Biesiada, at 708/835-8261. The courses are: "Passion for Perennials" starting October 7, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or October 8, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; "Problem Solving in the Midwest Landscape" starting November 5, 8:30 to 4:00 p.m.; "Basic Turf Management" starting November 4, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., taught by Tom Voight.

William Von Sigler is looking for an assistant's position in the Chicagoland area. Phone 317/262-8687. He has a very good resume which is being held by the editor. Anyone wanting a copy, please call 708/428-5009 and leave a fax number for me to send you a copy.

Due to clubhouse construction, Nordic Hills will not be able to host the March 1994 M.A.G.C.S. meeting. Anyone interested in hosting this meeting should contact Kevin Czerkies as soon as possible.

Ben Coker, 80, owner/operator of the Calumet Golf Club, Ridge Rd., in Gary, Indiana has been hospitalized at Munster Community Hospital. Ben had his left foot removed in a very serious operation. He is currently suffering from a bout with pneumonia.

The "Hoosier" foursome at all monthly meetings was Bill Krafft, Tony Sella, Al Travis and Ben Coker. Ben always paid for the gas and tolls with his poker winnings from Paul Voykin. Midwest members wish Ben a speedy recovery.

"Ray Gerber Editorial Award Contestants"

by Fred Opperman, Editor

This year to award the prize, the judges are going to be kept up late reading 17 entries and trying to choose a winner. Marty Baumann contributed 6 articles this year alone! Thank you Marty, for all of your help, and educating our membership.

Those qualifying to enter for the award in 1992/1993 are:

- October 1992 — "Chicago's Gentle Ben" by Dudley Smith
November 1992 — "My Top 10 Maintenance Pitfalls" by Dave Blomquist
December 1992 — "What is Happening?" by Dave Meyer
January 1993 — "Heart Attack" by Marty Baumann
"If You Have No Critics..." by Bruce Williams
February 1993 — "How Will You Handle a Crisis" by Marty Baumann
"Wasting Dollars on Dollar Spot" by Peter Hahn
March 1993 — "Safety First" by Marty Baumann
"PR & Chemical Usage" by Joel Purpur
April 1993 — "Airplanes and the Audubon" by Tony Rzadzki
"Why a First Aid Kit" by Marty Baumann
May 1993 — "Turf Talk, Are You On Line?" by Roger Stewart
June 1993 — "Doctors, Lawyers, Plumbers and Such" by Jerry Mach
"Repetitive Motion, Repetitive Motion..." by Marty Baumann
"Contingency Planning" by Glenn Bereiter
August 1993 — "Experimental Green at Cantigny" by Tony Rzadzki
"Are You Ready for a Fire" by Marty Baumann

The above articles will be judged by a panel of 5, and the award will be given at the Midwest Clinic, November 10, 1993 at the Medinah Country Club. The judges for this year's award will be: Timothy Kelly, President MAGCS; Dr. Randy Kane, U of I and CDGA; Dr. Tom Fermanian, U of I; Donald Gerber, Retired Golf Course Superintendent and past President MAGCS; and Editor, Fred D. Opperman.

Wanted to buy: Rainbird #66K riser valves, single slot. Call Don Lawrence, Atwood Golf Course, Rockford. 815/623-2213 at work or 815/623-8812 at home.

Steve Cummins, Supt. at Lake Barrington Shores is looking for a mechanic. Call 708/382-3252.

Congratulations to Larry Flament on his new job as superintendent at Eagle Brook Golf Club.

Your editor, Fred Opperman, has changed jobs and is now with Hinsdale Nurseries where he is running their maintenance crews and will also be calling on golf courses.

(Oak Wilt continued)

Spore mats are seldom produced on the white oaks.

It is important to remember that oak wilt is commonly confused with drought stress. The following items can help distinguish one from the other.

OAK WILT:

- More common, during first half of summer
- Small leaves, thin crown, wilting
- Edges and tips of leaves turning color first
- Leaves drop soon after discoloring
- Dying trees found in groups (root graft transmission)

DROUGHT STRESS:

- More common during last half of summer
- Regular size leaves, little wilting
- Leaves browning uniformly
- Leaves stay attached to tree
- Dying trees scattered throughout stand
- More common on stressed sites
- Often with trunk sprouts

Positive identification of oak wilt requires recovery of the fungus from trees suspected of having the disease. During the growing season, samples can be sent to the University of Illinois plant clinic in Urbana.

MANAGEMENT

At present, there is no cure for oak wilt. Management therefore consists of preventing the spread of the disease within an oak stand. Four considerations should be kept in mind:

1. If possible, avoid pruning oaks in known oak wilt areas during approximately mid April to early July. "Picnic" beetles are thought to move the fungus from the spore mats to fresh pruning cuts during this period.

2. If oaks must be pruned during this time, pruning cuts should be covered with a wound dressing. This is one of the few times that wound dressings are a recommended arboricultural practice. The dressing keeps the picnic beetles away from the fresh wound.

3. Sever root grafts between diseased and healthy trees. Oaks within 50 feet of diseased trees already may be infected without showing symptoms. Consider such trees to be suspect and place additional barriers between them and neighboring oaks. Root grafts can be severed by trenching to a depth of 3 to 4 feet or by chemical methods (Vapam).

4. Remove diseased red oaks as soon as possible. If quick removal is not possible, the trunks should be girdled to keep the fungus from spreading into the root system and to speed drying of the trunk. Diseased white oaks do not need to be cut down, but diseased branches should be removed and the tree treated to improve its vitality (proper watering, mulching and fertilization).

A new, systemic fungicide has been labeled for treatment of the oak wilt fungus in Illinois. The fungicide, named Alamo® by the Ciba-Geigy Corporation, can be injected into red and pin oak trees for both preventative and therapeutic treatments. It is not yet labeled for oak species in our area other than red and pin oak. Alamo has been used successfully for the treatment of oak wilt in Texas live oaks. Hendricksen, the Care of Trees has begun to inject red oaks to help prevent oak wilt in red oaks. Unfortunately, we do not yet have a history to base the potential effectiveness of these injections. Research done by the University of Minnesota does look promising, but only time will give an accurate picture.

Rubberized Turf: Old Tires Can Give New Life to Turf!

by Dan Banks, Benham Chemical Corp.

Every one of us can think of some areas where we can't grow grass due to traffic. It's human nature to take the most direct path to a destination, which is not always on a defined walkway or cart path. The result is soil compaction, which does not allow root penetration or sustain turf. Now you can grow turf in these bare areas!

Rubber cannot be compacted. Hence, when rubber is incorporated into a soil mix it also cannot be compacted and root penetration is achieved. Chopped rubber, made from used car tires, is a perfect rubber source for this use.

For three years, Trey Rogers of Michigan State University and Michael Venota, a graduate student, have been incorporating chopped rubber into turf. Last year they tilled 10,000 pounds of rubber into 10,000 square feet of Michigan State University's football players' practice field. The Michigan Turfgrass Foundation has supported a graduate assistantship for this research. Much of the final data has still not been collected, but we have some general guidelines for its use.

The shredded rubber is available in three sizes and has three different uses:

1. 3/8" — Soil Integration
2. 1/4" — Aerification
3. #10 — Topdressing

Keep in mind the object is to prevent compaction so the larger the particle the better the performance.

Those who have successfully installed the rubber recommend that 25-30% of soil be rubber. This rubber has been tilled into a depth of one foot. Here's an example of how to figure how much rubber is needed:

Rate: 25 to 30% rubber in soil tilled into a depth of 12".

How Much: 1 cubic yd = 800 lbs. of rubber

Example: a 5' wide x 20' long x 1' deep area

5' x 20' x 1' = 100 cubic feet

(27 cubic feet in a cubic yard)

100 cubic feet divided by 27 = 3.7 cubic yards

For 30% rubber mix:

3.7 (cubic yards) x .30 (30%) = 1.11 cubic yards of rubber needed or 800 lbs.

The rubber is packaged in a gaylord shipping container. This container holds 800 lbs. or 1 cubic yard. This material is shipped direct from the shredding facility to you and a minimum of 3 gaylords or 2,400 lbs. is required for delivery. The cost is relatively inexpensive, approximately \$.18 a pound delivered to most areas in Michigan.

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"Are We Prepared to Spray?"

by Marty Baumann

We all spend time, energy and concern over the safety and well-being of our employees. We purchase shatterproof glasses, helmets, steel toe boots, first aid kits, send them to training seminars and do safety audits. We strive to make our work places as safe as possible. But, how prepared are we for the work that we and our assistants do?

Spraying our golf courses is one of those duties most of us reserve for the superintendent, assistants or our spraying tech. The big question is how prepared are we to react to an accident, before or during spraying?

We can be prepared to react quickly and correctly for very little investment. We have been hearing about most of these items at safety seminars for years!

A safety eye wash station with normal saline eye wash and fresh water, an MSDS book (up-to-date), in an easy to find place. Do you have the Chemtrec number posted in plain view? (It's 1-800-424-9300). Is your spill kit full? These few items will allow you to react quickly.

We can be prepared to react quickly and correctly for very little investment.

If you have an incident, react quickly. If a chemical spills in your eyes, flush them for a full 15 minutes before seeking medical attention. If you get chemical in your hair or on your skin, wash with soap and water completely. If you spill on your clothes, take them off! I keep paper jump suits on hand just for that reason.

Lastly, while spraying or mixing, if you or your employee starts displaying one of these symptoms: nausea, sweating, dizziness, or obvious disorientedness, call EMS and have them taken to the hospital in an ambulance.

Finally, if you have a spill, take the time to clean it completely. A chemical spill is not only dangerous to your men and your shop, but there is also the danger of the chemical mixing with another chemical creating a problem of larger scope.

By being prepared and reacting immediately, chemicals can be safely used and safe to you and your men.

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Turfgrass Short Course Revamped

The Turfgrass Short Course was offered at Purdue University during 1989 through 1992. The course was part of the 8-week Winter Short Course at Purdue. The course was targeted at interested individuals that were already employed in the turf industry that wanted to further their knowledge about turfgrass management. Even though the course was fairly popular, it was difficult for interested people to dedicate 8 weeks to attend classes on the Purdue campus. The decision was made in 1993 to cancel the short course at

Purdue and to restructure it to better suit the turfgrass industry of the Midwest. The course has been changed to a week long course with 10 intensive sessions on all aspects of turfgrass management. The course is co-sponsored by Purdue University and the University of Illinois in cooperation with the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation and the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation. Attendees will receive a comprehensive education on turfgrass management taught by turfgrass specialists from both universities. Session topics include turfgrass

I.D. and selection, establishment, plant physiology, soil physics and fertility, all areas of pest control, and irrigation management. CCH credits and GCSAA CEU's will be offered where applicable. The first course will be held Feb. 20-25, 1994 in Merrillville, IN. You will be receiving more information in the future and if you have questions please call Zac Reicher at 317/494-9737.

*(Reprinted from Midwest Memo,
July 1993)*

Dowsing — An Ancient Art in Modern Use

by Jeffrey T. Dorrell, Supt., Cadillac C.C.

Dowse / 'dauz / verb — To dowse is to search with the aid of a hand-held instrument (such as a diving rod) for **anything**.

When a superintendent first demonstrated the technique of dowsing to me, I had the typical knee-jerk reaction of skepticism and disbelief. Yet it quickly proved its worth on the golf course for finding buried water pipes, drain lines, valves and electrical wires. Also, I found that with a little practice I could perform the technique myself. As irrigation technician on a course with an aging irrigation system and frequent problems, my divining rod became a tool of daily use. For anyone with underground irrigation, unless you really enjoy digging keep an open mind and give this a try. It has been my experience that it takes no special clairvoyance or faith and with a little patience anyone can learn to dowse.

History

The actual origins of dowsing are unknown. Historians point to some obscure references in Greek Mythology and to Biblical passages of Moses smiting the rocks with his staff and water gushing forth (Exodus XVII, 5-6). Written references to dowsing began in the 14th century and an engraving of a dowser at work is dated 1550. Records of scientific investigation on the subject began to show soon after the 15th century and continue today. Volumes have

Written references to dowsing began in the 14th century and an engraving of a dowser at work is dated 1550.

been written on the subject and still no real explanation has been found. Theories of ESP, electro-magnetism and unconscious muscle movement have been put forth but none fully explain this phenomena.

Much of the problem with trying to scientifically explain dowsing is its wide variety of equipment, techniques and results. The classic forked stick is only one of many types of instruments used. Pendulum bobs, straight sticks, and coiled springs, which could be made of metal, plastic, or wood, all seem to work. Some of the more unusual equipment used includes household items such as scissors, rulers, utensils and even German Sausages. The results include the well-known reports of locating well water and metal ore of all types, lesser-known reports of finding missing persons and merchandise, and even solving crimes, diverting underground water, and diagnosing car trouble. Some dowsers have had successes using only a map of an area. During the Vietnam War, the U.S. Marines were trained in dowsing and used the techniques to locate enemy tunnels, booby traps, and ammunition caches. The reasons why it works may be unknown, but the results are well documented.

Technique

I have begun to notice tucked into the back of many turf periodicals ads for pipe locators. These locators, though not advertised as such, as divining rods. So an instrument could

Ordinary coat hanger wire, electrical wire, and plastic tubing bent this way also work.

be purchased, but very simple rods that work very well can be made from materials around the shop. One type is a welding rod, stripped of its flux and bent at a right angle about

(continued on page 22)

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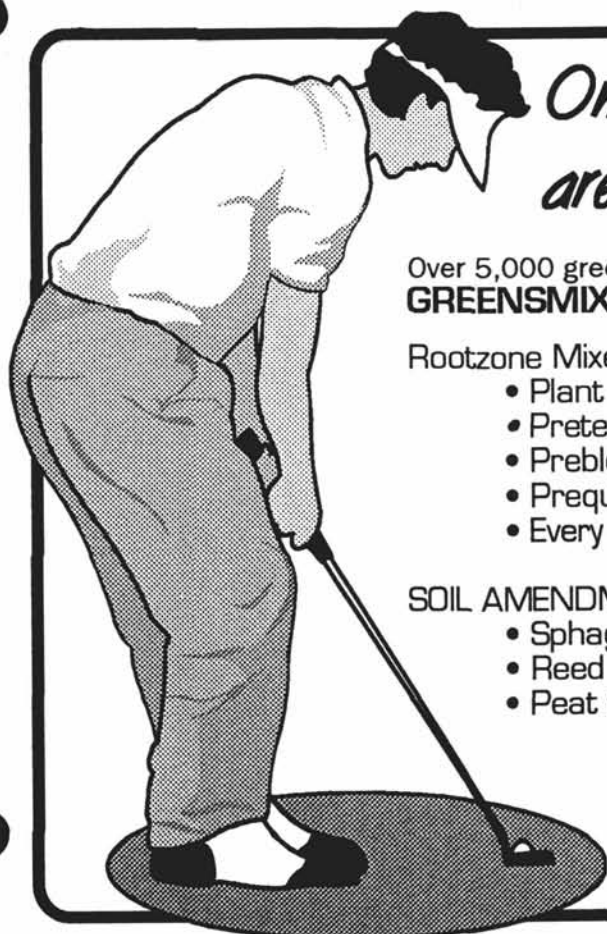
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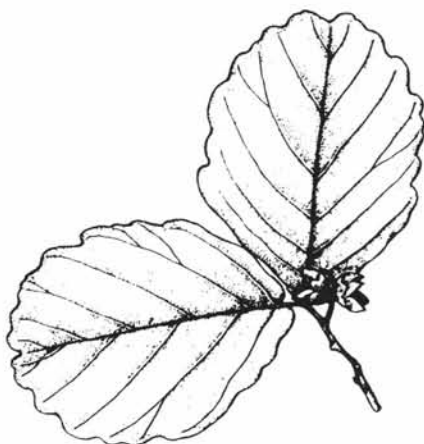
by Fred D. Opperman

Tree Trivia Question: What spruce was first discovered on Pikes Peak in 1862?

For this month, I've picked a tree that is native to Illinois and blooms in the fall. This in itself is very unusual. This is what you may call an understory tree or a forest tree.

Witch Hazel — *Hammamelis virginiana*.

Leaves: Alternate, simple, blades obovate, rounded or at times pointed at the tip. Up to six inches long, sometimes nearly half as wide, dark green and usually somewhat hairy on the upper surface. Paler on the lower side.



Bark: Light brown, and as tree gets older the bark is somewhat broken into small scales.

Twigs: Slender, flexible, brown, hairy at first but becoming smooth; leaf scars alternate, half-round with 3 bundle traces.



Flowers: Blooms from September to November, several in a cluster, each with 4 bright yellow petals up to 2/3 inch long.



Height: This is a small tree with a height of around 25 feet.

Wood: Hard, heavy, close grained, and light brown.

This is a tree to be naturalized along the forest edge and in shrub beds.

Trivia answer: The Blue Spruce.

Credit: **Forest Trees of Illinois**

Deer Problems?

Are you having problems with buck rubs on your trees? In my travels around the Chicago area, I have noticed that some courses really have problems with the buck deer rubbing and polishing their antlers on trees. This severely damages the trunk of the tree and if it is a small tree can kill it. In my own tree nursery I have this problem and hopefully this year I will be able to solve it. I purchased 4" plastic drain tile and cut it to 4' lengths and slit it length-wise (use a linoleum knife). I then slipped this over the tree trunk. You take a piece of 12" x 18" heavy plastic or vinyl to put around the tree trunk and then push the plastic tile over this and down. I can cover a tree in about 10 seconds with this method. I used the plastic/vinyl file or report folder cover to protect my trees and it worked really slick. If you have a Farm & Fleet store near you, they sell the 4" tile for 19 cents per foot.

Your trees need to be protected starting in early September for it is then that the bucks will start to do their rubbing, if not sooner. In removing the plastic tile from the trees, be sure to use the piece of plastic/vinyl to again protect the tree from the sharp edges of the plastic drain tile. The tree protectors should be removed by late March. Or they could be left on for your smaller trees to protect them from ball damage.

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