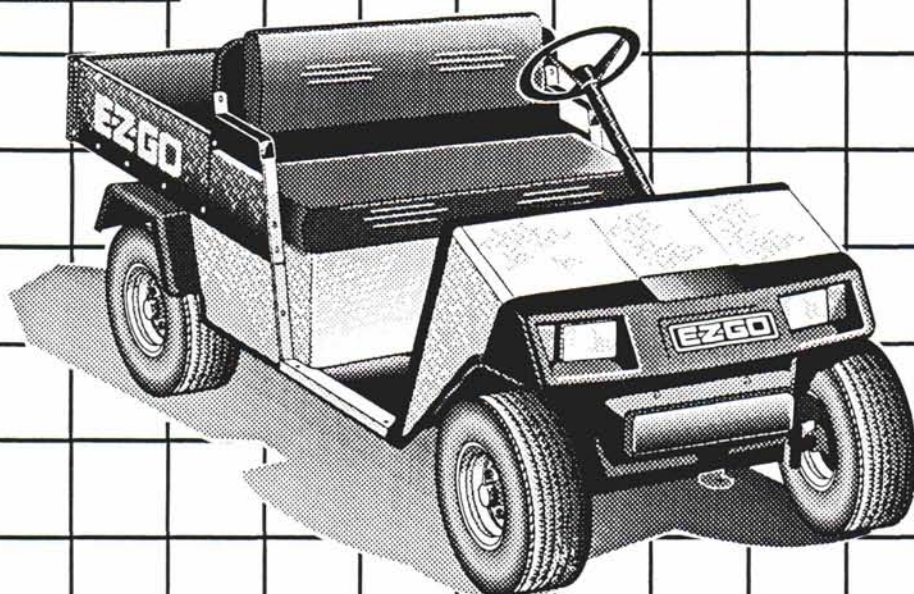


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# the Bull Sheet

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## On Course with the President

It has been a long and difficult season for all of us and hopefully, all of us have done a good job of keeping our clientele informed of the many environmental factors causing turf problems of which we have little or no control. Hats off to Dr. Randy Kane, Dr. Henry Wilkinson, Bob Maibusch, and the CDGA for distributing a fine summary report on the damaged turf



conditions of 1995! This excellent and complete summary was sent to CDGA Member Club Presidents, Superintendents, and CDGA Board of Directors. On his own, Dr. Randy Kane sent the letter to non-member courses as well. To no surprise, it has been a brutal summer for Randy, having to consult at a record number of courses. We are really lucky to have the services of Dr. Kane and the CDGA. To extend the support and appreciation of the MAGCS, the Board of Directors voted to make a donation to the CDGA Foundation, this was made possible from your voluntary Research and Development donations to the MAGCS. I hope everyone read the golf turf article in the Chicago Tribune of September 8, 1995. It sympathizes with what Superintendents have gone through this year and maybe it will emphasize to uninformed and unsympathetic golfers that this year was definitely not one to be critical of less than ideal turf conditions. Once again Dr. Kane and Bob Maibusch were involved with the effort to spread the message. Good Job!

Other news with the Midwest; a new name for our newsletter has been chosen. The Editorial committee presented five finalist newsletter names from over a hundred suggestions from our members. Both the Board of Directors and the Editorial Committee were in agreement with the top choice. It is very fitting and amazing that the new name came from the very person who suggested the original name **The Bull Sheet**. Bob Williams submitted the winning suggestion of "On Course" with the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. The MAGCS newsletter will take on its new name, "On Course", and its new cover around the turn of the year. The Editorial Committee has a lot of work remaining to set up all of the details and prepare the newsletter for its new look. "Thank You" again to all of our members who submitted serious and creative name suggestions.

The Editorial Committee will also re-route the name "The Bull Sheet" by replacing what is now "Midwest Breezes". We will most likely bring back the "Bull" figure to this page, enabling us to publish the local "Bull", maintaining an old and honored tradition.

Thanks and congratulations to Bob Williams in helping the MAGCS stay "On Course".

**Joel Purpur, President, MAGCS**



## Directors Column

by Kevin Czerkies

The October M.A.G.C.S. meeting will mark the last golf event that I will serve as chairman of the golf committee. I've enjoyed the last two years as golf chairman, but I've discovered that it is truly a demanding job.

The M.A.G.C.S. runs six golf meetings annually. It is virtually impossible for the golf committee to come up with events that are going to please the entire field. Many members prefer team type events, whereas others prefer to play their own ball.

The pre-registration and pre-payment policy is working quite well, but problems still exist. Many golfers wait until the last week to sign up, thus not only missing the registration deadline, but causing me to make an average of 15 phone calls per golf event. Some of the reasons that I have to make these calls are only three players of the foursome sent their money in, or one guy is signed up with two different groups. Only once that I recall did someone call me to say "hey, I signed up to play with so and so, and now he can't make it." Other problems occur when someone comes up to the registration table to check in and I don't have their name on the list that I received from the M.A.G.C.S. office.

The annual tournament may someday become a 36 hole event for those in the championship flight. The M.A.G.C.S. champion does receive an invitation to participate in the Illinois Open. It is to our advantage to produce the best possible player to represent the Golf Course Superintendents.

It is only fitting that I end my duties as Golf Chairman by hosting the event. It will be the Annual College Championship/2-man scramble on October 12. This event is always lots of fun, however, there may be a misconception that a member has to be a college graduate to participate. This is not true at all. In fact, only half the field last year competed for the College Championship. Prizes are awarded to the 2-man scramble teams. The College Championship winner gets their name on a trophy and bragging rights for a year.

I'm looking forward to October 12 because the last time Sportsmans hosted a meeting was June, 1989. Many improvements have taken place since then. Like most golf courses, this summer has taken its' toll on my turf, but hopefully we'll be in good shape for the outing. Hope to see you there!



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## Organic Fertilizers — A Summer Stress Aid

by Len Conley

Summer fertility has always been a major challenge for turfgrass managers. The challenge is trying to balance the fertility requirement of the turf — with that of managing summer disease pressures. This summer was a testimonial to that fact. It was so bad this year, I heard comments from superintendents — "Don't even bring nitrogen near my golf course!" But, there are new choices.

Over the last 6 years, I have been working with turfgrass universities evaluating the benefits of using animal protein organic fertilizers on golf courses. This type of organic fertilizer is a very slow release all natural product that offers some unique agronomic benefits. These products are hot weather safe and do not promote summer disease pressures. In fact, research has shown that turfgrass fertilized with these products has less overall disease problems.

**What is an animal protein organic fertilizer?** It's a product derived from blood, feather and bone meals. These products when used in your program offers some very unique agronomic benefits. They aid in reducing your overall disease pressure, promotes excellent color & density, and enhances the stress tolerance to the turf. Research at Rutgers and Colorado State University has shown that in combination with certain groups of fungicides, disease control can actually be enhanced. This includes both summer and winter diseases.

**How do these products work in the soil?** These products are high in vitamins and food energy. This food energy is needed to feed the natural micro-organisms found in the soil. This food energy plus vitamin B-12, naturally found in these products, help these micro-organisms to multiply. These micro-organisms break down the product and release the nutrients to the plant. Research at Cornell and at Michigan State has shown that specific micro-organisms in the soil can aid with rooting & plant growth, decrease disease pressure and improve overall turfgrass health.

**How are these products different from other organics?** Products that are manure or sledge based have less food energy to feed this micro-organism complex. Hence, these products lack the consistent results if applied at lower rates. To improve results, higher application rates are used which impacts growth. Or, urea is added but this lessens the natural benefits of the product.

Overall, animal protein organic fertilizers can offer some new agronomic benefits and unique windows of application. For best results, these products can be applied at lower rates during the summer with fungicides for longer effective disease control, after aeration to promote turf recovery and rooting, and in conjunction with snow mold fungicides for enhanced control and spring color.

If after this summer you are looking for some alternatives to help manage the stresses of summer or winter, you may want to give one of these products a try. These products are sold under the trade names of Nature Safe, HHI and Ringer. For specific program ideas, you can contact these companies for their research findings and specific program recommendations.



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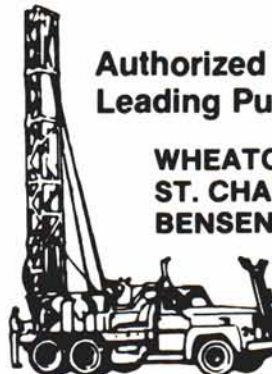
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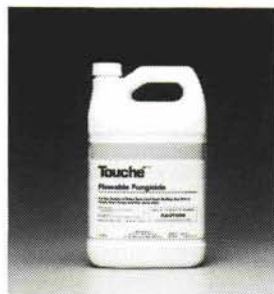
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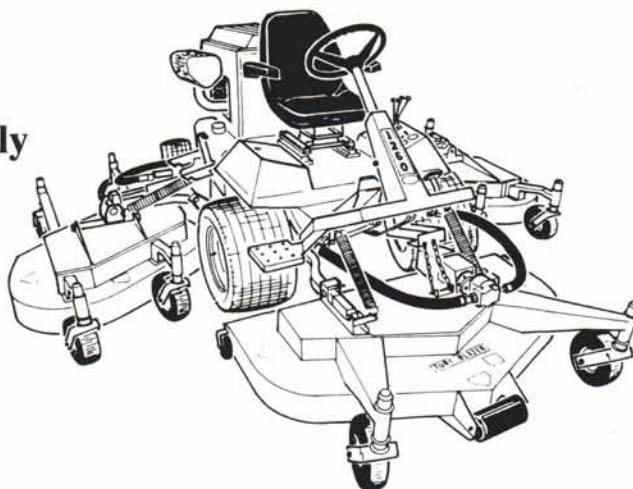
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## Hydraulic Irrigation, What's That?

by Matt Springer

Assistant Superintendent, Sunset Ridge C.C.

Sunset Ridge Country Club uses a hydraulic irrigation system with electromechanical satellites which were installed in 1977. The electromechanical controllers use several knobs, pins and gears. The closest comparison is watering putting greens using a lamp and appliance timer. To control nightly irrigation cycles with this type of controller, you must rely on several timers with up to 15 minutes in time variation. Sunset Ridge's irrigation satellites have eleven stations all with individual time adjustments. Over the years Dennis Wilson, Golf Course Superintendent, has adjusted each station time so they all water as close to the same as possible. If for any reason a water time needs to be changed, to water lightly for example, we must change around 372 water time dials. Another drawback to these controllers is the lack of sprinkler head control. In a single satellite, only one head can be run at a time. On a green with four heads, it would take 40 minutes to complete a 10 minute cycle. An irrigation cycle of 10 minutes on a fairway could take one hour and fifty minutes or longer depending on the size of the fairway. It is possible that when the program has finally reached the last station an applied fertilizer may have burned or a pesticide has dried, becoming ineffective. Hydraulic systems are uncommon in the Chicagoland area, and new hydraulic installations are rare. With hydraulic systems there is no control of pressure at the heads. The farther you get away from the pumping station, the lower the head pressure. Another disadvantage is the length of time it takes for a head to come up or go down. This makes water times difficult to program accurately.

When programming an evening schedule on a hydraulic system, the irrigation program must be set up manually, run times must be carefully calculated and start times set not to overlap and exceed pumping station limitations. This is difficult when you are relying on mechanical timers and slow hydraulic valves.

The Network 8000 computerized irrigation system, one of TORO's newest and most advanced irrigation systems, utilizes double row sprinkler heads and uses an IBM 486 computer as its central controller with satellites of precision solid state design.

With the new solid state electric satellites, total control sprinkler operation is achieved. The Network 8000 satellites have control of up to 32 stations which can control two heads each and run 6 stations simultaneously. This is useful for irrigating fertilizer applications or cooling hot greens in the summer sun. If a green needed a fertilizer watered in for 10 minutes, it would only take ten minutes if you ran all the heads at one time. Allowing a complete green could be watered before an approach shot is hit.

All the controllers have a digital display clock which have the time, day and month. The stations can be individually adjusted from 0 to 900% for perfect watering times. One important point about the precision programming of these satellites is the exact water time of the sta-

(continued page 10)

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(Hydraulic Irrigation continued)

tions. If a station is programmed to run for 5 minutes it will run for 5 minutes at exactly the time you set it to run. An electrically controlled head turns on the instant the electric signal is sent and also have a pressure relating spring which controls pressure and avoids having heads far from the pump house weeping. Electronically controlled heads are easy to run in pairs for shorter cycle times by just combining the wires at the satellite. The heads are also easier to repair and can be turned on and off at the head.

With the newer TORO computerized systems, pump station limitations are preset and the computer will keep you from exceeding them. For example, to water greens and tees for a set time you would set a start time for each and the computer will do the rest. Irrigation programming can also be set up according to plant materials, soil conditions, terrain and superintendent requirements. A computerized irrigation system with electrically controlled sprinkler heads will greatly improve course conditions. During heat stress periods there would be greener rough and less dormant areas. Irrigated roughs would improve rough lies and give you greater mowing variations. Irrigation would be more even, having less wet spots and dry spots.

After using a computerized irrigation system over the past four years, and have come to use Sunset Ridge's hydraulic system, it is hard to believe how little control we actually have with our system.



## **Golf Turf Management Courses Available During the Winter Months**

Harper College in Palatine will be offering Golf Turf Management courses during the winter months.

1) An 8 week course called "Basic Principles of Golf Turf Management". (This course is available in both English and Spanish). This course is a continuing education course tailored for the beginner student. The class will meet on Wednesdays from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. starting November 15, 1995 through January 31, 1996.

2) An 8 week course called "Advanced Principles of Golf Turf Management". (This course is available in both English and Spanish). You need to take "Basic Principles of Golf Turf Mgmt." in order to qualify for the advanced part. (It will qualify as a credit course if both parts are taken). The class will meet on Wednesdays from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. starting February 14, 1996 through April 3, 1996.

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