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FEATURES

FRONT COVER

Your 1999 Board, L to R, Front Row: Secretary/Treasurer Brian Bossert, President Robert Maibusch, Vice President Donald Ferreri. Back Row: President Emeritus Kevin Czerkies, Executive Secretary George Minnis, Director Luke Strojny, Director Dan Anderson, Director Jim McNair; Director Fred Behnke, Director Kevin DeRoo, *On Course* Editor Fred Opperman, Director Greg Thalmann. (Picture taken in the lobby of Medinah C.C.)

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The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGCS), founded December 24, 1926, is a professional organization whose goals include preservation and dissemination of scientific and practical knowledge pertaining to golf turf maintenance.

We endeavor to increase efficiency and economic performance while improving and enhancing the individual and collective prestige of the members.

The MAGCS member is also an environmental steward. We strive to uphold and enhance our surroundings by promoting flora and fauna in every facet in a manner that is beneficial to the general public now and in the future.



Bob Maibusch, CGCS, MG
Hinsdale G.C.

Winter is here, and we can all relax. Right? There is a common misconception that we all kick back and hibernate in the winter months. I'm sure you've all been asked dozens of times, "So, what do you do in the winter?" My standard reply is that we attempt to reduce our work week to approximately 45 hours, if possible. Between administrative duties, educational seminars, equipment maintenance, planning meetings, supervising winter sports, and construction projects (which don't cease with the onset of snow and freezing temperatures), our winter schedules can be nearly as demanding as the summer months.

All of these functions are important to our employers in continuing to improve the facilities that we are given the opportunity to maintain and enhance. They are also important to our personal growth. Being an active participant, especially in educational offerings, strengthens our skills. Many of us will soon be departing for the International Golf Course Conference and Show in Orlando. It is a great opportunity for everyone to enhance their skills through the

education offered. I feel it is just as important for us to have the opportunity to get together with other industry professionals to trade ideas and build networks of knowledge. We don't operate in a vacuum, so the chance to discuss common problems with peers from other regions or countries is always enlightening.

As a side bar, when you talk to superintendents from other regions, please remember that MAGCS member Tommy Witt, CGCS is running for secretary/ treasurer on the GCSAA Board of Directors. Tommy is a well qualified candidate who has worked tirelessly on behalf of this profession. Any help that we can receive from other chapters in getting Tommy elected will be appreciated.

Locally, you may already be aware that we sizably increased our annual donation to the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation. This was done for several reasons. I have felt for a number of years that the MAGCS operating procedure of making a token donation to the ITF and putting the bulk of our available funds into independent research funding was counterproductive. The MAGCS was not in a position to make qualified decisions on what projects would be funded based on scientific procedure. As a result, these decisions were often made in the past based on a personal relationship with the proposer or wide-eyed enthusiasm over what results we hoped to obtain without knowing whether or not we could reproduce those results in the field. We also, admittedly, have not had the best of relationships with the ITF in the past. Without going into detail, the MAGCS felt that there were internal concerns at ITF that needed to be addressed before we could show significant support.

Recently, Randy Wahler, CGCS and Don Cross, CGCS, representing the ITF Board of Directors, met with the MAGCS Board of Directors to discuss the relationship between our two associations and to talk about the changes that have occurred at ITF. The MAGCS board was very impressed by the changes that have been made, particularly in the areas of oversight and accountability. So impressed, in fact, that we have voted to funnel the bulk of our research funding through them. We will, however, honor any existing independent research funding agreements which we currently have. We will also review this relationship on an annual basis to be certain that our membership's donation is being used to its greatest benefit.

Be assured that we are participants in the investigatory process of determining how the research funds will be spent. The ITF has asked for our assistance in this area, and I would encourage any MAGCS member who is interested in participating on an ITF research review committee to contact Randy Wahler to inquire about the availability of openings. Your participation will strengthen our position.

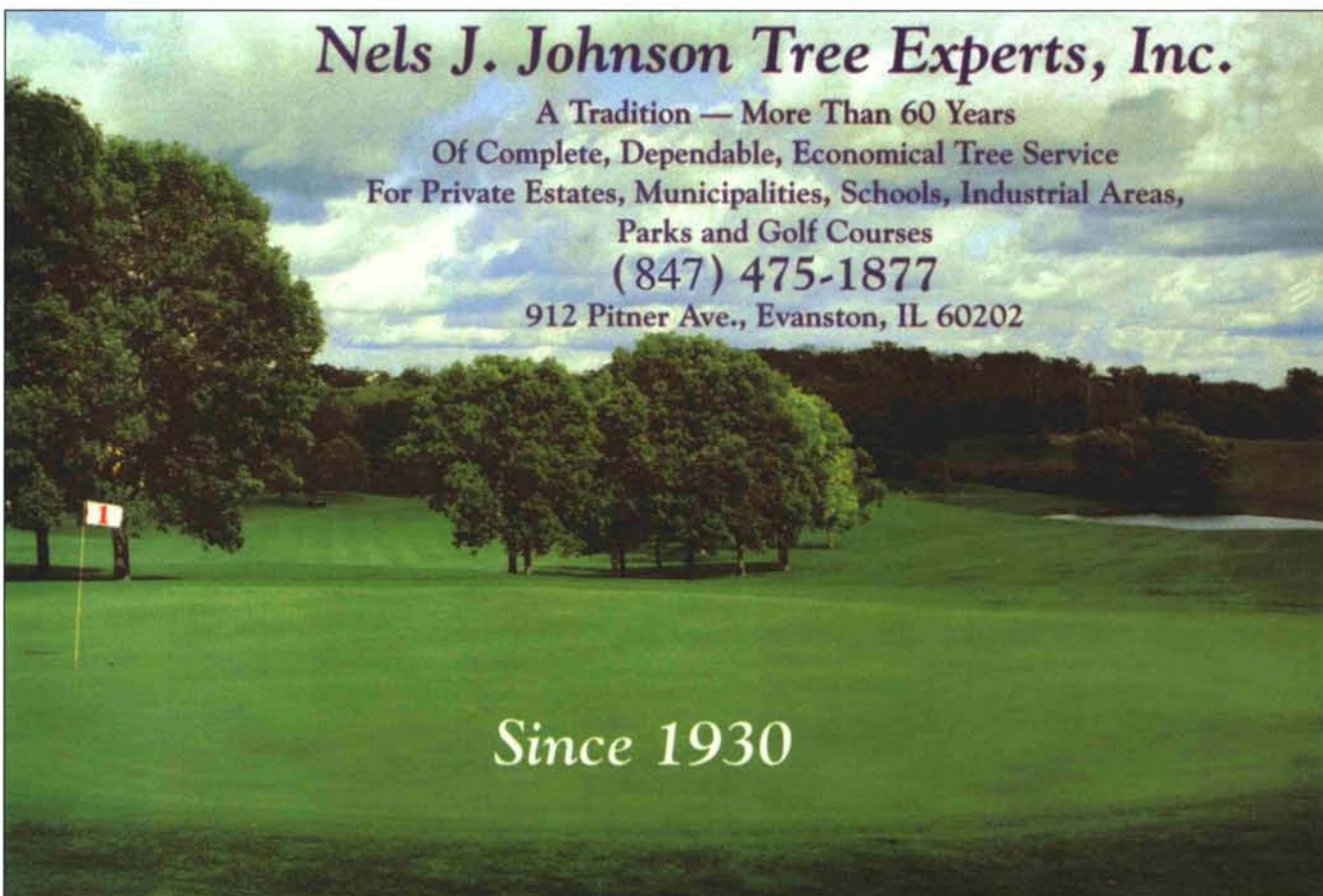
I hope to see you in Orlando. While there, don't forget to thank Brian Bossert and all of our commercial member supporters for what I'm sure will be another spectacular MAGCS hospitality room.

Bob Maibusch, CGCS, MG
President, MAGCS



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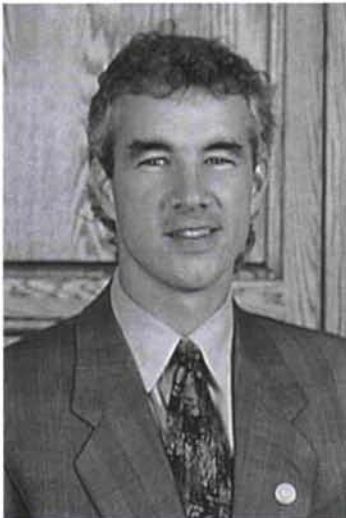
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Brian A. Bossert, CGCS
Bryn Mawr C.C.

You'll be reading this in early January, and I hope the weather has caught up with the calendar by then. Today is November 30, and the little bit of rain we had overnight and this morning actually has the grass greening up. How about that warm Thanksgiving weekend? We had 80 golfers on Saturday, more than we can generally expect all month. Sometimes the season just doesn't seem to end. After a long season such as this one (remember the spring—probably three weeks ahead of the norm), a superintendent can feel a bit whipped.


I am not sure where I'm heading with all this, but I hope everyone had an enjoyable Christmas and has found some time to relax and get away from their jobs. At Bryn Mawr, we had a new irrigation system installed this fall and major earth moving and rebunkering done on several holes. It was the busiest fall of my young career, and after spending most of the Thanksgiving weekend numbering controller stations with Jim Reed (no offense, Jim), I'm certainly looking forward to a well-deserved break.

A superintendent's responsibilities are increasing in the '90s. Not that they ever were minimal, but the business is becoming so advanced technically that it is difficult to keep up. I think the managerial responsibilities involved in directing large staffs and budgets, the environmental and safety considerations and documentation required therein, and the salesmanship required to pull off the job make this one of the most challenging careers going. I guess I never feel like I'm quite on top of it all. It makes me realize how important a well-trained staff is, because it certainly can't be a one-person show. Like I said, I'm not sure where I was heading with that, but I just hope everyone has an opportunity to get away from it all during the off-season. Enough is enough sometimes, and we just have to be content with doing the best we can.

I'm glad I have the opportunity to get away from the workplace occasionally and attend MAGCS functions. It is a nice break from the routine, and I especially enjoy attending the board meetings. I'll miss Ed Braunsky's sense of humor, but there's plenty more where that came from in the group. It is always interesting to hear how things are going at other golf courses. It is also very enlightening to hear other perspectives on the challenges and opportunities facing our industry these days. I will be assuming the secretary-treasurer position this year and look forward to it. It is nice to be a part of an organization that provides such a solid service to its members and strives to do such a good job. Having served behind the scenes for awhile now, I can proudly proclaim that to be very true.

In addition, I'll be coordinating the hospitality room at the GCSAA conference again this year. Hopefully, you will join us at the Omni Rosen Hotel in Orlando on February 11 and 12. Talk about getting away from it all; it doesn't get any better than this. As usual, vendor support has been terrific. See you there!

I hope our web site will be a complete reality by the time you read this. George Minnis and Fred Opperman have helped me a bit with the finishing touches; I hope everyone enjoys the end result. In fact, I'm sure there will be some improvements that can be made, and your input is welcome.

In closing, I appreciate the opportunity to serve this association and work closely with such a good group of superintendents. Recharge those batteries this winter, prosper in 1999 and we'll see you in Orlando! 

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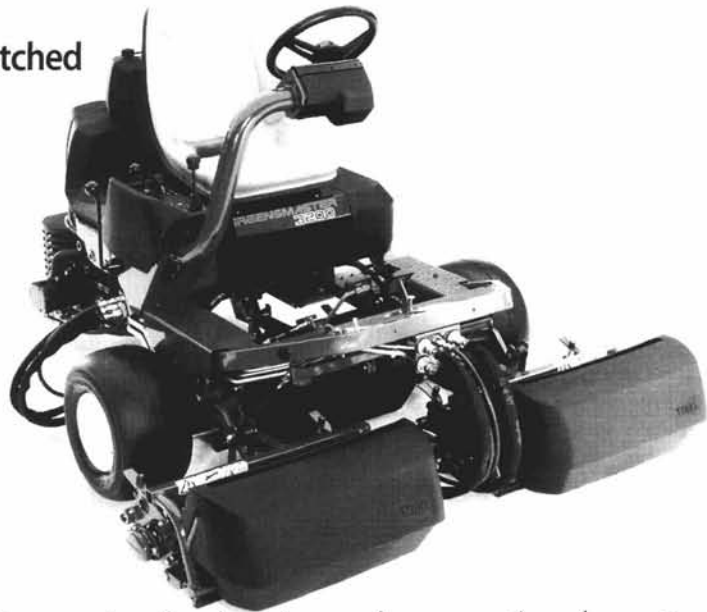
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A Baker's Dozen From an Evaluation of Native Midwestern Plants for Use in the Golf Course Landscape

Tom Voight
 Extension Turfgrass Specialist
 University of Illinois
 Urbana-Champaign, IL

The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, and the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation have funded a three-year study to evaluate the suitability of 56 native plants in unmowed, out-of-play portions of three Chicago-area golf courses. My thanks go out to Scott Witte of Cantigny Golf Club, Dave Ward of Olympia Fields Country Club, and Don Cross of Skokie Country Club for allowing me to conduct this work at their facilities. Following two seasons of evaluation, here are 13 great natives to try at your course:

Full Sun



Side-oats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)

This warm season grass produces dull, blue-green, 15-inch high foliage and is topped in late summer with one-sided seed heads. Particularly tolerant of drier sites, use this grass in masses in areas close to golfers' view. In this area, it is found in hill prairies and sandy hills and roadsides.



Rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*)

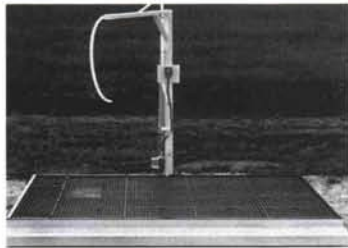
Upright, narrow, yucca-like foliage grows below the silver-white, prickly, globe-shaped flowers that are borne in July and August. Growing to 5 feet, it occurs in prairie remnants.



False sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*)

This 5-foot-tall member of the aster family produces deep golden-yellow disk and ray flowers that occur singly or in clusters throughout July and August. In the Chicago area, it is found in disturbed prairie remnants and at the edge of woodlands.

(continued on page 30)



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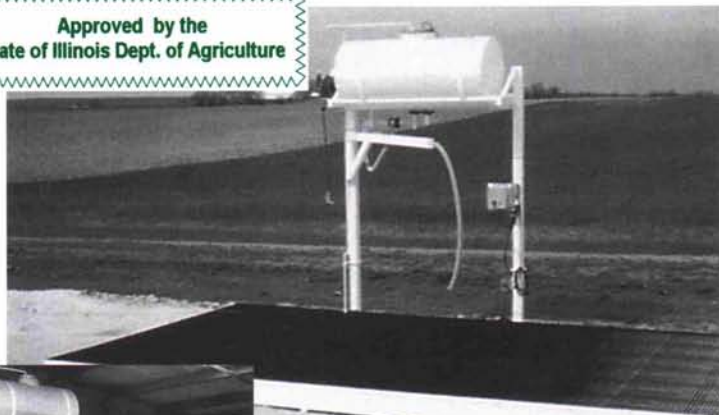
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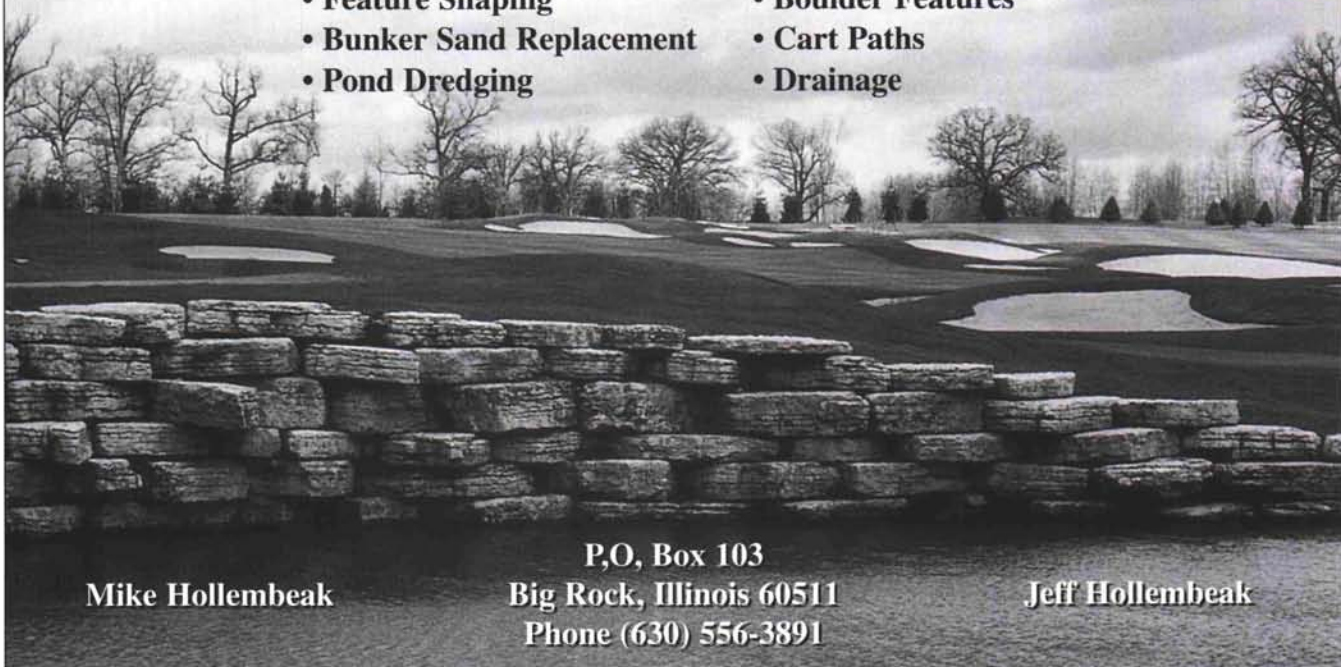
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LUST: Leaky Underground Storage Tank

Tim Anderson
Prestwick C.C.

The dictionary defines lust as: "a sexual craving, especially excessive or unrestrained. Any overwhelming desire or craving. Pleasure; delight; relish. To have an inordinate or obsessive desire, especially a sexual desire."

Unfortunately, in our industry, the term LUST has taken on a very different meaning. For many of us, LUST brings to mind the large gaping hole in the ground where our fuel tank once lived and the endless maze of EPA rules and regulations which are associated with it. Yes, as strange as it seems, the EPA has turned a work which is defined as "pleasure" or "delight" into an acronym that brings to mind fear and uncertainty.

If you are fortunate enough to work at a course that has updated tanks, then please don't waste your time reading this article. Instead, spend time with your family and friends, and enjoy the winter. If your course has already found its way through the great EPA maze and has received a closure letter on a LUST site, then I recommend that you have it framed and hang it on the wall next to your diploma and other certificates. As for me, I have come to realize that my quest for a coveted closure letter on the LUST site at Prestwick will take longer, cost more, and be more difficult to achieve than my certificate in turfgrass management.

I began researching the fuel tank issue at Prestwick in January

1997. It quickly became clear that the existing tank would not be in compliance with the regulations that go into effect December 1998. It was also determined that the existing tank was within the setback zone of a municipal well. This complicated everything. The IEPA classifies sites into three categories: No further action, low priority, and high priority. If a

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LUST site is located within the setback zone of a potable water supply well, then it is automatically classified as a high-priority site.

We decided to remove our old tank and switch to an above-ground tank which would be located outside the well setback zone. We figured that the best case scenario would be no contamination around the old tank (FAT CHANCE), and the worst case scenario would be that contamination would be found in the soil and ground water.

The new above ground tank was set up, permitted and operational by June 1997. We had no problems getting the new tank permitted. We decided to go with a vaulted tank made by Fuel Vault. By July 1997, all of our permits were in place, and we were ready to remove the old tank. During the tank removal, a representative from the States Fire Marshal Office was on hand. When the fire marshal walked over to check the excavation, we were right in the middle of pumping raw fuel out of the bottom of the hole. At this point, declaring that a release had occurred at the site was pretty much a no-brainer, and our best-case scenario of no contamination was no longer a reality.

We still had hope. Along with the removal of the tank, we planned to excavate the backfill material around the tank (approximately 75 cubic yards). Once the backfill was removed, maybe we would be back into clean soil. We removed the backfill around the tank plus a couple of extra truck loads. Soil samples were taken, but things didn't look promising. A handheld field monitor still showed high readings. The hole was lined with plastic and back-filled with clean stone. The lab results were not good. BETEX test on the soil samples revealed that all four walls of the excavation and the floor showed significant levels of contamination. It was official; Prestwick was going to be high-priority LUST site.

At this point, we reexamined all of our options. We decided to switch engineering firms. The firm

(continued on page 10)

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(continued from page 8)

which handled the tank removal and 20/45 day reports had done a good job, but they didn't have much experience handling high-priority sites. We switched to Huff and Huff Environmental Consultants out of LaGrange. Huff and Huff had a history of dealing with high-priority sites. They also had experience with sites that are located within well setback zones. Huff and Huff developed a site classification work plan and submitted it to the IEPA. Once the IEPA approved the plan, the site classification work plan was executed. The work plan included a series of soil borings and the installation of groundwater monitoring wells. The borings were used to determine the types of soils present at the site and the extent of the contaminated area. The monitoring wells were used to collect groundwater samples.

When the site investigation work was completed, a site classification completion report was submitted to the IEPA. In this report, Prestwick formally declared itself a high-priority LUST site. As soon as we had pulled the old tank and saw that there was fuel in the bottom of the hole, we knew Prestwick would be a high-priority site. So why go through the soil borings and well borings that left the asphalt around the maintenance building looking like Swiss cheese? Because the information gained during the site investigation was used to develop a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

The CAP outlined to the IEPA what steps we would take to correct the LUST site. If the IEPA approved the CAP, then the corrective action work would be implemented. Once the work was completed, a corrective action completion report was submitted to the IEPA. If the IEPA

approved the completion report, then they would issue the coveted "no further action" letter.

Once the IEPA approved the plan, the site classification work plan was executed. The work plan included a series of soil borings and the installation of groundwater monitoring wells.

So where are we so far? Our site investigation revealed a contaminated area of approximately 2,500 cubic yards. Fifty percent

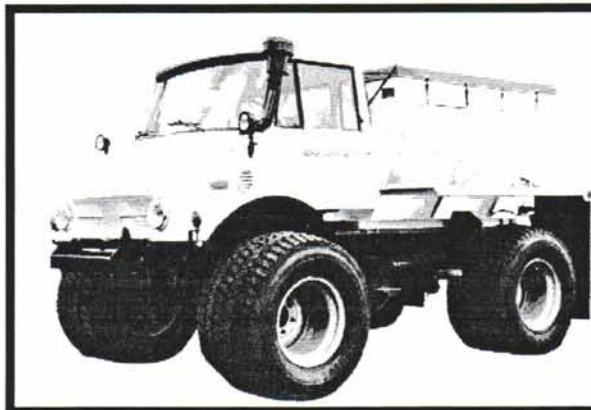
of this area was located underneath the maintenance building. All of the groundwater samples tested clean. (This was the only good news we had had so far.) Huff and Huff submitted a CAP to the IEPA. The CAP used computer modeling to show that given the soil types present at our site and even if the contamination did migrate, by the time it reached the well, it would be nondetectable. The CAP also provided past documentation of yearly water quality tests performed on the municipal well by the village.

None of these tests had shown any signs of contaminants. Our plan was to monitor the groundwater wells for a period that the IEPA determined was acceptable (most likely three years). We also agreed to keep an "engineered barrier" over the contaminated area to avoid contact with the contaminated soil.

(continued on page 22)

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