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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.

Beating plowshares into swords. You may have heard this expression, but what does it mean? As I interpret it, it refers to transforming a tool into a weapon. We have all seen demonstrations of this in our careers. Probably the best example is the stimpmeter. Originally developed as a tool to assist professionals in evaluating the quality of a small portion of their putting surfaces, the stimpmeter has often been used as a weapon to castigate the golf course superintendent's performance and castrate his positive attitude. It is an important quality control tool, but it should not be the only gauge by which quality is judged, and it certainly does not measure a green's health. Using only the stimpmeter to gauge the health of the greens would be like a doctor using only a thermometer to diagnose his patient. Just because a person has a normal temperature does not mean that the bullet that just passed through his heart will not kill him.

I am not really sure when the stimpmeter's transition from tool to weapon occurred, but it is obvious that without a major shift in mindset, the pendulum will not swing back. For those people maintaining diversified bent/poa mixtures on

older, classic push-up greens, it is becoming increasingly difficult to compete with the golf courses that have the advantages of modern construction and improved bent-grass varieties.

I do have one suggestion. I would love to see the USGA host a U.S. Open championship where the greens stimped 8.5. The USGA has been very supportive of golf course superintendents, and has repeatedly through its regional agronomists supported the notion that speed is not the only factor to consider in determining green quality. In fact, pursuit of green speed above all else can be a detriment to the game by increasing maintenance costs and reducing usable green space. Moreover, fast greens increase the time for the average golfer to play. It would be refreshing to see this assertion that speed is not everything in practice under a global spotlight. I am not holding out much hope, however, because I realize our national championship should be a severe test of golf skills. I also do not think that any of us would want to be the first golf course superintendent to host a U.S. Open on "slow" greens. However, more could be done to educate the public during the U.S. Open telecast on why greens cannot be maintained in this fashion for extended periods of time.

Another example of a tool turning into a weapon, in some people's estimation, is the assistant superintendent's position. While it may be crass to refer to an assistant as a tool, assistants can in fact be one of the most effective tools we use as managers. If properly trained and motivated, they can relieve many of our day-to-day burdens and allow us to concentrate on the activities that have become increasingly important to our professional survival, such as taking the time to interact with members or patrons,

dealing with regulatory issues, and project planning and implementation. Managed improperly though, assistants have the potential to signal our demise.

I have often heard grumbling about assistants who have undermined the authority of the golf course superintendents for whom they work, ultimately resulting in a superintendent being replaced by an assistant. More commonly, the complaint is that an assistant took a superintendent's job for less money than what the area's average salary is.

There is no defense for a person who would aggressively campaign for another superintendent's job. This is clearly a violation of our code of ethics, and should be dealt with accordingly. On the other hand, someone who takes a job for less money than what we may think it is worth is not necessarily doing anything unethical. In fact, what may need to be examined here is the way that facilities take advantage of their assistants. I remember when I was hired as an assistant and it was explained to me that in an assistant's position, I should expect to get "dumped on." Difficult tasks, long hours and low pay are commonplace. It was understood that this was a standard practice in the industry, and that it would ultimately prepare me for the next step up to a superintendent's position. That was fine 20 years ago when there was a legitimate possibility that within three to four years I could have a superintendent's job. That is no longer the case. Because of the intense competition for every position, recent college graduates are often forced to take irrigation technician, spray technician or second assistant positions for months or years prior to their first assistant's position. The quest for a superintendent's position can take many years.

*(continued on page 28)*



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Jim McNair, CGCS

For the past year-and-a-half, I have had the opportunity to head the Public Relations (PR) and Long-Range Planning (LRP) committees. In my column last year, I outlined the operations of the PR Committee. This year, I will give some insight into the workings of the LRP Committee.

During 1998, the MAGCS completely revised its long-range plan. We perform this update from time to time in order to delete accomplished objectives and add new ideas to the plan. The long-range plan basically gives direction to the Association. The LRP Committee is not so much involved with triggering the ideas as with researching the feasibility and publicizing and implementing them through the appropriate committees. We don't have a crystal ball, but merely listen to the Board of Directors, Past Presidents Council and the membership. Some of the improvements to the MAGCS that are the legacy of prior long-range plans include the change from the Bull Sheet to *On Course*, the new directory format, the Environmental Committee, and the ability to pay for meetings by

credit card. I would like to bring you up to date with another issue that we are facing.

Recently, the MAGCS received an offer from the CDGA to participate in the occupancy of a proposed "Illinois Golf House." The CDGA plans to build this facility at Cog Hill G.C. during the next several years. It is their desire that this facility will house all of the major golf-related associ-

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---

ations under one roof. We have been asked if we are interested in sharing office space with these other associations. We are pleased that the CDGA has included us in their planning, but we have to look at the present and future needs of our membership before we agree to any long-term commitments.

Our association is growing at a steady rate. The day-to-day operations of the MAGCS are growing as well. The business end of running this association is constantly generating more paperwork. Last year's Annual

Report was 55 pages summarizing the business of the MAGCS. My point is that maybe the time is right to pursue this opportunity for office space. I want to be clear, though, about the usage of this space. I don't envision moving George Minnis to Lemont. George has a very efficient office setup in his home. It would be counterproductive to move George's operation. This new office at Cog Hill would be staffed by a clerical person (maybe shared with one of the other golf associations). Our membership would gain a live voice at the other end of the phone to answer questions, direct calls to the proper person and to give information. This person could also perform some of the basic clerical duties and book-keeping currently done by the officers of the MAGCS. Initially, this may take place during limited hours each week, but at least the membership would be able to talk to someone during office hours and not have to play "phone tag."

I'm using this forum to bring this opportunity before the membership to get some feedback from you. We don't have an answer yet as to the anticipated date of completion of the CDGA facility: probably several years. We don't know how significant the cost of this space will be or even if there will be any cost at all. Until we have a better idea of how many other golf-related associations may be involved, we won't know of the possibilities to share staff. But, we do have an opportunity here that we need to examine. Think about where you expect this Association to be in the next few years, and then let us know. We are accessible by phone, fax or e-mail. We look forward to hearing from you. 

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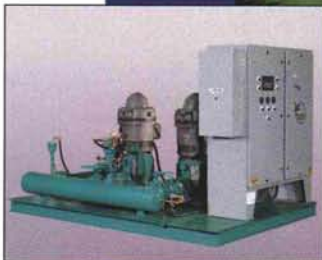


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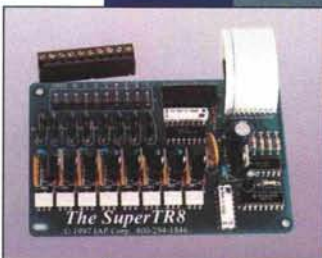
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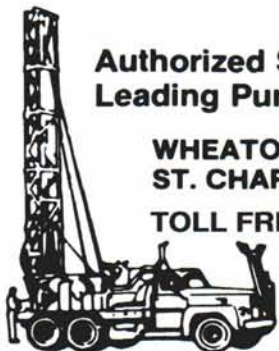
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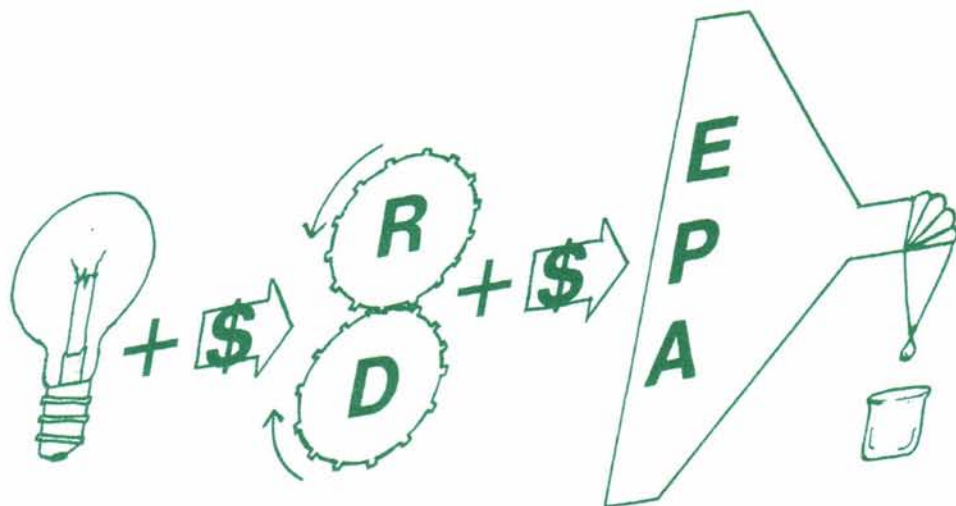
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# The Process Behind Good Chemistry

*Jim Shone and Mike Tysowski  
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*(continued on page 10)*



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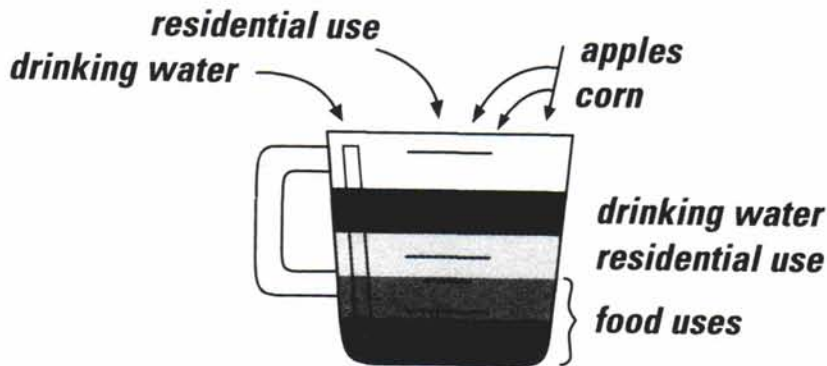


**The Process Behind Good Chemistry**

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legislation? To understand the answers to these questions, we first must look at the societal, safety, environmental and economic circumstances that influence the decision to bring or keep a particular type of product on the market.

Pesticide manufacturers are constantly searching for newer, more effective and safer products. In an effort to find potential agricultural or horticultural products, the industry intensively screens hundreds of thousands of molecules each year. Even with the intensive screening process, fewer than one in 20,000 products developed makes it to the market.<sup>2</sup> Although rumor has it that some products are discovered by "accident," today's competitive environment requires the use of high-tech screening processes that do not allow for mistakes. Upon discovering a potential product, the manufacturer must first satisfy a slate of conditions set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and next justify the economic feasibility of the potential product. The EPA conditions are valid safeguards that protect us, not only as handlers and applica-



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tors of products, but also as members of the general public. More importantly, the safeguards give the assurance that someone is watching our interests as family guardians.

Human safety issues are at the top of the list when a product undergoes consideration for registration. Potential human exposure is determined and then evaluated through a procedure called a "risk cup" analysis.

Testing produces an average daily intake, or ADI, for each specific outlet or crop proposed for a product. Think of the ADI, or safe potential exposure, for each outlet

or crop as filling the risk cup. When the risk cup becomes full of ADI points, the manufacturer can no longer seek registrations for the product on further application outlets.

The nation's food and pesticide regulations have become even more protective with the passage of the FQPA in 1996. Think of the risk cup again. This "cup" contains the amount of pesticide residue that a person can be exposed to daily without affecting health. The risk cup must make room not only for residues on food, but also from residues found

*(continued on page 20)*



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