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The first hole at Blackstone is a short par 4, 352 from the tips and tests the straight shot right out of the gate as pictured from the green.

#### FRONT COVER

The clubhouse over looks the 18th green at Blackstone Golf Club. Aim at the hole on your approach otherwise you might find yourself in a pinch on this horseshoe shaped green.  
Photo credit: Luke Cella

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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.

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ON COURSE WITH THE PRESIDENT  
Bob Kohlstedt, Fox Bend Golf Course



# Here We Go

*Ready or not, we start another season of mayhem. I hope everyone found some time during the shortened "off-season" to recharge and spend some quality time with family. My wife and I used the GIS to escape the kids for a few days and spend some time as a couple, which is rare for us. As our children approach the high school years their activities seem to double. These activities take time, and we have to become good managers of our priorities. The winter months allow us more freedom with time, but as the season starts, the pressure builds. Sometimes hard decisions need to be made, and family functions get shortened or skipped. I believe this is the evil side of our profession. It is easy to get sucked in. We pour our hearts and souls into our little slice of the earth, and it consumes us. I challenge myself every season to try not to forget to set aside time for family and friends. Equally important is to make time to take care of yourself and your well-being. Play more golf, go to more games (Go White Sox!), or take a long weekend. Don't regret not having a life off the course.*

The business of turf management has definitely changed over the years. I must be getting to be a grumpy old man, but it seems to me that greens keeping was more fun when I was younger. Not that I don't enjoy my chosen profession, but it's frustrating being asked to do the same, or more, with less money and manpower. Thanks to the wonderful state of this economy, there's no relief within reach. Still I am amazed what my staff can get done in a shortened day, with old equipment, and at the same wages as last season. For that I am very grateful.

We all know about learning from past experience and applying the lessons to current challenges. Extremes are not what any of us want to deal with, but after two decades of turf management it's inevitable that we will experience similar conditions again someday. Be proactive. Don't add any unnecessary stress to the turf during the "100 day war," because a shaggy green is easier to restore than a brown one. Concessions need to be made in dealing with smaller budgets. The demand for tournament conditions during extremes is unrealistic. As professional turf managers we need to be able to communicate this to the golfers so there is some understanding.

I often make the mistake during difficult growing conditions to think I'm the only one that's struggling. When soil temps wander above 95 degrees on 75% poa greens, the last thing you want to hear is a golfer telling

you that your neighboring course isn't having any trouble. That's what they want you to believe. You know it's not true. That's the time to reach out and talk with peers. Misery loves company. I have had some of the best conversations at MAGCS monthly meetings. This is one reason to attend the meetings and share experiences (and a cold one) with others who are willing to help.

The Midwest is here to help the membership spend a little time away from the pressures of the job. Blackstone Golf club will be hosting the next MAGCS event on June 19th. You should plan on bringing your assistant and competing for the Dom Grotti Championship. Assistants deserve a chance to recharge as well. Too busy? How about bringing the family out to the Kane County Cougars game on July 14th? This is a great opportunity to spend some of the above-mentioned quality time with friends and family. What about a long weekend with buddies north of the border wrapping up at Big Foot Country Club on September 24th? Then it's time to call an alum and compete for your alma mater at Calumet Country Club on October 22nd. The strength of this chapter comes from its membership. After attending other local and national events, it's easy to see that the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents is one of the best.

So, here we go! I hope we all have the perfect season and that we all take care of ourselves, because nobody else will. **-OC**





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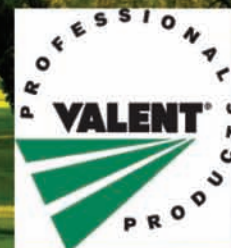


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## FEATURE

Todd Kerry, *Water Well Solutions*

# Mercury and Water Don't Mix

## Illinois Law Bans the Sale of Mercury Seals for Well Pump Applications Due to Environmental Concerns

*Mercury is a very toxic element that can cause severe neurological health problems. Mercury can enter the human body through inhalation, ingestion, and skin absorption. Over the years there has been a growing concern with the use of mercury. Many environmentalists believe that the use of mercury in everyday products may have contributed to cardiovascular disease, autism, seizures, mental retardation, hyperactivity, dyslexia and many other conditions. Many states have enacted legislation that has reduced or eliminated the amount of mercury that a product can contain.*

Recently, in the interest of public safety, the Governor of Illinois signed new legislation (SB 1213), which was approved by the Illinois House of Representatives and the State Senate, banning the sale and distribution of "mercury seals" for water well pumping equipment. Due to the environmental and public health concerns, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), Division of Pollution Protection, decided to add submersible motors to the mercury ban list after several mercury spills were reported throughout the country.

The mercury ban in the new law prevents the installation of a mercury seal commonly found in the Flowserve Corporation, Byron Jackson, Type "H" Submersible motor, which has been installed in many water wells throughout the State of Illinois. The Byron Jackson motors are unique as they are the only submersible motor manufacturer to offer a mercury seal option in a submersible motor. This design utilized mercury's unique characteristics to create a seal around the rotating shaft. This inhibits the intrusion of well water into the oil-filled electric motor housing, preventing a catastrophic motor failure. The Type "H" motors have 8.25 to 17.25 pounds of mercury located within the seal. Seals on a standard water-filled motor are not as critical. Well water can enter a water-filled motor without risk of immediate motor failure, unlike an oil-filled motor.

The mercury ban goes into effect on July 1, 2012. After that, owners of water systems will be required to install alternative seals, such as the industry standard mechanical seal found in all other submersible motors. According to the IEPA, owners will no longer be allowed to purchase, repair, or re-install the type "H" motor with a mercury seal. According to the law, if a submersible motor is pulled for servicing, the seal cannot be altered or repaired. If repairs to the motor are necessary, the IEPA will require that the mercury seal be replaced. In response to this new legislation, the Flowserve Corporation has decided to discontinue production and repairs to the

Type "H" motor with mercury seals as of July, 2012. They will make conversion to a double mechanical seal mandatory.

Owners will not be required to pull existing pumping equipment in order to become compliant. Owners of water systems will be required to become compliant with the law only when installing new systems or when repairs become necessary. There are several options available for compliance with the new law once a system requires repairs. When the pumping equipment is removed from the well for service, the Byron Jackson Type "H" motor can be retrofitted with a double mechanical seal. Another option is to adapt the pump to a water-filled, submersible motor with a standard mechanical seal, which is often seen as more environmentally friendly. Water-filled motors have been around for decades. Due to their reliability and availability, they are the most commonly used submersible motors in the world. They account for over 90% of all motors installed.

There are some important considerations when determining whether to convert the Byron Jackson to a double mechanical seal or to replace the motor altogether. When evaluating the cost of conversion of the Byron Jackson or replacement with a new water-filled motor, the prices are comparable. The choice of repairing the old motor or replacing it with new becomes compelling once you factor in the turnaround time for repairing and converting the Byron Jackson motor, which can be between 7 and 16 weeks. Typically, water-filled motors are readily available for immediate installation.

Our goal is to assure that all water operators are fully informed of the impact of this new law and to provide assistance in developing cost-effective solutions for achieving compliance. How do you know if you'll be affected by this legislation? Questions on the new law can be directed to Becky Jayne with the IEPA. You may also contact us directly. A simple site visit by a qualified service technician can help determine the law's effect on you. **-OC**

SUPER -N- SITE

Travis Dykstra, *St. Charles Country Club*

## Andy Perry -N- Blackstone Golf Club



*Blackstone Golf Club (BGC) is an upscale, 18-hole, public golf facility located just outside Marengo, Illinois, on 172 acres of rolling terrain. It is owned and operated by Dan Weck. Construction began in 2005 and the course opened in 2006, under the architectural lead of Bob Lohmann. BGC offers a full practice range, as well as a full bar and fine dining options, all located in its newly-constructed clubhouse. What makes Blackstone unique is that each hole is very different from the next. Not only does it have a great mix of wooded holes that protect you from the wind, but it also has many holes that are out in the open, which challenges the golfer's ability to hit every shot. This makes turf management challenging because of the different microclimates. At least this is what my good friend, and BGC course superintendent, Andy Perry, tells me.*

Andy has been at Blackstone Golf Club since February of this year. He took over for Nick Leu, when Nick moved to Superintendent at Omaha Field Club, located in Omaha, Nebraska. Oddly enough, Andy and Nick are high school friends who grew up in Ottumwa, Iowa. Andy says, "My transition to BGC has been very smooth because Nick was doing an outstanding job and was very organized."

Andy developed a passion for the golf course at a very young age because his father was a course superintendent back in Iowa.

"He was always bringing me to the golf course to hit balls or ride on the course with him," says Andy. Andy started working at Ottumwa Country Club, for Gary Twedt, while he was still in high school. After graduation he went on to Iowa State University where he earned his degree in Horticulture with an emphasis in Turfgrass Management. During his tenure at ISU, he worked at Veenker Memorial Golf Course, under the supervision of John Newton. During the summer of 2003, Andy participated in an internship program at the Seaview Resort, in Absecon, New Jersey. In the summer of 2004,



*Andy and wife Sara.*

Andy came to the Chicagoland area and interned for Ron McCarthy at Edgewood Valley Golf Club in LaGrange. After graduating from ISU in May 2005, his passion for golf and the Chicagoland area brought him back. He landed his first Assistant position at Cress Creek Country Club, in Naperville, working for Bill Kennedy. After spending five years at Cress Creek, he worked for Dave Biery at Black Sheep Golf Club in Sugar Grove for the past two seasons.

Most superintendents would agree with Andy that the most challenging aspect of course maintenance is dealing with the ever-changing "Mother Nature."

However, Andy says, "Each day is different than the last, and there is always something new going on. The job always keeps you on your feet, and there is never a dull moment." Currently, Andy and the BGC crew are working on removing a large hump in the practice green and leveling it out. They will be expanding it to allow for more cup area, permitting them to disperse foot traffic a little more. Additionally, they also plan to continue re-sodding collars that have been contaminated with bluegrass.

*(continued on page 9)*







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His favorite piece of equipment at BGC thus far is a Toro Greensmaster 3300 Tri-flex that was purchased last year. It has 14 blade reels. This piece of equipment allows Andy to allocate man hours elsewhere on the golf course without sacrificing quality of cut.

Andy told me that even though his father is no longer a golf course superintendent he is someone he has always looked up to and calls often for advice. He also has tremendous respect for the above-mentioned men who have been instrumental in his development from assistant superintendent to superintendent.

Outside of work, Andy and his wife, Sara, live in Aurora with their dog, Chloe, and George the cat. In his off hours he enjoys spending time with Sara, golfing, exercising, following sports, going to concerts and spending time with family and friends. Most importantly, he enjoys cheering for the Iowa State Cyclones and the Detroit Lions.

I am truly honored to say that Andy is one of my good friends. Therefore on behalf of me and MAGCS, a big "Thank You" goes out to Andy, Dan, and the rest of Blackstone Golf Club crew for their generosity and dedication in preparing for the June Meeting. **-OC**



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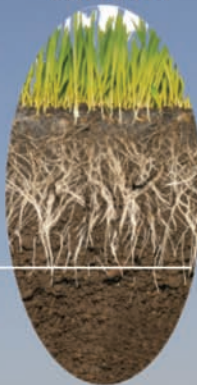




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