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Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*

New Normal Every Morning

This season has been another “head scratcher.” After the three previous growing seasons being unusually hot, 2013 has been relatively cool and sometimes very wet. Temperatures and precipitation frequency have made it ideal to grow grass, and it has been an “easy” year thus far.

MAGCS Members have had to “wheel and deal” to try to figure out what, where, when and how to get all of the maintenance tasks completed between rain drops. Throw in a few “curve ball” storms and the year has been a doozy. It seems the definition of normal changes each day and MAGCS Members do what they usually do; (do we have a choice?) plan for the worst and hope for the best.

Jim Canning, White Eagle Golf Club: “I was very disappointed in our seed head suppression control. We went early and made three applications of ethephon and trinpac-ethyl. It was unsuccessful. I am thinking of switching to Embark next year.”

Scott Kuebel, Tyler Enterprises: “The pre-emergent season seemed to be later than last year and seemed to go on longer. April was very busy. March was pretty slow compared to 2012. Customers have been asking about the ineffectiveness of the seed head suppression applications.”

Tim White, Prestwick Country Club: “Everything seems to be off schedule; (with regards to timing of sprays) we’ve had to constantly make adjustments.”

Rusty Stachlewitz, ProGro Solutions: “It’s been difficult to have the right products available at the right time because weather patterns have not been typical.”

John Gurke, Aurora Country Club: “I’ve never seen more grass clumps in the rough that need blowing and dispersing more than this year.”

Jeff Pozen, Downers Grove Golf Club: “Our course was closed for three days after the big flood. Our pump house

had three feet of water in it. The entire VFD panel melted and replacement time was going to be 8-10 weeks. Chris Plumb from Absolute Service found some spare parts and had us back on line much sooner than projected. For a while, we had to hand water greens with a sprayer. We have flooded before, but never that high.”

Kevin Carlson, Springbrook Golf Course: “It was hard to try to keep up with the mowing with all of the rain days and water logged turf.”

Easy year....I don’t think so. Nobody mentioned all of the bunker wash outs that are incredibly labor intensive to pump out water, remove silt deposits, push wet sand back up the faces and add new sand as needed. I bet a few courses had to do that. Oh yeah, and because everything is growing so well the weeds in the landscape beds have been an added chore to manage. Courses that had capital project work that required earth moving and shaping have been delayed by saturated soil conditions. And of course if it’s raining or the forecast is for rain, the golfers have not been playing.

Ok, so there are always some positives in a glass half filled world. The flowering trees and perennials have been stupendous. We haven’t had to run much water through the irrigation systems, so we’ve saved some electric power expenses and some very valuable fresh water (remember the drought). There has been to date, minimal disease pressure. Knock, knock.

Party on Wayne. @

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