



Scenes of winter in New England? How about late winter early-early spring in Orlando. Granted these photos of Disney's Osprey Ridge GC were taken in March 1992, but frosts are a reality to be dealt with every year. Photo by Joel Jackson

GCSAA Web note

Visit the "For Your Golfers" section for information you can post on your bulletin board on frost delays.

I make sure that I or someone from my staff is around the clubhouse to keep an eye on the golfers and to address any questions that may be asked about the delay. I also make it a point to inform the pro shop staff as to why we have a delay and also point out the damage that can be

done. Golfers are always going to be impatient. The best thing to do is to be there to teach them why certain situations happen. I have found the more golfers know about maintenance, the more they appreciate the conditions they are given and the more tolerant they are when conditions aren't that great.

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Using water-soluble material to create a dry environment for pvc cement
Forget the Bread

By Dale Walters, CGCS

Every once in awhile we all have an epiphany. A light bulb moment. A slap on the forehead - why didn't I think of this idea sooner? An idea that we feel might be original, brilliant, astounding, revolutionizing and ultimately really useful to our industry and to others.

I recently had such a thought. In July I had a 3-inch pipe line that was leaking at a tee fitting. After valving off the area, I cut the pipe and waited for the line to drain, and I waited, pulled some weeds, waited, wrote a To-Do list, waited, then I used a sump pump to remove the draining water flow. The drainage flow continued into a second day. I wanted to use pipe cleaner and pvc cement for the replacement fittings. But with the continuous flow I had to wait until it ceased to make a dry repair.

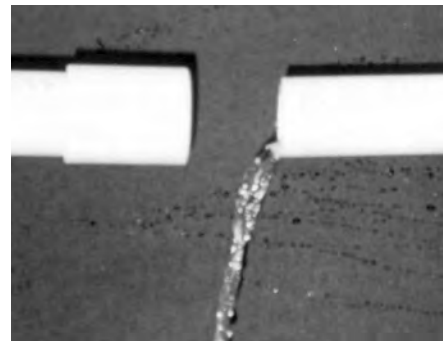
In the past, I have used bread to block the

flow but there were nearby sprinklers and I have seen them clog up from the bread. Then the heavens parted and an idea fell out of the sky. After all, I had plenty of time to think while waiting for the flow to stop. So, it was at this time that I came up with the idea of using water-soluble material to stop the flow and give me time to make a dry situation for the pvc cement.

For several years, I have been using acephate (Orthene) in a water-soluble bag. I thought about the timing it takes for the bag to break down and if I could use a similar material it would be enough time to make the repair. Using a water-soluble material would mean I would not need to be concerned about the pipe lines being clogged after the system is pressurized.

I located a distributor of water-soluble materials that are being used primarily in the medical field. After a visit with the distributor, I was given several types of product to play with. I ran several experiments in the shop to figure out which product would work best in the field.

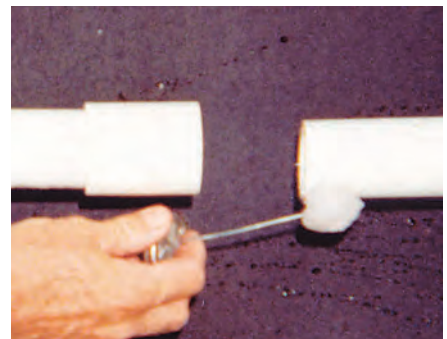
Fortunately (and unfortunately) I had several irrigation leaks shortly after receiving the material. I had one 8-inch, one 6-inch, one 4-inch, one 3-inch,



Slowly draining irrigation lines can hold up repairs to leaks at critical times.



Insert water-soluble material into pipe to block flow. The material will dissolve completely and not plug up sprinklers.



Have all fittings and materials ready-to-go. The temporary plug will provide adequate time to make a pvc cement repair.

and two 2-inch pipe leaks. Instant field testing! In each case I was successful in using the water-soluble material to stop the drainage flow which allowed me the opportunity to make the repair before the flow stopped.

The bruises on my forehead from my "Why Didn't I Think Of This Sooner" experience faded, and in September, I applied for and received a provisional patent for the use of water-soluble material to stop a flow in a pipe line. Presently, I am seeking how to market the material so that others can benefit from the time-saving method of making pvc repairs.

Editor's note: Dale submitted his innovation for irrigation repairs while he was still a superintendent at the Royal Palm C.C. in Naples. This isn't a plug for a Lesco product, but it might be some day. For current contact information, see the inside cover. Good luck, Dale!.