

with high clay soils and poor surface drainage can cause problems, such as decline due to standing water. All of these problems can be avoided with better construction and renovation building techniques.

#### Water Quality

Do not neglect water quality. If turfgrass performance is marginal with an older bermudagrass variety, do not expect anything better with the ultradwarfs. Take the time to address water quality.

#### Overseeding

Like it or not, overseeding competes with and shades a bermudagrass surface. If overseeding is a must, consider using a lighter rate or join the growing number of courses that paint instead of overseed. Also, there are numerous products that can assist early removal of overseeding. Keep in mind that overseeding does contribute to organic matter levels in the upper portion of the rootzone. Extra aeration and topdressing are required.

#### Take Home Message

Ultradwarfs have the potential to provide the highest quality putting surfaces possible at sites where bermudagrass is the preferred turf species. Hopefully, this article has given the reader some ideas about maintaining the new ultradwarfs. More importantly, we hope the reader will study up on

these new varieties and seek as much information as possible before problems arise.

## Is Your Turf-Care Facility The Site of an Accident Waiting to Happen?

By Jim Baird

These were the words of the prosecutor in a recent court case in Australia that convicted the Warringah Golf Club and their former superintendent of criminal negligence. A pesticide used on the golf course was discharged from a spray tank onto an uncontained concrete wash pad that drained into a nearby creek. Contamination of the waterway resulted in the deaths of an estimated 10,000 fish and numerous waterfowl.

Could this happen on your golf course? Do you have a dilapidated turf-care facility and pesticide storage and containment areas that do not conform to environmental regulations? According to the legal brief in the these aforementioned case: "The evidence shows that a draft environmental policy and a master plan for the golf course were essentially not acted upon.

Furthermore, the President has given evidence that the board had in recent years focused on other matters in the belief that they had no responsibility in respect of environmental matters

and that it was entitled to delegate such responsibilities to management employees."

So ultimately who was responsible? The Club was ordered to pay approximately \$600,000 in fines, court fees, and costs of cleanup as well as installation of proper pesticide storage and handling facilities. The superintendent was sentenced to community service, had to pay substantial legal fees, and lost his job.

If your facility needs improvement, now is the time to take the necessary measures to protect our environment and the game of golf. Consult your state or local environmental regulatory agencies for information on standards and specifications regarding the safe storage and handling of chemicals on the golf course.

*This regional update and others written by the Green Section staff may be found on the USGA Web site at: [www.usga.org/green](http://www.usga.org/green).*

*Editor's Note: With recent studies showing high levels of arsenic (regardless of the source) in golf course soil and groundwater samples, regulators are taking harder looks at golf course operations and record-keeping. Expect more in-depth inspections in the future. Mix/load areas, pesticide storage facilities and wash-down pads are areas that need to be brought up to modern standards of containment and safety. Is your maintenance area an "accident waiting to happen?"*

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