

## Indianapolis seeks to privatize muni layouts

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — Four of the city's 11 operating municipal courses were targeted most in need of improvement or addition, but the price tag "in the millions" has been tabbed too costly.

City Parks Director Leon Younger said the city will seek proposals from private enterprise to make improvements at three of the courses in exchange for contracts to operate them for 15 years. The city already is negotiating with Ron West, the pro at Winding River. The others are Eagle Creek, South Grove and Riverside.

The pros pay the city a percentage of their revenues. Last year, the pros returned to the

city \$902,000 out of total revenues of \$6.9 million. Under current contracts, money is insufficient to make all improvements. Plans call for adding nine holes to Eagle Creek and Winding River.

The city hopes to install new irrigation systems, upgrade the greens and make new cart paths at South Grove and Riverside. Each project will cost more than \$1 million.

Indianapolis businessman James O'Connor has proposed buying all 12 municipal golf courses for \$25 million. One course, Coffin, is not in operation.

## Noise laws

Continued from page 1

the course until 7 a.m. to comply with Cary, N.C.'s regulations.

"Noise ordinances are a growing problem. But they tend to sneak up on people in our industry because they are more concerned about air quality and pesticide issues," said John Gillan, executive director of the Professional Grounds Management Society. PGMS lists many course superintendents in its ranks.

Cary's leaders were targeting car stereos and construction

crews with their 7 a.m. ordinance. But a Lochmere neighbor noted the law also applied to golf courses, which traditionally sent mowers out as early as 5:30 a.m. to get ahead of golfers.

Lochmere labored under the regulation for a year and a half, Totten said. The first tee times were pushed back from 6:30 a.m. to 7 a.m., cutting into revenues and golfer satisfaction. Head pro Randall James explained the problem to the Town Council and in August it approved an amendment allowing golf courses to begin grooming greens at 6 a.m. from May 1 to Aug. 31.

The situation hasn't come to as happy a conclusion in Somers Point. The town passed its 7 a.m. noise ordinance four years ago with trash collectors and construction crews in mind, according to Greate Bay superintendent David Geyer.

Greate Bay continued mowing as early as 5:30 a.m., unaware the law applied to golf courses. A resident voiced concerns last fall. Geyer responded by keeping mowers away from areas where houses bordered the course during early morning.

The matter came to a head in mid-July when a summons was issued. The course went before the Council, seeking permission to begin mowing a half hour earlier during spring and summer.

The Council voted unanimously for the amendment on a first reading but later reversed itself under political pressure.

"It became sort of a David-versus-Goliath thing," said Geyer. "The little guy was out to slay us."

Nearby residents offered a minor compromise allowing mowing to begin early during the annual LPGA tournament and 10 yearly charity events.

But keeping mowers and golfers off the course until 7 a.m. reduced rounds and increased overtime pay, Geyer said. The extra labor time results from maintenance staff having to stop working while golfers play through.

Geyer is hopeful councilors will be more receptive to changes following November's election. He is also investigating purchasing quieter-operating electric greens mowers, a recent innovation. "Now that fall is here, the major complaint is leaves," Geyer said.

That's also the case in Greenwich, Conn., where local officials have limited use of gas-powered leaf blowers from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the week and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekends. A local group is even seeking a complete summer ban on blower use.

Greenwich CC superintendent Greg Wojick said the club received a noise-ordinance violation last summer. Police warned that next time, the equipment operator would receive a \$75 fine.

"We'd gotten some complaints in the past and built that berm to try to muffle any noise," Wojick said. "But it didn't seem to help much."



### ONE INSECTICIDE SATISFIES EVERYONE IN THE GOLF WORLD. INCLUDING THOSE WHO DON'T GOLF.

Maintaining a showplace golf course goes beyond beautiful turf.

There's the birds of the air and the fish in your water hazards to consider, too.

So an insect control program that's less toxic to the  
wildlife on your course is important.

That's where MERIT<sup>®</sup> Insecticide comes in.

MERIT lets you control grubs and other insects while using  
remarkably low levels of active ingredient.

In fact, MERIT is effective at rates 85% to 96% lower than other soil insecticides.

And when applied in the spring to control billbugs and *Hyperodes* weevils,  
MERIT provides enough residual to effectively control grubs throughout the summer.

To find out more, contact Miles Inc., Specialty Products,

Box 4913, Kansas City, MO 64120. (800) 842-8020.

Do it for those in golf who actually like landing in trees and  
splashing in water hazards.

