

# A picture/video file is worth a thousand pages

By TERRY BUCHEN

In today's high-tech society, a superintendent can be much more thorough using a video camera/recorder and 35mm and Polaroid cameras in the daily work routine.

During the grow-in renovation of a course, it is good advice, to document all phases of construction with a camcorder and 35mm camera for a permanent file for the course archives.

It also helps employees to actually see how the irrigation system or drainage was installed, in case they have to work on it.

Taking this one step further, superintendents at many courses take 35mm pictures of each piece of equipment they own and put it in the archives to prove to their insurance company, in case of loss, that they were still using it, the equipment's condition, and to give a better estimate for replacing it. Also, videos of the entire maintenance building complex, soil storage building, fuel storage and pesticide storage provide a permanent record for insurance purposes in case of a loss. Do this annually to make the photographic records more accurate and complete.

Also annually photograph other physical buildings such as rain shelters, bathrooms, pumphouses, swimming pools, tennis courts, clubhouses, golf shops, trap and skeet ranges, ice skating rinks, etc.

Many companies provide this same service to homeowners. One copy of the records is kept in a safety deposit vault and the other at an attorney's office. In most cases, having this type of documentation will expedite settlement of insurance claims.

## NEWSLETTER TOPICS

It's that time again, when planning the superintendent's next newsletter column, to select a timely topic for golfers to read with interest. One favorite topic for Northern and transition-zone golf courses in the fall (done in the spring on Southern courses) is for supers to write about what they and their staff accomplished during the off-season, as most golfers are unaware.

Many construction projects can be completed during the off-season, such as building a new tee, bunker renovation, adding new bunker sand, trimming and removal of trees, etc. to least inconvenience golfers and they usually can be finished in the spring if the winter is too severe. Also explaining the equipment renovation and painting of course accessories is thought-provoking.

Listing all turf conference seminars, USGA regional conferences, and renewing pesticide licensing, etc. further explains the complexity of our business.

## GRAIN FUTURES

It is always interesting to lis-

ten to television golf announcers talk about the grain of the grass on the greens and in which direction the greens will break — such as toward the mountains, or toward Indio in the Palm Springs area of California, or toward the ocean at Pebble Beach. As every superintendent in the world knows, the ultimate objective is to have all grass blades grow vertically, which is impossible. Nonetheless, we keep trying to make it grow vertically. With groomer and verticut at-

tachments for greensmowers, top dressing, dragging in with a steel drag mat, and mowing in different directions, it would seem that we have a pretty good handle on grain. But do we?

I visited with Allan MacCurrach, senior agronomist for the PGA Tour, Senior PGA Tour and Nike Tour and he had some interesting revelations! "In most cases, most grain on a putting green runs east and west so it is best, when verticutting, to accomplish this going in a north

and south direction. I think that, in most cases, the mowing of greens in multiple directions is overkill and that only two directions for mowing, such as a north/south and east/west is needed to properly control grain," he stated emphatically. We also talked about my technique of testing the trueness of a putting surface using the USGA Stimp meter which really helps in eliminating grain and what direction the grain is coming from and he truly agreed. He also said that brushing of a putting surface should be in the same direction as the grain is

## SAVVY SUPERINTENDENT



running, usually east/west.

Surface water draining toward the front of the green obviously has quite an effect on the direction of grain but, all in all, Allan makes an interesting, proven point.



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