Uniform lockers beat 'tradition'

By TERRY BUCHEN

Maintaining higher standards for a superintendent's employees has always been a top priority, and the upgrading of the maintenance building is no exception. The employee's lunch room, lockerroom, restroom area is most important for employee morale and self-esteem, which has gained great strides during the past two decades.

Employer-furnished uniforms are in vogue at courses that want their employees to look nice, in keeping with their image. Uniform service companies are starting to provide separate, individual lockers for each employee's use, with a separate dirty-clothes hamper set alongside.

The uniform service company employee has a master key which opens each "set" of lockers. Each week, he or she places the pants and shirts in the lockers in exchange for the dirty clothes. The lockers are usually provided free of charge to the course — obviously as long as the course uses the company's laundry services. Employees have individual, separate keys for their uniform lockers.

The traditional employee's locker usually remains to house an employee's items, such as a rainsuit, extra jackets, shoes, boots, gloves, hats, safety goggles, etc. The uniform locker is usually seen as an extra amenity for the employee.

Many supers who are designing a new maintenance building will make provisions for the extra space needed for the separate uniform lockers, usually as part of the lunch room, locker room, rest room area.

Each individual employee locker, because it houses only freshly-laundered uniforms, is far more narrow than the traditional employee locker.

Q&A: Yelverton

Continued from page 13

February to early March. I do not like the statement "when dogwoods are blooming it is time to put out pre-emergence crabgrass materials." This is too late. What I normally say is "when dogwoods are blooming, crabgrass is germinating and growing." If you want to use a phenological indicator plant, use forsythia. When forsythia blooms, it is time to get started.

Goosegrass generally germinates when soil temps average about 60 degrees — about 14 to 21 days after crab. Regarding split applications of pre-emergence herbicides, certain herbicides do exhibit enhanced control when you split the application about eight weeks apart. For instance, several of the DNAs (Surflan, Pendimethalin, etc.) will show a little better control when applied at1/2 rates at the normal time, followed by the remainder eight weeks later. Barricade (another DNA) also can be enhanced by splitting the application eight weeks apart, but it is generally better to use 2/3 of the full rate at the normal time, followed by 1/3 eight weeks later.

It is not recommended to split the Ronstar rate. We recommend that Ronstar be applied at the full rate in one application at least two weeks before any expected crabgrass germination. While all crabgrass/goosegrass herbicides are more effective when applied prior to any germination, it is absolutely essential that Ronstar be applied before any germination occurs. Any crabgrass or goosegrass that has emerged will not be affected by a Ronstar application.

USGA: How do you feel about having the pre-emergence herbicide placed on a granular fertilizer? Is herbicide efficacy improved or lessened when added to a fertilizer particle?

FY: There is nothing inherently wrong with applying a PRE herbicide on a fertilizer carrier, so long as the timing of the herbicide and the fertilizer are compatible. If you have overseeded with a cool- season grass, or established cool- season turf species such as in western North Carolina, eastern Tennessee, etc., this represents a situation where the timing is compatible. In terms of efficacy of the herbicide on a granule or fertilizer carrier, so long as you get good uniform application and distribution of the dry particles, efficacy will be no different than a spray.

However, there may be some areas where it is difficult to apply a granular product. For instance, it is difficult to get good granular distribution where there is a narrow tee box and you have to back the application equipment to say the back tees and there is inadequate space to turn around. Oftentimes I see poor control on the slopes of elevated tee boxes in these situations.

There are other areas that are just difficult to get to with a granular. Many superintendents touch up these difficult areas by using sprays in advance of, or following, granular applications. This is a good way to deal with these problems. Also, when spreading granular materials in bulk, you have to be careful to prevent granulars from getting on the hard-scape (concrete, asphalt, etc,), where they can be easily washed off into surface water.

USGA: It seems there are some labor advantages associated with applying the fertilizer and herbicide at the same time, but there must be some waste of fertilizer as well, due to the early timing of application. Do you have any feel for how much fertilizer is wasted?

FY: If you have a cool- season turf species growing that can use the fertilizer when it becomes available, this is a good way to make an application. However, in the case of non-overseeded dormant Bermudagrass, the fertilizer is obviously not going to be used. In this area of North Carolina, we need to get our PRE herbicides out and watered in the latter part of February or very early March. If you are putting a herbicide with fertilizer on dormant, non-overseeded Bermudagrass, this fertilizer application is probably at least two months in advance of when you would normally be applying a fertilizer.

Now, someone could argue that because these products are slow-realease they are not going anywhere — they will just sit there. This is a good point. But between March and May, we normally have weather conditions conducive to some release of available nitrates. If the Bermudagrass cannot utilize this, we have to ask the question "What happens to it?" Perhaps nothing. But if you are on sandy soils, you can get some leaching.

The point is, on non-overseeded Bermudagrass, the timing of a PRE crabgrass herbicide and a fertilizer is not compatible. It is difficult to say how much may be lost. It may be none, or it may be a significant percentage of what is applied.

USGA: Would a sprayable pre-emergence product work just as well as a granular?

FY: So long as the distribution of a granular and a spray are adequate, there will be no difference in control. However, generally if we see a difference in our research trials (and we usually don't) it will favor the spray applications. Again, I think it gets back to uniformity of distribution. If a product is formulated on a granule, you must be able to get a certain amount of granules in a given area of space to provide uniform soil coverage.

Remember, with a PRE herbicide, when watered in, it must provide a uniform herbicide barrier just at the soil surface that the crabgrass or goosegrass plant must grow through. As the plant attempts to grow through this barrier, the herbicide is absorbed in the young roots and shoots (in the case of a DNA) or the shoots in the case of Ronstar.

So the herbicide does not prevent weedseed germination. The weed dies as it tries to grow through the herbicide-treated zone. Obviously, if this herbicide-treated zone has significant areas where there is no herbicide, this is where the weed will grow through and will not be controlled. One exception where I have seen a granular product work better than a spray is where you may have a product that is relatively volatile. If you spray a product that is volatile, you might have some volatility losses with a spray, whereas you can control this volatility loss more with a granule.

USGA: Would you expect to see any cost savings with a sprayable pre-emergence product?

FY: When applying a PRE herbicide to non-overseeded dormant Bermudagrass, the cost savings can be significant. Most of the sprayable pre-emergence products must be applied when the Bermuda is still dormant. What would be the risk of an early-summer breakthrough of crabgrass or goosegrass? Would you make any additional pre-emergence application at this time?

North Texas bestows honors, installs officers

The North Texas Golf Course Superintendents Association held its Annual Awards Banquet Jan. 18, at Woodhaven Country Club with outgoing President Rusty Walker passing the gavel to Walt Wilkinson, superintendent of Indian Creek Golf Course.

Wilkinson introduced the new 1997 officers and directors including Vice President Keith Ihms of Bent Tree Country Club, Secretary/Treasurer Brian Cloud of Mira Vista Golf Club and directors Doug Moore of Fossil Creek Golf Club, Dan Wegand of Squaw Valley Golf Course, Tom Hall of Canyon Creek Country Club, Chris Rather of Buffalo Creek Golf Club, and affiliate representative, Jim Newkirk with Jacobsen Textron.

Several special awards were presented by President Wilkinson. Polo Hernandez received the A.C. "Ace January" Jr. Memorial Superintendent Championship Award as the winner of the 1996 golf tournament. In addition, Joe Wisdorf, superintendent at Las Colinas Country Club, was presented a plaque and Golf Course Superintendents Association of America watch for the Best Newsletter Article contributed in 1996

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the A.C. Bearden Memorial Award for Superintendent of the Year to incoming President Wilkinson.

During the awards program, outgoing board members Doug Fiene of the Ranch Country Club, Scott Peck of Carswell Golf Club and Roger Field, formerly of Shady Oaks Country Club, were presented plaques in recognition of their past services on the board.