



Environmental practices

Although I agree with most of what John Walsh said about superintendents in general (The greener side of golf," March issue, page 6), he's singing to the choir. He has to look harder at the executive boards, general managers and committees of private golf courses who don't believe it's worth the effort to adhere to an environmentally sound program no matter how strong the superintendent is.

Until the "everything has to be manicured and sterile" mentality stops, there will be little change at many clubs. In the South, snowbirds hold most courses to a resort mentality during the winter and don't take ownership of their equity and responsibility.

At first, most superintendents are excited to be involved in environmental programs, but when you're beat down as ridiculous or even threatened with your job for trying to implement the proper strategies, it becomes a matter of your own survival. There are exceptions to the rule, but as a whole, it could be tremendously better, so don't hold everything over the superintendent's head. Get your choir robe and head to the board meetings and let them hear you hit that "high C." We've strained our voices too much already, and we need the help.

Joseph Hubbard, CGCS
 Director of golf maintenance
 Broken Sound Club
 Boca Raton, Fla.

Regarding John Walsh's editorial in the March issue ("The greener side of golf," page 6), it always has seemed like golf course superintendents were the driving force behind environmental stewardship. When the South Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association's board of directors were deciding how to best use its proceeds from the First South Florida Turfgrass Exposition 20 years ago, they unanimously decided to concentrate on environmental research. This decision was firmly endorsed by the membership, the Florida Turfgrass Association and the University of Florida.

I've visited more than 400 golf courses while I was a sales manager for an equipment company, and I didn't see one example of superintendents who simply didn't care or were too lazy to concern themselves with envi-

ronmental stewardship. Superintendents were trying to establish relationships with county and state environmental resource regulators and regional water use regulators. Innovative superintendents devised mix/load areas and wash areas that cost their owners next to nothing and ensured that soils and ground water didn't become contaminated. Devoted professionals were unsung heroes and easy targets for people who think they know something about turfgrass and the golf business because they have a yard. It was Don Shula who said, "How would you like to have a job where everyone thinks they know your business and you get fired after one bad season."

There's a considerable percentage of superintendents representing the current Florida leadership who feel the editorial is accurate, even motivating. Initially, I was dumbfounded by this because we had firmly taken the leadership role for many years. Their response is a tribute to the determination of superintendents who love the outdoors and the environment. Superintendents have made the biggest difference at golf facilities in the past and will continue to do so into the future.

Scott Wahlin, CGCS
 Golf maintenance manager
 Links at Boynton Beach (Fla.)

Thanks for a thoughtful March issue about environmental management. Our superintendents Cal Lewis and Joe Deforest take pride in using reclaimed water to irrigate our 45 holes at the Lake Placid Club. We've also worked with Audubon International to increase environmentally sensitive areas, thereby reducing maintenance costs and creating more natural habitat for plants and animals.

Furthermore, to ensure eternal protection of the tees, greens, fairways and rough of our two championship courses, we entered into a conservation easement with Audubon International whereby the designated areas might never be developed for anything more than a golf course or cross-country skiing trails.

Arthur Lussi
 Director of golf
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