

Quality treatment

A trio of facilities try out waterless on-course restrooms in lieu of Porta-Potties. BY ALYSE LAMPARYK

Watching his courses' turf being torn up by waste management trucks twice a week was just too much for superintendent Russ Chamberlain, so he started looking for alternatives to the 50-gallon Porta-Potties. "You get about 90,000 rounds of golf and you've got to keep them clean," Chamberlain says of the required frequent cleaning for the portable waste units.

Chamberlain supervises Brae Loch Golf Club in Grayslake, Ill., and Countryside Golf Club in Mundelein, Ill., which is made up of the Prairie course and the Traditional course. All three are public, 18-hole courses located in northern Illinois.

After picking up a tip about possible companies from another employee, Chamberlain began researching several different options. Eventually the choices were narrowed down to a Biological Mediation Systems (BMS) facility or comparable waste system.

What it came down to was the composting system, and the BMS unit required much less maintenance than (other similar systems) available at the time. "I talked to three or four golf courses that had it and they just were thrilled by them," Chamberlain says of his decision to purchase from BMS.

The unit he decided on did not require water or electricity and was able to decompose naturally. In addition, the decomposing exhaust system runs on solar power making it even more environmentally friendly.

Unfortunately, because of budget concerns, Chamberlain was only able to revamp the restrooms at Countryside. In spring 2006, he bought two restrooms at \$21,000 each, and two years later purchased one more for \$24,000, due to cost increases over time.

"We do plan in the future to do them at Brae Loch, but right now it's not the top priority with the economy right now and how the golf courses are doing," Chamberlain says.

Brae Loch is much smaller than Countryside and its restrooms are more accessible, making it easier for the waste management



The Biological Mediation Systems facility composts without water or electricity and operates a ventilation fan via a solar power unit on the roof.

trucks to maneuver through the course and less of an immediate concern for new restrooms. "We don't have as many rounds out there so we never had a situation," Chamberlain adds.

Once the restrooms were ordered from BMS, the prefabricated 500-gallon concrete structure and building were shipped by semi-truck from Colorado where they were built.

Chamberlain worked with his staff and an employee of BMS who was flown out to assist and together they finished the project in about a day.

The layout was set up so that for every nine holes a restroom was made available. The Prairie course has one and the Traditional course has two, one of which is located where it can be shared by both courses.

The facilities only require a small amount of attention that is easily performed given

that there are 10 maintenance employees per course and an annual maintenance budget of \$500,000. Each course has one employee responsible for cleaning the restrooms every morning and checking for vapors and garbage. With a 500-gallon tank, an outside source is hired once a year to clean out the tanks.

If Chamberlain wanted to, he could wait even longer than a year for the tank to be cleaned. It is only truly necessary every two or three years but he prefers to have it done more frequently.

The on-course restroom's lack of maintenance and repair have left Chamberlain very happy with his purchasing choice. "You just kind of monitor it and it's really easy and there are cost-savings in the long run." GCI

Alyse Lamparyk is a freelance writer based in Athens, Ohio.



Precision pumping

Preston Trail Golf Club relies on local companies for pump station needs. BY ALYSE LAMPARYK

The consistency of Flowtronex pump stations has provided assistant superintendent Chris Rick more time to focus on other issues, both at his current job and at previous places of employment.

Rick, who has worked in the golf industry for 18 years, still maintains the opinion he formed when he first came across a Flowtronex pump station in 1998 at a Seattle course he previously worked at. "It was a solid system and ever since then I've always felt that they were a good pump," Rick says.

The course Rick is presently at, Preston Trail Golf Club in Dallas, underwent renovations involving the installation of a brand new Flowtronex pump station in 1999. Rick was not on board for the initial installation, as he began working at the 18-hole private course 5 ½ years ago, but was involved in decision making when the Silent Storm system needed an update last year.

"We had Flowtronex give us a price to retrofit the pump station and it was a lot more reasonable than buying a new one," Rick says, adding that cost was a definite factor. The decision to retrofit the pump station cost about \$130,000 and involved a new flow meter, computer, pumps and motors.

While Rick says he wasn't dead set against specific bells and whistles, there were certain features that appealed to him.

The computer-based pump log is an element that he has been particularly pleased with because it enables constant monitoring of the amount of water running through the pump posts. In addition, the log feeds a signal up to the office computer making it easier to supervise.

Ultimately, Rick was pleased with the process and the results the company produced. "Exactly what they told us they were going to do is what we got and it was a pretty flawless

transition," Rick says of the retrofit.

Since the retrofit there has been no need for repairs. Conveniently, if anything malfunctions on the pump station, the Flowtronex main office is located in Dallas, as well.

However, Rick does his best to stop any problems before they can occur by employing Monroe Pump Service to perform preventative maintenance. Once a year the local company inspects everything to make sure it is running properly. "By doing that we can

two other assistants every really touch the pump station. With an annual maintenance budget more than \$1 million, Preston Trail has 31 maintenance employees taking care of the golf course.

Should something change and he would require more help with the system, Rick believes it would be fairly easy to train his employees to use it. The touch screen control panel places everything out in the open, making it simple to modify the system as needed.

"It's all about reliability. It's all about not having to worry about it and having it work all the time."

— Chris Rick, assistant superintendent, Preston Trail Golf Club

anticipate any problems if they do notice something," Rick says.

Prior to the recent retrofit, Monroe Pump Service came to their aid when a pump broke down. Rick says the company arrived quickly and the machine worked well after the repair.

Besides during inspections, only Rick and

When it comes to pump stations, Rick simply wants the product to be hassle-free. "It's all about reliability," he says. "It's all about not having to worry about it and having it work all the time." **GCI**

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Flowtronex's Silent Storm Vertical Turbine system with touch screen.