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overriding factor.

"I put more pressure on myself than my membership or my general manager just because I want everything to look good," Holiday says. "It's a part of me. I want my members to be satisfied and happy with the way things are going.

"For three months out of the year – June, July and August – it's hard to have balance,"

Holiday says. "Those are three months where my dedication is to the golf course. My family understands that."

While they may struggle with their own issues, many superintendents are particularly sensitive about work/life balance in their employees' lives. Some will go so far as to chew out a subordinate they catch neglecting their family duties.

"I've always had some single parents (on staff) and I've made it a point to say, 'Listen, your kids are No. 1. There's nothing that's life threatening on this golf course that you should neglect your children for,'" says Thom Martinek, superintendent at Oberlin Golf Club in Oberlin, Ohio. "I drive that point home enough to say that I'd dismiss them if I ever caught them neglecting their children to stay at work for an extra hour."

Gregory Jack, assistant superintendent at The Old Collier Golf Club in Naples, Fla., is waiting for his opportunity to become a superintendent. In the meantime, there's pressure to test his mettle, which is often gauged by long hours and hard work.

"When you're working six days a week there's not a lot of time left over for personal things in your life," Jack says. "My specialty is irrigation systems. We use brackish water and we have to flush the brackish water out with fresh water. We found out that the most efficient way of doing this was overnight. So that required me to work 24 to 28 hours straight. I'd go to work at 5:30 a.m. and leave at 8:30 a.m. the next morning.

"I guess you could say that's when you really start to feel the pressure," he adds.

While many superintendents say dedication and commitment are traits they seek in assistants, burnout is not.

"I remember one kid in particular who wanted to work all of the time," says Tim Powers, CGCS, Crystal Springs Golf Course, Burlingame, Calif. "I said, 'You just can't do that. You need to go home.' We really are our own worst enemies."

Bieck agrees. Many superintendents bring this problem on themselves. In his three decades as a superintendent, work/life balance has been a key issue and he's authored a number of articles over the years addressing the topic.

No superintendent intends to play favorites, but it's no secret that the demands of a superintendent's job can swell and overwhelm life off the course. Despite Bieck's best intentions, there were instances in his own career when the demands of his golf course superseded those of his family. "I've really tried to guard myself against that and prevent that from happening," Bieck says. "But sometimes there are emergencies that happen on the golf course and our families are forced to take a backseat."

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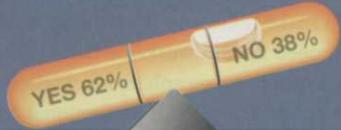
# GCI'S WORK/LIFE BALANCE SURVEY

In June, Golf Course Industry magazine surveyed 374 superintendents and assistant superintendents via an online survey service. Here are some of the results.

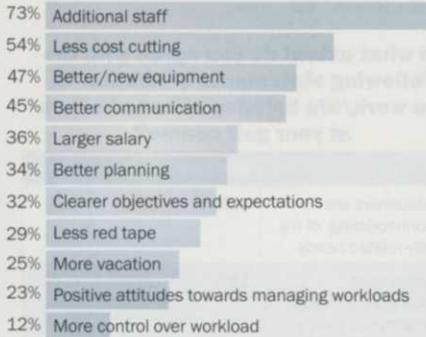
## Do you work too much?



## Would your family, friends and/or spouse consider you a "workaholic"?



## Which of the following would improve your work/life balance?



## How frequently does this happen to you?

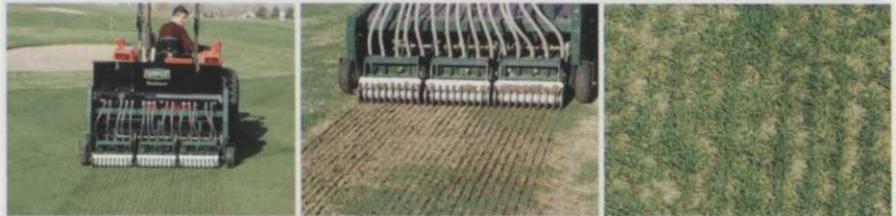
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Irritable at home because of work	8%	72%	17%	3%
Become detached at home because you are thinking about work	9%	68%	21%	2%
Cancel appointments with family/friends due to work-related commitments	12%	64%	21%	3%
Do not have a lot of energy for leisure activities	9%	49%	33%	9%
Do not have time for hobbies	14%	48%	28%	10%
Work obligations make it difficult to relax	14%	51%	26%	9%

Course, and his home is about 195 yards from his office. While the temptation is to work all the time, Powers says 18 years as a superintendent has taught him how essential a few ground rules are for work/life balance.

"The most important thing is I go home at 1:30 every day," he says. "Sure, we could do stuff all day, but by saying I'm done at 1:30 makes me organize and prioritize more to get

what needs to get done, done. You put things off and suddenly you have things stacked to the ceiling that need to get done and it'll drive you crazy."

Short of changing industries, how can superintendents better balance their lives? First, superintendents must lead by example. Since most superintendents don't judge the hours they're putting in as excessive, it becomes their



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way of life, says Piscataway, N.J.-based business consultant Deb Bailey. They look around at their peers and everyone else is putting in those same hours, so they don't seem out of the ordinary.

"Managers can encourage a work/life balance with their employees by having one for themselves," Bailey says. "That means placing more emphasis on the work performed and less

on the hours one spends to complete it."

Next, superintendents need to trust in their crews and realize their job as supervisors is to manage workers, not babysit them.

"I trust my employees to do their jobs and I empower them to make decisions on their own," says Sweet about how he's created more work/life balance. "That way I can feel comfortable about being away from the golf course.

"We've done cutbacks and we're at the lowest (staff) level we've ever been at, but I'd have to say it's my most efficient staff," he adds. "We kept on the strongest people and the most experienced and they're able to do their jobs in a timely manner so that we all can get out of here on time."

In addition to better organization and coordination, Hickam says another key is communicating that a balanced work/life philosophy is a priority and a part of your shared culture at the course. "I make it clear to my team members that they need to find work/life balance," he says. "It provides an atmosphere for excellence. A fresh employee – a fresh professional who has that balance – is going to perform on a level that's healthy and they're going to enjoy their job. If you don't have that then there's no way you're going to deliver on a standard of excellence." GCI

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements in relation to the work/life balance afforded to you at your golf course?**

	Disagree	Neither	Agree
My superiors are accommodating of my family-related needs	10%	15%	75%
Management encourages sensitivity to employees' family and personal needs	13%	18%	69%
Management is sensitive toward employee child care responsibilities	11%	32%	57%
In the event of a conflict, my superiors understand when I put family first	10%	16%	74%
I am encouraged to strike a balance between my work and family lives	19%	27%	54%
It is difficult for me to leave during the workday to take care of personal or family matters	52%	11%	37%
To turn down a promotion for family-related reasons would seriously hurt my career	29%	33%	38%
To get ahead, I am expected to work more than 40 hours a week	19%	16%	65%
I am expected to put my job before my family	52%	26%	22%
Boasting about my work/life imbalance demonstrates my commitment and my solid work ethic	51%	32%	17%

Source: GCI Work/Life Balance Survey

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At Hermitage Country Club in Manakin Sabot, Va., superintendent Keith Fellenstein occasionally uses DMI fungicides to combat fairy ring. He cautions others to be careful about using DMIs in the heat and to conduct tests before making DMI applications in the summer.

# BEWARE OF SUMMER DMI USE

Avert disaster by avoiding DMI fungicide use  
in the heat of summer.

By John Walsh

Like a beware-of-the-dog sign alerting a mailman or unknowing visitors, superintendents have that same caution from researchers and peers when it comes to using DMI fungicides on bentgrass during the heat of summer when turf is stressed. Turf damage is what they're trying to prevent.

All DMI (demethylation inhibitor) fungicides have growth-regulating properties, says Lane Tredway, associate professor and extension specialist in the turfgrass pathology department at N.C. State University.

DMIs include Banner Maxx, Bayleton, Eagle, Rubigan, Tourney, Trinity and Triton. The later three are supposed to have less growth-regulating effects than the older products; nonetheless, they still have growth-regulating effects. DMI fungicides' main disease targets are dollar spot, brown patch and anthracnose.

The growth-regulating effects are minimal when the turf is healthy and actively growing, but significant thinning of the canopy can occur during hot weather, even on otherwise healthy turf.

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"Combine a DMI application, hot weather and severely stressed turf and the consequences can be disastrous," Tredway says.

Because DMIs have growth-regulating effects, turf can end up off color and off texture, says Megan Kennelly, assistant professor, extension and research, horticultural crops in the department of plant pathology at Kansas State University. DMIs can make turf lush and green, but they also can make some turf blueish in color. And they can cause the texture of a leaf blade to get thicker.

"The more common problem is undesirable color," Kennelly says. "It's a strange, blue color. You see it in putting greens."

The higher the rate, the more likely the growth-regulating effect will occur. Turf managers can lower the risk by using a low rate of DMI mixed with other fungicides. High-stress conditions play into the regulator effect, too.

"I don't recommend using DMIs in the heat of the summer," Kennelly says.

Contact fungicides such as chlorothalonil, boscalid, thiophanate and iprodione are suggested alternatives to DMI use.

"It's important to use a variety of modes of action," Kennelly says. "I'd like to see two or three different classes of fungicides in a rotation. You don't need six, but you also don't want to rely on one or two over and over again. It all depends on the disease pressure and what was used before."

#### SELECTIVE AND TIMELY USE

Jim Husting, CGCS, at Woodbridge (Calif.) Golf & Country Club, is in the know about avoiding DMI use when temperatures are high.

"I've never run into trouble with DMIs because I attend GCSAA seminars and have subscribed to PACE for years," he says, referring to the turf management information service. "I value what they have to say. When Larry (Stowell) says don't use DMIs in the heat of the summer, I don't. And if you use PGRs, that's a double whammy. I keep my nose to the books and absorb as much as possible. I knock off the DMIs before June and don't go back to them until after Labor Day."

Husting, who has been at Woodbridge for 24 summers, manages old push-up *Poa annua*

greens, *Poa/rye/bermuda* fairways and rye tees with a \$1.23-million budget, \$82,000 of which is spent on fungicides.

"I've gotten burned one too many times trying to skip a fungicide application," he says. "This is a private club, so the margin of error is minimal."

Husting's big three diseases are summer patch, anthracnose and Southern blight. He sprays preventively and curatively, but strategically, meaning he sprays selected cool-season fairways regularly but not the predominately bermudagrass fairways, on which he applies only PGRs.

Husting's greens are on a strict preventive program – he sprays once a week, alternating systemic and contact fungicides from April through October. Tees are sprayed strategically in June, July and August. From mid-October to mid-April, he treats for snow mold preventively; from mid-February to mid-April, he treats for yellow patch.

Husting uses DMIs, mostly Banner Maxx, in the spring, fall and winter for suppressing anthracnose and summer patch.

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"DMIs are a nice, broad systemic fungicide you can use in nonstressful times," he says. "But most people are cautionary. It's going to be 103 and 105 degrees this week, and I don't know anybody using DMIs right now."

#### LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE AND OTHERS

Like Husting, Andy Fries has been burned

before – to the point where he lost a job.

"I had used DMIs with no regard as far as unwanted growth regulation, says Fries, CGCS, at Brownson Country Club in Huntington, Conn. "Years ago, I got into trouble on a golf course and was let go. Banner Maxx at a high rate was my style, but that was four years ago. A sales guy and message boards have helped, so I've tried

to avoid DMIs. I don't have a check plot. I'm just going off others' experiences."

Fries, in his second season at Brownson (last year he was an assistant) manages bent/*Poa* greens, rye/bent/*Poa* tees and fairways and rye/blue/fescue rough with a maintenance budget of \$570,000 and a chemical budget of \$82,000. The top two diseases Fries battles are anthra-

## DMI fungicide use on creeping bentgrass during heat stress

By Lane Tredway

**S**uperintendents must use extreme caution when applying DMI fungicides (Banner, Bayleton, Eagle, Rubigan, Tourney, Trinity and Triton) to creeping bentgrass putting greens. These products can cause severe phytotoxicity, thinning and even death of creeping bentgrass if the turf is severely stressed from heat, drought or other factors. The potential for injury is much greater when high label rates are used and when high temperatures are consistently above 90 F.

There are differences among the DMIs in their potential to cause injury – some are safer than others – but none of the currently available DMIs can be classified as safe on bentgrass during 90-plus degree weather.

Additionally, there are few situations in which DMI applications are necessary or beneficial during the summer because safer chemistries are

available for control of most summer diseases. The DMIs are most useful during the fall and spring to prevent diseases such as dollar spot, summer patch, take-all patch, fairy ring, snow mold, yellow patch, etc.

Anthracnose is the only disease that warrants DMI applications during the summer, but this is only a concern for superintendents managing older bentgrass varieties such as Penncross, Pennlinks, Dominant, Dominant Plus, L-93 and Crenshaw.

If a DMI application is necessary to control anthracnose during the summer, use low label rates and tank-mix with chlorothalonil to prevent algae infestations. The Penn A and G series bentgrasses are essentially immune to anthracnose in North Carolina, so this disease is not a concern for superintendents managing these grasses.

*Tredway is an associate professor and extension specialist in the turfgrass pathology department at N.C. State University. He contributes to a blog about turf diseases at [turfdiseases.blogspot.com](http://turfdiseases.blogspot.com).*

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