

Automatic irrigation

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Oaks' annual maintenance budget. Because the cost of labor continues to rise rapidly, this savings is expected to increase sizably over the next few years.

Through careful engineering, the automated system has significantly reduced North Oaks' actual sprinkling time. This not only means better utilization of water and lower pump costs, but reduced man hours as well. Previously Toupal required one man full-time around the clubhouse eight hours a day specifically for irrigation. He now uses one man 5 1/2 hours a day. In addition, the shorter irrigating schedule means more late night and early morning golf time. The old irrigating schedule called for watering from 7:30 p.m. until 8 or 9 a.m. With the new irrigation system, Toupal could wait until 9 p.m. to begin the evening's sprinkling, well after the last golfer had headed for the clubhouse. In addition, he had completed his cycles by 7:30 a.m., in time to run a quick syringe over the course before the first golfer had time to tee-up.

The end result for North Oaks has

been a much improved, more challenging course for its members. "Two seasons ago members were constantly on my back about the shoddy condition of the fairway edges and roughs," says Harry Olson, club manager. "We recently held a golf guest day and many of the people playing the course told me they felt we had the most enjoyable course in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area," he says. "I'm particularly pleased with the increased number of golfers we have in the mornings and late evenings."

To date the North Oaks system has been a success. "We are totally satisfied with the design, engineering and operation of the system," says Leo Mariani, greens chairman. "The few problems we have incurred have all been man-made."

Today a system similar to North Oaks' could cost \$120,000 including the entire clubhouse area and practice range, excluding pump stations and pressure mains. This is completely offset by the assurance that the system will operate with maximum efficiency giving the course increased playability with a minimum amount of labor and maintenance. □



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Q—We've heard the 1966 Pennsylvania Turfgrass Survey extolled as "the first authentic survey." Can you explain the basis for the "authenticity"?

(Hawaii)

A—The label "authentic" was given to the 1966 Pennsylvania Turfgrass Survey primarily because it was conducted by the Crop Reporting Service under the guidance of the Secretary of Agriculture Dr. Leland H. Bull. The Crop Reporting Service over a period of years has perfected a system of sampling various phases of agriculture wherein a high degree of accuracy has been achieved. The Turfgrass Survey was the fortunate recipient of this highly developed A.Q. (accuracy quotient). Nothing was estimated. Each published figure was derived from computerized calculations based on data obtained from accurate samplings.

We need more such authentic surveys in order to have unassailable facts and figures to give us support when we request needed tax support

for our coordinated programs.

Q—When we have soil tests run we get values for Ca and Mg with suggestions for rates of application to maintain certain levels. Can you explain briefly just why calcium and magnesium are important to us for growing superior turf? (Virginia)

A—Calcium deficiency promotes failures in the development of terminal buds and root tips. Magnesium deficiency creates loss of green color between the veins of leaves. Calcium builds strength and rigidity in cell walls and helps turf resist wear. It is important in the manufacture of proteins, in nitrogen up-take and in the enzyme systems. Magnesium is vital to enzyme systems and is the only mineral element on which the chlorophyll molecule is built. Chlorophyll is vital in energy conversion. Both elements help to maintain proper pH levels in the plant as well as in the soil, thus maintaining a correct chemical balance.

Calcium and magnesium are furnished in dolomitic limestone, an inexpensive material that is universally available on the market. □