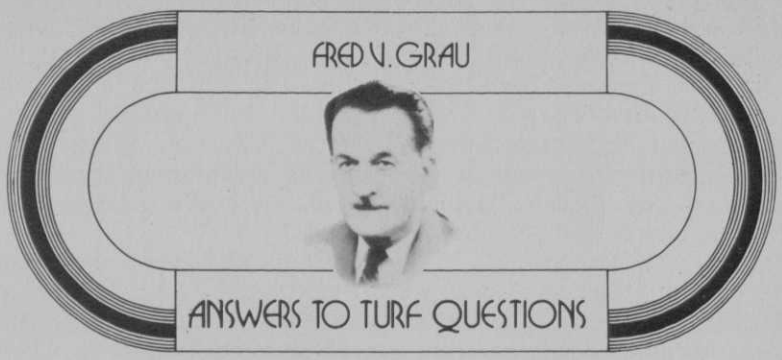

LET'S NOT BE SO SQUEAMISH

Sewage effluent is a fact of modern life. It cannot be avoided, but it can be channeled. The fastidious would prefer to ignore it, pretending it didn't exist. Larger quantities of clean water are needed continually to meet the demands of a growing population. When clean water is used to flush away wastes, it doesn't mean that it is waste water. It is simply dirty water that needs to be laundered and used again and again.

The amount of sewage effluent by cities is prodigious. Its disposal has created interesting problems. For years this laundered water has been used to irrigate forests and fields with highly encouraging results. Penn State was a leader in this field.

Processes for sterilizing sewage effluent have been perfected. Pathogenic organisms are destroyed, rendering the water fit for every use except household use. Because most golf courses, sod farms, parks and athletic fields are close to urban population centers, where the effluent is produced, what is wrong with piping sterilized effluent "used" water to these turfed areas that require a continual dependable supply of irrigation water? Turfgrass represents one of the best filtering systems known, second, perhaps, only to forested areas. Water filtered through turf returns to the ground water supplies in clean condition.

I would like to emphasize my aversion to the term waste water. It is simply dirty water, which contains wastes that need to be removed so that the water can be cleaned and reused. We should know by now that we cannot afford to waste water.

Yes, there will be and are problems. But they are not insurmountable. Probably one of the most difficult will be to convince the squeamish that used water, properly treated, is perfectly OK for irrigating turf. All of us will do well to follow closely the developments in treating dirty water so that it can be used without reservation for irrigating turf. This writer will keep in touch and will report on occasions.

Q—*In one of our rough areas, we are infested with curled dock. It is a hardy perennial that seems to be hard to kill. Unmowed, the tall seed stalks are brown and ugly. Is dock good for anything? If not, how can we kill it?* *(Maryland)*

A—The young leaves of curled dock *(Rumex crispus)*, also called curly dock, are one of the finest green vegetables I have ever eaten. I own a vacant lot in College Park, which has lots of dock. Just before the lot is to be mowed, we go over it and pick all the dock leaves, sometimes as much as two large grocery bags full. After sorting and washing them in cold water, I boil them five to six minutes, discard the water, then repeat. After draining, they go to the refrigerator for a thorough cooling. The bulk is frozen for future use. The spinach-like leaves, served cold, are delicious as a salad or side dish with mayonnaise, cider vinegar, salt and pepper. Try it. Also, if you're bothered by mosquito bites, crush a few fresh leaves of dock and rub them on the welts. Itching disappears almost immediately.

Q—*Now that Agnes has come and gone, we had several greens that were covered with a foot-thick layer of mud, silt, slime, oil and trash. We removed all we could manual-*

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