

#### **GASOLINE—EAST** *from page 48*

for spreading sand will account for 75 to 80 gallons a week this winter.

Although supplies have been at average levels, Coste added a somber note when he talked about quality. "We've had poor performance from our gasoline on occasion. The quality levels seem lower, perhaps some additives are being left out. Poor starting and continued combustion after shutting off the engines has been troublesome."

A spokesman for a major oil company, who declined to be named or have the company identified, commented on the question raised by Coste's findings at The Country Club.

"I know of no oil company cutting down on quality. The industry is under attack constantly these days. As you must be aware we're even having trouble convincing everyone of the reality of the shortage, which we have warned about for some time. In certain parts of the country there are acute shortages. In other areas, enforced rationing. Golf course operators will have to bear the burden along with all other gasoline users." Executives at other oil companies were not reachable for comments on the potential problems faced by golf course maintenance fleet fuel shortages.

Robert Feindt, superintendent at the Country Club of Rochester (N.Y.) is on a quota system based on 1972 usage. Although this assures steady delivery it could also become a problem, according to Feindt. "Last year we had a light September, which could cause us a problem this September, because our monthly quota of gasoline is based on 1972's consumption. If we went into any construction it could also create a problem for us. We use 6,800 gallons a year and during our busiest months, June, July and August, we run to 900 gallons, delivered. We've had no problems on deliveries as yet. Our

*continued on page 62*

in La Grange, observed, "With everyone looking for a secondary supply source, all would have been quickly exhausted. We were lucky we weren't ultimately faced with the problem." Fredericksen never felt any pinch. If he had, he figures that it would have been alleviated within his own club, because several of his members are in the fuel supply business. Many other superintendents, fortunately, are in the same position.

A second way of coping with possible shortages would have been to cut back on maintenance programs. Several superintendents did this, just in case, and now are going along with the new routine. For example, Bruce Burchfield of Calumet CC reduced tee mowing from three or four times a week to two or three times and eliminated one weekly pass over the fairways with the mowers. He justifies the curtailed schedule, as do other superintendents, by reminding members, if they ask, that the gas situation even now could become critical in the Midwest, as it has farther west.

"Actually," said Burchfield, "very few members would ever notice that you've cut back on maintenance, unless it's on the greens. It's only a finicky few who would detect it. With these people you have to point out the facts of life."

If a real emergency arose, superintendents figure they could get by with one less vehicle or two, if they absolutely had to. As it is now, most 18-hole courses use an average of eight vehicles, including tractors and utility cars, in addition to mowers. Over-all gas consumption is probably more directly proportional to course acreage than to the number of vehicles in operation, although the frequency of mowing has to be figured in there somewhere. Weather also is a factor, because mowing frequency is closely tied to it. Because these several factors offer some alternatives, superintendents reason that they can find a way out if a gas pinch ever became unusually severe. It wouldn't be easy, but it could be done. □

#### **GASOLINE—WEST** *from page 48*

his supplier have told him of similar cuts.

"We've had to supplement by

taking cans to the service station," he said. "We were lucky enough to find one out-of-the-way station that filled three 50-gallon drums for us. The main loss has been in the time required to stop the equipment and go after gasoline. It's a real nuisance." He uses about 1,000 gallons a month also.

Another Los Angeles area superintendent said that his supplier is living up to his contract, which calls for deliveries as necessary on a "keep full" basis.

"But the price keeps going up," he said. "When we switched to our current supplier about a year ago, the price was about 27 cents a gallon, and now it's over 31 cents." He's another 1,000 gallon a month customer. He has budgeted \$4,000 for gas, oil and lubricants for the 1973 to 1974 fiscal year, the same as 1972 to 1973, when he spent less than \$3,000, so he feels comfortable.

None of the superintendents interviewed by GOLFDOM could think of ways to fight gasoline cutbacks, but they all agreed this is no time to switch. All who have inquired about changing suppliers have been refused; the suppliers simply won't accept new customers.

One of the enterprising ones has talked to others who are thinking about converting their equipment to propane (liquefied petroleum) if the gasoline hoses run any drier. "The rule of thumb is that a year's operation saves the cost of converting the engine to propane," he said, "and we expect our tractors and other equipment to run longer than that." He said that propane users report no oil dilution and no contamination of the oil by carbon and no smog control devices are required. "I'd prefer it over diesel by a long way," he said. Natural gas is not considered a practical alternative in California.

One superintendent in San Mateo said that he is getting all the gasoline he needs and has been working extra long hours to catch up with work that couldn't be done during the rainy spring.

"Everybody we've talked to is getting plenty of gas," he said.

That's why it can't be reported with certainty that a gasoline shortage exists—at least here in California. □

#### **GASOLINE—CENTRAL** *from page 48*

tage were making the rounds in March and April, superintendents prepared for it in two ways. Most immediately, they started looking for backup suppliers, but as Harold Fredericksen of Edgewater Valley

## GASOLINE—EAST from page 61

tanks are filled automatically, sometimes twice a month." Feindt reported a recent price increase of one penny a gallon, however, so the situation in western New York is changing, too.

The local nature of the shortage problem is confined in that Merion in Ardmore, Pa., just 80 miles south of Mt. Manor GC, is facing price increases of three cents a gallon or 10 per cent over last year.

Richie Valentine, Merion's superintendent, has reported no delivery interruptions except once when he received a half tank. "During June, July and August we average 1,200 gallons a month," Valentine said recently, "and when we're not mowing as heavily in April, May, September and October, we run about 800 gallons a month. The rest of the year we'll use 350 gallons a month unless we have heavy snow plow work to do."

World renowned Merion, host to the United States Open in 1934, 1950 and 1971, will probably use 9,000 gallons of gasoline to service its two 18s this year. The 10 per cent increase in cost will add \$270 to the club's yearly maintenance budget.

"Sure, there will have to be price increases," a distributor in the Philadelphia area responded recently. "Our costs are rising too. Price spirals are not necessarily caused by shortages. Most of us will try to be fair and allocate our own supplies to our regular customers. I don't think distributors should be the ones to decide who has priority usage of available gasoline." He went on to explain the individual aspects of each situation indicating there was no real pattern to the effects the shortage was having. "It's possible, I suppose," he added, "some distributors may consider golf courses low priority users. I don't see it that way, though."

The Congressional CC in Bethesda, Md., seems to be one of the hardest hit courses. Warren Bidwell, Congressional's superintendent, was recently informed by his supplier he could only expect 70 per cent of his 1972 monthly purchases for comparable months in 1973. As disastrous as that may seem, it's an improvement over the

supplier's original threat of only 57 per cent of last year's consumption.

To meet his immediate needs, Bidwell reported, "I just had to go out and buy some gasoline at retail. It cost \$.41 to \$.42 a gallon." He paid \$.33 a gallon wholesale for approximately 9,680 gallons consumed in 1972.

Congressional's 27 holes, during peak periods in May, June, July, August and September, use an average of 1,200 gallons a month. March, April, October and November, 650 gallons. January, February and December, 220 gallons (Based on 1972 figures). These averages total 9,260 gallons. The remaining 420 gallons were consumed during construction projects in February and September.

Projecting Congressional's plight well beyond what anyone would like to consider at this time, if deliveries stopped entirely and each superintendent had to go the retail route, cost increases might prove truly disastrous for some operations. Specifically, a nine-hole layout using an average of 3,090 gallons a year would pay \$247.20 more for gasoline at the retail level of \$.41 a gallon. An 18-hole course using 6,180 gallons, \$494.40! (Both calculations based on comparing \$.33 a gallon wholesale and \$.41 retail.)

Reaching down the East Coast to our southernmost state, we talked with Jim Sanders, manager at Pine Lakes GC in Jacksonville, Fla. Sanders recently has had to specify the number of gallons he needs prior to delivery, whereas in the past his supplier would simply come around and fill his tank.

"So far, we've had no trouble," Sanders explained but added, "Knock on wood." He has not had a price increase and feels the situation in his area is fairly stable. "I'm keeping my fingers crossed," he says.

East Coast operators and superintendents may have to face the reality of the fuel crisis in terms of rising costs. It may be the only way to "share the burden," as the oil company official has suggested.

There appears to be little that can be done directly to forestall the inevitable dry period. Budget planning for 1974 should take this into account. □

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# ADVERTISER'S INDEX

ADVERTISER .....	PAGE	ADVERTISER .....	PAGE	ADVERTISER .....	PAGE
Acme Iron Works .....	16	Godwin, Hiram F. & Sons, Inc. ....	63	Oregon Highland .....	19
Acushnet Sales Co. ....	26, 27, 32, 33	Goldcrest .....	34A	Oregon Rye Grass .....	16
Aldila .....	24	Good Year Tire & Rubber Co. ....	12	Ottawa Silica Co. ....	42
Amerace Microporous .....	20	Hahn Inc. ....	18	Par-Aide Products .....	45
Aquatrols Corp. ....	44	Harley Davidson .....	28	Putman, Robert D. ....	63
Ault, Edmund B. ....	63	Hercules Inc. ....	41	Rainbird Sprinkler .....	50A
Bellante & Clauss .....	63	Hillerich & Bradsby .....	34P	Ryan Turf .....	4
Bodin Knits .....	34H	Hills, Arthur .....	63	Safari Gas Water Cooler .....	62
Buckner Sprinkler Co. ....	CIII	Hogan, Ben .....	34I	Savannah Inn & Country Club .....	34K
Certain-Teed Products .....	48	Iberia Earth Moving Service .....	63	Smith, David .....	34J
Chemagro .....	6, 13, 19, 60, 62	Izod Ltd. ....	34O	Spear, William J. ....	63
Chipman Div. of Rhodia .....	46	Jacobsen Mfg. ....	14, 15	A.G. Stafford .....	46
Club Car Inc. ....	17	Jantzen, Inc. ....	34M	Taylor-Dunn .....	50C, 50D
Coursigns .....	9	JFK Marketing .....	57	Tee-2-Green .....	10, 11
Cushman Motors .....	CIV	Jones, Robert T. ....	63	Trojan Battery .....	8
Difini Originals .....	CII	Jordan, Bob .....	63	Westcoaster Otis .....	22
Dow Chemical .....	36	Maddox Construction Co. ....	63	Westinghouse Electric Corp. ....	5
Eastern Golf. Co. ....	6	Moody Sprinkler .....	40	Wilson Sporting Goods Co. ....	34D, 34E
Eaton Corp. ....	34N	National Mower .....	21		
Fazio, George .....	63	North Central Plastics, Inc. ....	13		
Fleischmann Distilling Corp. ....	7				
Gilison Knitwear .....	34G				

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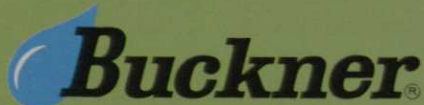
**CP-2** provides advanced central programming where field controllers are needed for on-course inspection and maintenance. Syringe and omit cycles. Watering of fairways, tees and greens can be completed in less than nine hours.

**711** is the perfect automatic in-field controller for large turf areas. This 11-station system features 0-60 minute control. Waters fairways, greens and tees in less than nine hours.

The **ICM series** offers three systems: The 12E has 12 control stations, the Dual 12E has two 12E units with two clocks, and the 24E has 24 control stations and one clock, where longer watering times are permissible.

The **BR-10** delivers dependable performance at a rock bottom price for a dual program with ten stations.

If you're planning new watering systems, now's the time to get together with the Buckner Agri-turf Division of Johns-Manville. We'll take the time to figure out exactly what you should have. Then we'll supply it. Because we have more kinds of controllers, heads, valves and pipe than anybody in the business.



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