



**Made in Wisconsin**

# INTRODUCING “MADE IN WISCONSIN!”

In the past few years there has been an increased awareness on the part of the American consumer of goods and products that carry the “Made In The USA” label. Renewed pride in the purchase of these products has certainly helped the recovery of the American economy. We have that same intent with this new series of articles that you will be seeing in each issue of THE GRASSROOTS for the next couple of years. There isn’t a single golf course maintenance facility in Wisconsin or anywhere else in the entire country without one or, more likely, several products or pieces of equipment produced within the borders of our own state. The editorial staff of THE GRASSROOTS will be travelling about the state, gathering the stories of these many industries that are critical to the golf course maintenance industry, here at home, across America and indeed, around the world. They are our neighbors, members of our clubs, our friends and our colleagues. They have, taken together, an enormous impact on the Wisconsin economy. And each one has an interesting story to tell. Our task is a very easy one.

Our first story features one of the oldest and one of the best known — MMSD and the renown fertilizer, Milorganite. This year marks the 60th anniversary of Milorganite and we salute that accomplishment. Their quality has been unchallenged for all of these years. And, of course, their history is tied closely to the WGCSA because of O.J. Noer.

We are grateful to Jim Spindler and his gracious acceptance of our invitation to author this story. As the “new kid on the block,” Jim spent a lot of time in research and investigation of the archives of MMSD and has prepared an excellent narrative for your information and enjoyment.

MSM

## THE MILORGANITE STORY

By Jim Spindler

Milorganite, like many turf products, is a long established product made in Wisconsin. This year 1986, is an important year to Milorganite, and to the turf managers in Wisconsin and elsewhere. This is the diamond anniversary of the beginning of commercial production of Milorganite and with the development and production of Milorganite came a product and the people who have played a major role in the modernization of turf management.

For more than 60 years people like O. J. Noer, Charlie Wilson, Jim Latham, Bob Welch and others have played a tremendous role in developing many turf management practices that are still used today. Before Milorganite the only fertilizers available to turf managers were manures, dry blood, composted materials, ammonium sulfate, salt peter, etc., products that were either difficult to handle or risky to use on turf. Before O. J. Noer, greens and fairways were often planted to fescues, ryes and bluegrass. O. J. promoted the use of bentgrasses, especially when modern mowers were developed.

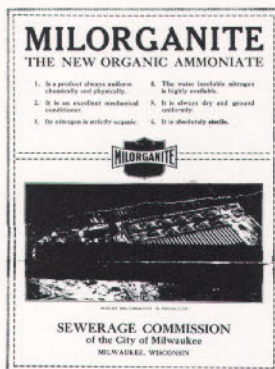
that is to provide adequate sewage disposal. At that time all the sewage produced was dumped into one of Milwaukee’s three rivers; the Milwaukee River, Menomonee River, or Kinnickinnic River, and out to Lake Michigan. Then, as now, all of Milwaukee’s drinking water came from Lake Michigan and bathing or swimming was popular in the rivers as well as the lake.

In 1913 the Legislature of Wisconsin passed an act authorizing the City of Milwaukee to create

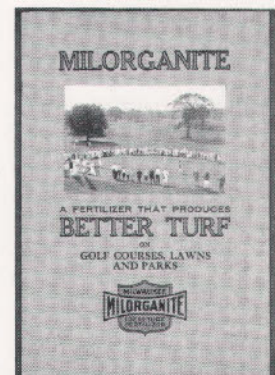
Since Milorganite was first offered for sale more than 3,633,330 tons have been produced. Presently, about 65,000 tons of Milorganite are produced and marketed every year. It has been sold in all 50 states as well as in Canada, Venezuela, India, Puerto Rico, Japan and many other countries.

### How It All Started

In 1879 the City of Milwaukee was directed to clean up its act,



This is the first flyer printed in 1927.



This is the first booklet put out in 1927.