



GETTING READY FOR SPRING: START THE SPRAYING SEASON RIGHT — DON'T BREAK DOWN IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO!

By Steve Barritt
Sales Engineer
Reinders Brothers

Every golf course superintendent knows how expensive repairs can become. To insure the maximum performance from your spraying unit you should carefully follow all manufacturer's instructions as printed in the operator's manual received with your sprayer.

A sprayer is a carefully designed and built machine that should provide many years of reliable service, if properly cared for. Neglect can cost dollars in repairs, wasted spray material and premature replacement of the sprayer. Before you start the 1988 spraying season, be sure you take time to get your unit ready. Here are some tips:

INSPECT THE TANK

One of the first things to check is the inside of the sprayer tank. If it is a metal tank, are there flecks of rust or epoxy coating that are loose and should be removed? A piece of steel wool or a steel brush along with compressed air could help remove these pesky little pluggers before they have a chance to get to the spray nozzles. If your tank is polyethylene or fiberglass, has the gasket in the withdrawal fitting deteriorated to the point that it needs replacing? Remember, how are you going to change it with several hundred gallons of water/chemical in the tank? A \$10.00 fitting with new gaskets is a lot cheaper than an hour of spraying time or a gallon of chemical.

INSPECT THE VALVE

Now, trace the suction line of your pumping system. Is there an in-line shut-off valve? Does it work? If you have to disconnect or repair the pump it is important to be able to effectively shut-off the water/chemical supply.

INSPECT LINE STRAINERS

If you have an in-line strainer before the pump itself (this is recommended unless you have a centrifugal pump in which case the strainer can be on the pressure side of the pump), is the screen still maintaining its shape and is it clean?

INSPECT THE HOSES

While we are on the subject of the

suction line, look to see if it is kinked. Have the hose ply layers separated? Is it unduly soft (a sign of chemical attack)? If it is a plastic hose — does it have any cracks? A small air leak on the suction side of the pump (caused by any cracks) will prevent it from priming successfully. Also, check for corrosion of the hose clamps.

CHECK PUMP & FITTINGS

Next, and probably the most important, is the pump itself. Check to see that the fittings feeding in and out of the pump are sound. Does the pump turn freely by hand? If it doesn't, it might be a good time to remove the end plate or volute and see what exactly is the problem. Once you have reassembled your pump it's not fair to dismiss any extra parts on your work bench as one of those unnecessary options that never worked anyway.

If you have a roller pump, look for worn rollers. Look for pits and grooves in the rotor and end plate. Too much wear prevents priming and promotes additional wear. If you have a centrifugal pump, examine the impeller. Although speed of rotation is the secret of efficient centrifugal pumps, a worn impeller should be replaced.

The next point of inspection should be the directional control valve. If this is a TeeValve type of control, you should disassemble it and check that the spring loaded shut-offs inside are not worn and that their seats are unobstructed. Even though you may have flushed your system last fall, some chemical may have salted out or formed corrosion during winter storage.

INSPECT GAUGES

Also, remove the pressure gauge and examine the tiny inlet to the gauge. This is a good place for corrosion and is next to impossible to flush clean without removing.

INSPECT THE NOZZLES

Last, the operator must check out the spray tips and strainers. Check for corrosion and obstructions. Also, make sure you are using strainers that do not restrict the flow of your tips. All nozzle

charts give a strainer mesh recommendation. Make sure that you are using the same angle and size spray tips. An 8003 is not compatible with a 730308 or a 6503. Try different angles of the spray pattern. 80, 73, and 65 degrees, require different operating height.

Once the preventive maintenance outlined above has been done, you should select the proper application rate, pressure, speed, water/chemical ratio and actually calibrate your sprayer. A tank full of expensive chemical is a sad way to find a bad hose, a leaky connection, bad seals or worn cups in the pump.

THE GRASS ROOTS DOES IT AGAIN!

By Rod Johnson

For the fourth consecutive year your newsletter *The Grass Roots* has received the highest possible award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

During GCSAA's International Conference and Show in Houston. Editor Monroe Miller received the award for the chapter newsletter judged Best Overall for Chapters with 70 or more members.

The Grass Roots has become the standard of the industry and we are all indebted to Monroe Miller for its continued success. The creative staff at Kramer Printing in Madison continue to give us superb, professional service. Furthermore, all contributing authors deserve our thanks. Please take the time to thank the many talented people who have taken of their time to insure the success of *The Grass Roots*.

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