



*Lilacs and Roses, Retirements and Awards  
AND a pretty nice compliment.  
It's all inside!*



# THE GRASS ROOTS

an official publication of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association

Volume XVIII, No. 4

May/June 1991

## MAINTENANCE FACILITIES

### *The Wisconsin Survey*

By Robert J. Erdahl

In the last issue of *The Grass Roots*, I analyzed the results of a survey of thirty Wisconsin golf course maintenance facilities. My discussion included a treatment of all maintenance facility components as well as a description of what I concluded were the "Best Maintenance Facilities" in Wisconsin. In addition, I touched on the storage of topdressing, fuels, fertilizer and pesticides. The intent of Part 1 was to define the current state of maintenance facilities in Wisconsin along with future trends in design and construction.

In part two of my article, I'd like to tell a story. It is the story of dreams and realities. The dream is a new maintenance facility for North Shore Country Club. The realities are the bumpy roads that must be traversed to achieve that dream.

From the survey results discussed in Part 1 of this article, I knew that many of you are also dreaming of a new maintenance facility for your golf course. It is my hope that this story can help to smooth out some of those rough roads you are sure to encounter en route to the realization of your dream.

My story is titled "Dreams and Realities: The Planning of a Maintenance Facility at North Shore Country Club." Read it for entertainment. Take notes on my mistakes. At this point, I can't tell you if the story is fiction or non-fiction, because we are still many months away from laying the first brick.

#### PART 2.

#### **Dreams and Realities: The Planning of a Maintenance Facility at North Shore Country Club**

##### *Preface*

It almost goes without saying that every WGCSA member wants and needs a maintenance facility that can keep pace with the demands of modern golf course management. Wants and needs, however, are quickly tempered by the real world. Forces such as member attitudes, financial resources and government restrictions are just a few of the realities that confront our efforts to plan and construct new maintenance facilities.

This story tells how the planning of a maintenance facility at NSCC was shaped by a host of factors, many of them unforeseen when we started the project. It is meant to be a preview of what you can expect if you undertake the quest for a new maintenance facility at your golf course.

##### Chapter 1 — *Getting Started*

When I started at NSCC back in 1984, the existing maintenance facility consisted of two buildings that seemed adequate enough to support my management programs. The first, an 1,800 sq. ft. heated, steel building contained the workshop, a small bathroom and a small locker room. The second, a two story, 80 year old dairy barn with 2,800 sq. ft. on each level contained the cold storage and a 200 sq. ft. heated office.

Over the past seven years, however, we have just plain outgrown each component of these two buildings. My equipment inventory has tripled, I have twice as many employees (including five women) and the work shop is jammed year round. Add to these problems a grossly inadequate pesticide storage-mixing-loading situation and you end up with a real mess.

Obviously my employees and I knew that the maintenance facility was outdated and in some respects just plain illegal. But did any of my members care about the condition of the maintenance facility? I guess a better question might be: Did any of my members even know about the conditions? Since the answer to both these questions was no, there was only one person to blame—yours truly.

I accepted that blame about 18 months ago and decided to take some action. With poison pen in hand, I fired off reports on building a new maintenance facility to the big three—Board of Directors, Long Range Planning Committee, and Green Committee.

Lo and behold; everyone listened, everyone cared and everyone agreed that we needed a new maintenance facility. In fact, it took only 2 months for the subject of a new maintenance facility to go from total obscurity to the number

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