

Just in case anyone is wondering, management of the Noer Facility is in very capable hands. Tom Salaiz has demonstrated time and time again over the past couple of months what a capable young man he is. On some days he's had to deal with as many as four different contractors simultaneously. He has had to make many on-the-spot decisions, coordinate all the work going on and make sure everything is being done as we want it. He, like the rest of us, is looking forward to the day when research becomes the number one priority of the Noer Facility.

Finally, let me share with you something that happened at the Noer Facility earlier this summer. I gave a visitor from Penn State a tour of the place at a time when everything was at a standstill. After the tour and a sharing of our plans with him, he declared the Noer Facility to be "state-of-the-art and second to none in the country".

*Q: The pH of the fairway soil on our golf course is slowly rising—a tenth of a pH unit every 5 years or so. Someone suggested it was the hard water we use for irrigation. Could that be true?*  
VERNON COUNTY

A: Definitely. I'm surprised the pH hasn't risen faster. Home lawns in the Madison area commonly have pH values of 7.5 to 7.8 within 5 years or so after establishment. If you draw a line on a state map from approximately Marinette to Baraboo and then back up to St. Croix Falls, the area to the south is underlain by limestone. Consequently, the ground water in the area is loaded with calcium and magnesium. In essence, everytime turf in the area is irrigated with well water the soil is being limed.

*Q: For some reason, my fairway fertilizer requirements for the 1991 season have dropped dramatically. I'm going to end up using 1.0 to 1.5 #N/M less than my average for previous years.*

*I'm on a heavy aerification program. Could it be that the soil that I've been bringing up to the surface is nutrient rich and reducing the N requirement? Or could it be the greatly improved rooting I've noticed? DANE COUNTY.*

A: Aerification and better rooting may well be involved. Anytime soil is disturbed, there is a temporary flush of microbial release of N from organic matter. Aerification may also be reducing fertilizer N loss via denitrification. However, I'd venture to say that weather has had as much to do with the better fertilizer N response as anything else. First, we had June weather in May. This greatly increased response to the dormant Milorganite you applied last season. Then we had July weather in June. The high temperatures greatly slowed turf-grass growth rates and, consequently, the amount of fertilizer N used. The net result has been longer term response to fertilizer than you're accustomed to seeing.

To back up my answer, I've seen the same thing in my unaerified research plots. Creeping bentgrass last fertilized with fall IBDU or dormant Milorganite still has acceptable color. In fact, where I did apply some N two weeks ago, the color improvement was barely noticeable. In another experiment, this time with Kentucky bluegrass, I simply skipped the normal July N application because it wasn't needed.

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DATE: February 18, 1992

COURSE: Prairie du Chien

TYPE: Semi-private, 9-Hole

SEASON: February 18, 1992 to  
November 30, 1992

SALARY: Negotiable

Will leave open—Depends on  
qualifications

BENEFITS: None

JOB RESPONSIBILITY: Greens,  
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