

people to do this because sales forecasting isn't so important when business is good," Bob explains. "But it's important when business slows down. When the sales forecasts leveled off, I'd go directly to the vice president and they'd cut back purchasing (for future manufacturing) by 25 percent. I had the facts. I could give them a 90-day notice of a downturn in business."

Commutes to California...

With the Toro irrigation division headquartered in Riverside, California, Bob committed to moving west when he became National Director of Sales. But he never quite made it. For three years, he commuted to California so his family could stay rooted in Wisconsin. Then for a year he commuted to the Toro headquarters in Minneapolis while he served as Director of Customer Education in the distributor development group. Bob managed sales and service training programs for all divisions of Toro.

In 1986, Toro created a National Accounts Manager for the golf

business within its irrigation division; Bob was chosen for the job, one that he could do from his Milwaukee home. Once again, he found himself creating new ways of doing business. As the golf business grew, Toro again wanted Bob to move to California. In 1990, Watertronics Pumping Systems of Hartland offered Bob a job as its Sales and Marketing Manager. With no desire to move, Bob made the decision to leave Toro. His new job meant less travel and more time at home with his family. This suited him just fine.

But before we head down this new road, let's back up again. During his years with Toro, Bob served eight years on the board of directors and executive committee of the National Irrigation Association. He was national president in 1991. "Toro was very supportive of me being involved in this organization," Bob points out.

Now on to his new job, where Bob found himself setting up sales and marketing practices for a smaller, developing company. "Watertronics has a great tech-

nology," he explains. "But they needed sales and marketing help. It was a great opportunity to influence the sales force, programs, manuals, catalogs, et cetera, from the ground up."

Joins his brother in business...

In 1996 Bob joined his brother in the irrigation consultant business. He is quick to point out that it is primarily his brother's business. "He started it. I'm just a minority partner," he says, adding that he is eight years older than his brother and was nearing 50 when he joined Tom. "Our girls were grown, I didn't have to worry about income as much, I was ready to slow down a bit," Bob explains. "My time is more flexible now. I can spend more time with my family."

The brothers split up the work according to their abilities. "We recognize our strengths," Bob says. "Tom is very, very good with design work and calculations, so he does all of the design and field work. I'm more of the sales type, so I do the sales, marketing and administration. I could probably design an irrigation system, but I'd

Bob's Tenets of Sales

- 1: The key to success is the ability to listen.** "I've been called a 3 by 5 carder," Bob says, adding that he always carries 3 by 5 cards with him. "If I try to take notes while talking with someone, I find that they're slightly intimidated and don't talk as much. So I just listen. And when they say something that I really need to remember, I take out one of my cards and ask, 'Do you mind if I write that down?'"
- 2: The average American must be exposed to a new idea five to seven times before they fully understand it.** "I know it takes time for people to learn," Bob says. "I don't get upset when someone doesn't understand all at once. I start a new sales or training project knowing that I'm going to have to chat with these people five to seven times."
- 3: There are three types of buyers: The basic buyer, the analytical buyer, and the emotional buyer.** "This really opened my eyes when I first learned it," Bob admits. "I was trying to get people to buy what I thought they should buy for my analytical reasons. I learned to help people buy what they want to buy as opposed to what I thought they should buy. And I learned to help them buy it in their style, not my style."
- 4: Whatever you accomplish, you have to accomplish it through other people.** Bob discovered this while in the military, and he carried it over into his sales.
- 5: T, 3, 6, 9, 1, 2, 3.** "I do what I have to do today (T)," Bob explains. "But I also analyze what it will do for me in 3, 6, and 9 months, and in 1, 2, and 3 years. This philosophy encourages me to give extra effort each day - to not just get by."

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have to do it in pen and ink. Tom uses AutoCAD (computer aided design)." They also employ one full-time AutoCAD draftsman, Ryan Jaeger.

Their competition comes from other independent irrigation consultants and from irrigation distributors. What sets them apart the competition? "The client deals with Tom and me personally; we answer the phone," Bob states. "In addition, we meet the client's needs on time. If we commit to completing a design and estimate by a certain date, we do it, even if it means working nights and weekends."

They also deal with the complete infrastructure and not just one part of the irrigation system. "The water source, the power source and the infrastructure are

equally as important as the irrigation system itself," Bob says. "People often focus on the sprinklers and controllers, but putting together a whole system is equally as important."

What are the differences between working for a large corporation versus your own small business? "When I worked for Toro there were many people to manage and motivate and get together for meetings. Now there are just three people to worry about," Bob says. "I no longer have people reporting to me. I don't miss the day-to-day managing of people, and I don't miss the travel."

"On the other hand, when you own your own business you have to worry about making payroll, generating income, cash flow, and skyrocketing insurance costs," he

adds. "And I do miss some of the contact with people."

But he does enjoy more time with his family. Both daughters still live in the Milwaukee area. Lisa is a St. Norbert graduate and a marketing analyst for Commercial Communications, Inc. Christine graduated from Marian College and works in the development office at Mount Mary College. "Kathy gets all the credit for raising the girls because I was never home," Bob admits.

So that brings us up to date in Bob's life. His journey has been filled with changes. There have been uphill battles and also times to coast. With his zest for life and eagerness to learn and teach others, I don't think Bob would have it any other way. ♣

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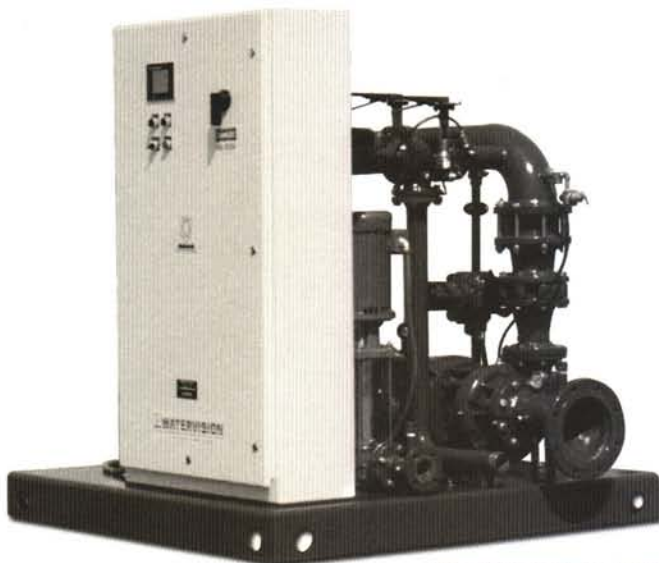
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The ITM Program



By Kevin L. Hensler, Integrated Turfgrass Management Specialist, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility

The Integrated Turfgrass Management program is not so much an environmental program as much as it is a turfgrass management program that provides benefits for the environment. To emphasize this point, the ITM Program has developed a certification program consisting of criteria that a majority of golf course facilities and superintendents are already practicing in their daily activities. The idea is to quantify turfgrass facilities and the beneficial management practices they perform. Attributes of turfgrass sites constitute a beneficial component of environmental protection, merely by their existence.

What has led up to a need for developing Certification Criteria?

The ITM Program itself was borne of a federal and state desire to protect waters-of-the-state from non-point pollution runoff. The United States Environmental Protection Agency mandated that Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources develop and implement broad-based performance standards to protect and enhance the water quality within our state.

Additionally, there is legislation being proposed and enacted across the nation related to turfgrass facilities and environmental concerns. This is not a new phenomenon; the environmental movement goes back to the 1960's and concerns of the health dangers of pesticides and their indiscriminant use. Society was realizing that, just like everything in life, along with the benefits of pesticides, there were also harmful effects. We are a part of this movement to moderate the use of detrimental chemical applications whose harmful impacts outweigh the benefits. This is a move-

ment to preserve the quality of our lives and our communities.

But the pendulum is now swinging to the other extreme. To some groups, any fertilizer or pesticide application is harmful. Most of us would agree that is not the case. By moderating both extremes, these communities can both protect the environment and utilize beneficial turf management practices that include fertilizers and pesticides.

The scary part of this recent spate of fertilizer and pesticide prohibitions is that these communities are considered progressive communities. As such, they are also leaders that other communities follow. Their ideas and legislative procedures are modeled across the country.

As an industry, we need to let the public understand that we can

provide them with the quality of turf they want, and we can do it in a safe manner.

Objective of the ITM Certification Program

The objective of the Certification Criteria is a pro-active response to legitimate community concerns related to turfgrass management practices. **Legitimate** is bolded because it is, or should be, a concern to each of us. We all strive to be environmental stewards whenever possible. A majority of golf industry employees are outdoorsmen. They hunt, fish, boat, and generally recreate in an outdoor setting.

By participating in the ITM Certification program, the industry can counter environmentalists' unfounded radicalism toward our industry. We cannot change or convert the hard-core radicals' beliefs

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about turfgrass maintenance practices, but we can, and should counter their objections. By doing so, we **can** convert the every-day Joe whose family recreates at the local sports field or gathers at the park on Sundays. We just need to provide an alternative viewpoint.

Pro-active participation in the Certification program, and reduced pressures from an educated public can also minimize future legislative efforts directed at the turf industry. In many cases, environmental legislation has a grass roots origin. By quantifying the turf practices utilized, we can present what we actually do, rather than what radicals say we do, to legislative lawmakers who make and write the laws.

The Certification program is a set of criteria designed to help establish and maintain quality turfgrass areas in an environmentally conscience manner, reminding us of the consequences of our actions. The criteria are basic concepts that most turfgrass managers are already utilizing. The idea is to quantify the actions the industry is taking, and take it to the citizens/communities we live in.

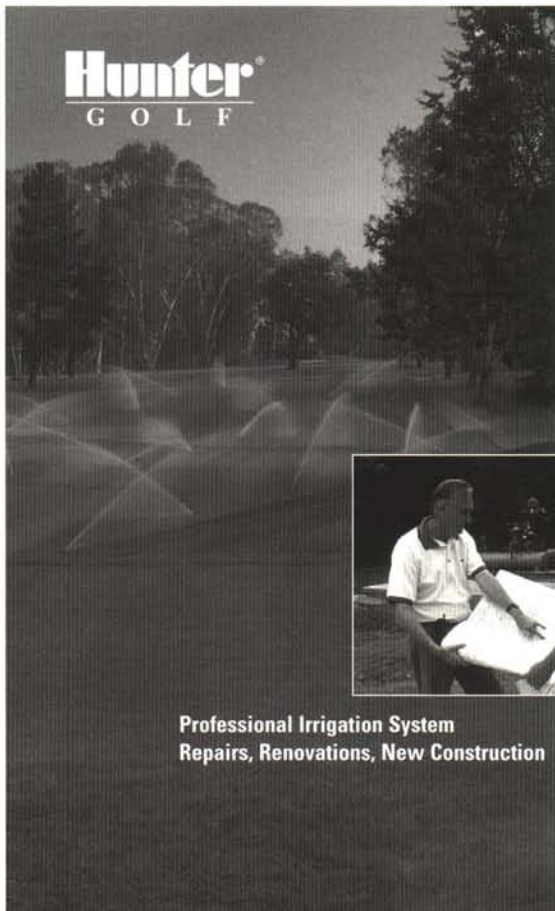
It is a pro-active response to concerns about our industry, and is an action we need to take. It will allow the industry to come together, forming a potential political bloc of educated and informed professionals. I recently listened to a leader in the golf industry say he'd worry about legal restrictions

on the industry when they happen.

I say that is too late. This legal encroachment on turfgrass practices has already happened. NR-151 legislation that passed into law is a foot in the door and we should all be concerned, NOW!

We all talk and complain about people who criticize the turf industry. Well its time to do more than talk. Now is the time to illustrate your commitment to environmental concerns by being a part of the ITM Certification program. We need to let the public know what we are doing and this program is the way to do that.

For more information on the ITM Program, contact Kevin at hensler@entomology.wisc.edu, or (608) 845-2545. ♣



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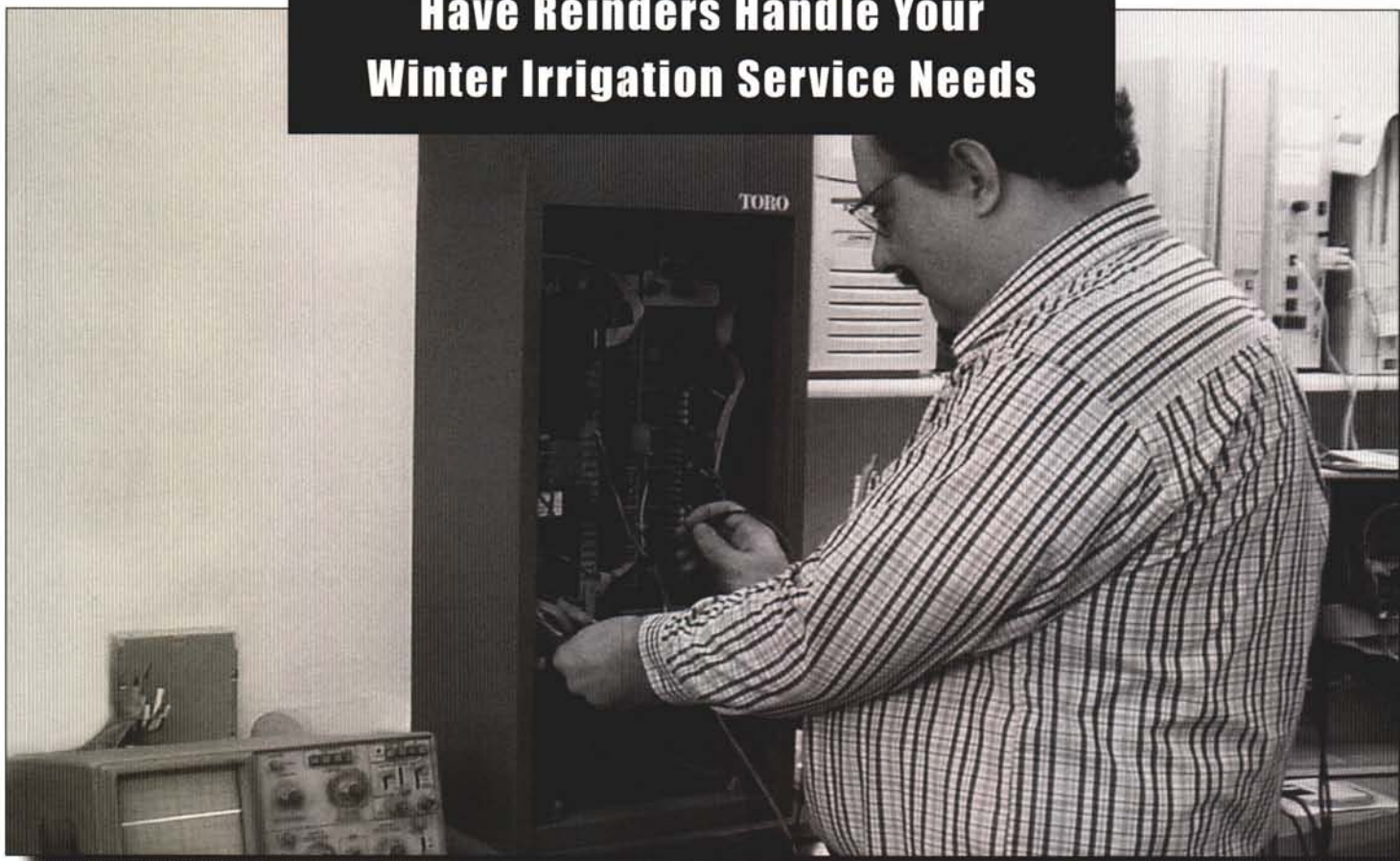
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Decision Time: Sod or Seed?

By Dr. Wayne R. Kussow, Department of Soil Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Are you doing some construction or renovation and have the option of establishing turf from sod or seed? A quick telephone call to a local landscaper will tell you that the costs will be in the range of \$260/M for seeding and \$600 for sodding. The costs stay relatively the same even if the work is going to be done in-house. Looks like a no-brainer, doesn't it? Maybe not.

Looking at only the installation cost may not be the way to go. Depending on the situation, there are some hidden or long term costs that you may not be thinking about that could change your mind. That's what this article explores.

The regulators are everywhere these days. Chances are that if you're about to establish turf anywhere near "waters" of the state, you have to abide by certain codes. If seeding on slopes, you're going to have implement some type of an erosion control measure. Let's assume this brings erosion control mats into picture. This leads us to a recently completed study on the effectiveness of different types of mats and compared them to a straw mulch and sod. I added in some cost figures.

as sodding and would have been far less effective in terms of erosion control. Also note the effectiveness of plain old straw mulch and its cost. The turfgrass stand uniformity ratings were taken 4 months after turfgrass seeding and lead to something else I want to talk about. But, first, let's go to the issue of mulch type. Tom Schwab and I conducted a study on this a few years ago. We compared chopped straw with the pelleted paper mulches, Pennmulch and Establisher, and AmTurf paper mulch. Our findings are summarized below.

Type of mulch	Seed wash	Stand uniformity	% Ground cover
Pennmulch	5.6	7.2	74
Establisher	4.5	6.2	60
AmTurf	8.0	7.6	71
Chopped straw	5.0	8.5	84

The amount of seed wash and stand uniformity are on scales of 1 to 10, where 10 = zero seed wash or a perfectly uniform stand of turfgrass. Seed wash was the result of a heavy rain 5 days after seeding. Stand uni-

Type of establishment	Type of mulch or mat	Cost/M
Seed	Straw	\$258
	Wood excelsior	332
	Jute mat	348
	Coconut mat	511
Sod	-	595

Notice how quickly seeding costs can approach those of sodding. Now the issue becomes, which of the above provide the degree of erosion control required and provide the best turfgrass stand possible? These questions were addressed for slopes of 8 and 16 %.

	Soil erosion - lb/M		Turfgrass stand uniformity*	
	8 % slope	16% slope	8% slope	16 % slope
Seed + straw	5.2	18.9	8.5	7.5
Seed + wood excelsior	9.4	23.8	8.3	6.6
Seed + jute mat	4.9	11.7	8.5	7.8
Seed + coconut mat	10.4	33.2	7.9	6.2
Sod	0.2	3.7	10.0	10.0

* Scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being perfectly uniform.

These results clearly show that had you or someone else made the decision that mat effectiveness = cost, seeding would have cost nearly as much

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formity was recorded 2 weeks after seeding and percent ground cover after 3 weeks. As the numbers show, straw performed as well or better than the paper-based products and did so at considerably lower cost.

Now back to the issue of the differences seen in turfgrass stand uniformities for the different types of erosion control mats or the different mulches. One of the consequences of these differences in turfgrass stand density and uniformity during the establishment year for turfgrass was manifested last season in plots established in 2001 at the Noer Facility. These are 6 large plots consisting of mono-stands of creeping red fescue, turf-type tall fescue, perennial ryegrass, a 4-way blend of elite Kentucky bluegrass cultivars, the "Madison Parks" mix of fine fescue, perennial ryegrass and Kentucky bluegrass and sod grown from an elite blend of Kentucky bluegrasses. The plots are split in two directions, one for different mowing heights and the other for differences in annual fertilizer N rate. Differences in turfgrass stand density and uniformity were readily evident at the end of year of establishment. The consequences with respect to weed invasion in 2002 follow. First we'll look at the comparison

between Kentucky bluegrass seeded and sodded. Weed counts in early September tell the story.

Treatment	Crabgrass	Broadleaf weed
	population	population
	----- number/1,000 ft ² -----	
Seeded: mowed at 1.5 in.	1225	429
	2.5 in. 1026	265
	3.5 in. 218	175
Sodded: mowed at 1.5 in.	55	434
	2.5 in. 44	66
	3.5 in. 19	62

The effect of mowing height on weed populations tells a lesson by itself. Averaging across all 3 mowing heights, sodding resulted in 958% less crabgrass and 35% less broadleaf weeds than did seeding. The implication is that when we look beyond just establishment and factor in maintenance costs such as weed control, sodding takes on new light. In 2003 we'll see what it takes and how effective we are in bringing these weed populations under control with herbicides.

Mowing height isn't the only thing that influences turf density and the opportunity for weed seed con-



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