

out to Mike Skenandore of Wanaki Golf Club with an impressive score of 74! Great Job Mike!!

At this time, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the hosting courses and their respective Golf Course Superintendents for an outstanding 2008 monthly meeting schedule. In chronological order: Kevin Knudtson and Geneva National Golf Club, Mike Schmieden and Evergreen Golf Club, Mike Upthegrove and Watertown Country Club and lastly Jim Hasz and Lake Breeze Golf Club.

I would also, on behalf of the WGCSA, thank all of the supportive sponsors, many who have been supportive for years, for helping make our monthly meetings a success. Your support makes these events more enjoyable through

hole events and prizes, making the prices much more reasonable to participate and the food tastier with allowing for upgraded options. In no particular order the Vendor Sponsors for 2008 included; Syngenta, Hartman Companies Inc., Midwest Turf Supply, Pumpstation Professionals, Municipal Well and Pump, Pendelton Turf Supply, Tiziani Golf Cars and Bayer Crop Sciences.

Thank you once again, the 2009 season is being formulated already. If you and your facility would like to host an event in 2009 or even 2010 please contact me soon as the calendar usually fills up fast. If you are a vendor and would like to participate with supporting the WGCSA and the golf industry in Wisconsin to make these events possible and

more enjoyable, contact me as well. There will be a description of vendor support in the mail sometime late fall/early winter.

I would also like to thank your Board of Directors particularly Chad Harrington for setting up the educational presentations for these events Dustin Riley for communicating to the members for the cancellation at Evergreen and Jeff Millies for making sure the bills are paid! If you have any questions comments or concerns for the past year or the next years events never hesitate to contact me at (920) 922-8455 or email at jkvanherwynen@charter.net and I will be more than happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Until the next event, take care! 🌱

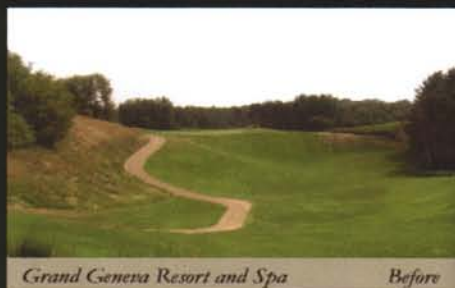
Design.

New Courses, Restoration, Renovation
Construction Management

Build.

New Construction
Renovation and Restoration

In this game, it's all about perfect execution.



Distinctive. Innovative. Memorable.

www.lohmann.com 815.923.3400

GOLFCREATIONS

Building on Experience

www.golfcreations.com 815.923.1868



Bridge to the Future

By **Tom Schwab**, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Noer Facility is divided into two halves by an urban drainage ditch which when full after a rainstorm, can stop work on half of the facility. The drainage ditch was not a problem seven to eight years ago. In the last several years, Madison has been expanding incredibly and the accompanied urban runoff can now fill the drainage ditch for up to a week after a large rain event. We knew a bridge was in our future but we were waiting for the city of Madison to deepen and widen the drainage ditch, which their city engineers said would happen soon. They finally admitted that the improvement was unlikely to happen so we decided to build the bridge and improve the waterway ourselves.

There was money designated specifically for a bridge from a sewer project installed through the Noer Facility in 1999. All the rain in August 2007 and the spring of 2008 made us realize we can't wait any longer to build our bridge. Fortunately we found a professor from the UW-Madison Department of Biological Systems Engineering, Dr Dave Bohnhoff, to design and build the bridge for us.

The project began in June. First we constructed a roadway for construction equipment including ready-mix concrete trucks to access the site. The bridge is completely cast-in-place concrete, and with the wet spring we needed the access road because we couldn't risk burying a ready-mix truck. The trucks first came to place footings for the support piers in holes that were augured six feet deep. Next the piers and deck support beams were formed. What amazed me the most was the amount of reinforcing steel bar that goes inside of a concrete structure. We tied steel rebar completely through one night to get ready for a concrete delivery the next day. Good thing we stayed on schedule with the delivery because the day after pouring the pier and deck support beams, a rainfall filled the waterway up over the concrete forms that would have washed them away had they not been poured.

The concrete was then left to cure for two weeks. Next a wooden frame to hold in the deck concrete was constructed and more steel was tied. The placement of deck concrete went according to schedule and was left to cure for another two weeks.

While the deck was curing, we proceeded to reconstruct the waterway to help transport water away from the Noer Facility quicker. The increase in urban rainwater runoff that was occurring past the Noer Facility needed the ability to flow in larger volumes. Otherwise



Constructing the access road to the bridge



Forms were constructed for pouring the concrete piers and deck support beams

it comes up over the banks and deposit silt on valuable research projects. We mowed down 1/3rd acre of reed canarygrass in the old waterway, reshaped the swale and birms, and seeded the waterway. This way we can mow the turf which along with widening the waterway will help the water flow past the Noer Facility quicker. The maintained turf is a 90/10 mixture of tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass donated by Seed Solutions.

The seed has just germinated as of mid-August and the crew is busy keeping it watered. Next for the bridge project we will construct the ramps up to the deck and blacktop the service road leading to the ramps. Depending on finances, we may even cover the bridge with a wooden structure this winter, and once again Dr. Bohnhoff said he'd help us design and construct the covered bridge. We're so fortunate to have him help us. The research on the far side of the drainage ditch is no longer out of reach and floodwaters should stay within their banks and move away from the Noer Facility easier, making our bridge to the future fantastic. 🌱



The crew working through the night to tie reinforcing steel bar before the concrete arrives the next morning



The flood that occurred the day after pouring the piers and deck support beams



Building the forms for the concrete deck



Designer and builder, Dr. David Bohnhoff from the UW-Madison Department of Biological Systems Engineering, pictured center



Pouring the concrete deck



The deck left to cure for two weeks

**TO MAKE IT
ON THIS TURF,
YOU NEED THE
POWER MORE
PROFESSIONALS
DEMAND.**



Find out why more people who cut grass for a living prefer to do it with KOHLER[®] powered riding equipment. Visit KohlerEngines.com, or call 800-544-2444 ext. GR2.

KOHLER[®]

On the Dry Side

By **Bob Vavrek**, Senior Agronomist, United States Golf Association, Green Section

A comprehensive member survey was taken at a highly regarded course recently, and it revealed that members with a 5 or higher handicap were relatively content with the overall playing conditions. In contrast, the course conditions did not meet any of the expectations of the less than 5 handicap players. The greens weren't fast enough, smooth enough, or firm enough. The roughs were too short, the bunkers had too much sand, and the tees and fairways were too soft. The obvious conclusion is that the few highly skilled players at the club are never happy with course conditioning even when the majority of golfers are clearly satisfied.

I noticed a similar "glass is half empty" attitude from low handicap players at a recent Turf Advisory Service visit. The new superintendent has done a great job keeping the course exceptionally firm and dry - a considerable departure from past management practices. Greens and fairways have been pushed right to the edge of moisture stress and it wouldn't be a stretch to say some of the playing surfaces had the appearance and consistency of Cheetos; you know, kind of orange and deep fried to a crackly crunch.

Considering that the two complaints expressed at nearly every golf course visit are (1) the bunker conditions are inconsistent and (2) the fairways are too wet and soft, I fully expected the golfers to be ecstatic about all the extra roll they were getting on the rock hard turf. Much to my surprise, it didn't take some of the mid-to-low handicap golfers very long to complain about those #!&* \$ hard fairways.

Many of their less-than-perfect drives were now rolling and bouncing into fairway bunkers; hazards they usually managed to avoid when the fairways were wet and soft. The prospect of having to execute very long sand shots to reach the greens has some players pining away for the good old days when the turf squished beneath your feet. Fortunately, the majority of players look forward to the extra roll on fairways, though the jury is still out regarding how well they like the firmness of the greens. This experience supports the conclusions drawn from the aforementioned member survey; that some golfers are never happy.

By the way, there was one group of players who were quite vocal about what they consider to be significantly improved fairway conditions. Interestingly, it's a group that is usually hesitant to make any comments regarding course conditioning. You are correct if you guessed the ladies. Most don't have the same

ability as men to drive the ball a great distance and really enjoy the extra roll when just keeping the ball moving down the middle of a firm fairway.

All in all, it was nice to see an old classic course being played as it was intended to be played. Golfers have the option to run the ball up onto the putting surface and a player who can put backspin on the ball has the advantage over the player who cannot.

There were still some gripes from members who believe the course must be emerald green to be healthy and that the grass is slowly being killed by the superintendent. No doubt, there will be some moisture stress injury to localized areas of turf dominated by *Poa annua* from time to time. Good communication can minimize the annoyance of a little dead turf. In any event, it was amazing to find that some of the old push up greens in shaded sites only needed to be watered once a week during midsummer as long as a little hand watering was applied in a timely manner.

Most superintendents have never taken the time or have not been given the opportunity to push the turf to the edge of stress with stingy irrigation. Keep in mind that an extra effort was made at this course to aggressively core greens, tees and fairways during spring and fall as a prerequisite to cutting way back on water. No doubt the extra coring improved root growth and reduced the potential for developing localized dry spots when irrigation was decreased.

Golfers at this club finally have what they claim to have desired for years - a firm, dry course. Whether or not they are willing to accept brown grass versus lush, green grass remains to be seen. 🌱

HERFORT ▣ NORBY

Golf Course Architects

Phone: 952.361.0644 Fax: 952.361.0645

e-mail: golfnorby@earthlink.net

web: herfortnorby.com



What the Heck is Brown Ring Patch?

By Dr. Jim Kerns, Department of Pathology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

You may have heard about a new disease of *Poa annua* and creeping bentgrass called brown ring patch. Yes, the actual name of the disease is brown ring patch. Not the greatest of disease names, but in the world of fungal taxonomy and disease connotation we have to stick with the name given by the first publication documenting the disease. I do not like the name either and I have heard a number of comments about the name, for which you can use your imagination. The fact of the matter is this a real problem for turfgrass managers and we know very little about this disease.

Brown ring patch was first described as a disease of creeping bentgrass in the late 90's by Japanese researchers. They implicated the *Rhizoctonia*-like fungus *Waitea circinata* var. *circinata* as the causal agent. The symptoms are very similar to those of another turf disease, yellow patch, caused by *Rhizoctonia cerealis*. Symptoms of brown ring patch initially appear as thin yellow rings, several inches to several feet in diameter (Figure 1). Rings have a circular or scalloped appearance and may stay yellow, however the rings can become brown and necrotic over time (Figure 2).

Dr. Frank Wong at the University of California-Riverside also observed these symptoms on annual bluegrass putting greens. From his work, we know that the pathogen appears to colonize the crowns and stolons of creeping bentgrass and annual bluegrass (Figure 3). In addition, the pathogen appears to degrade the thatch layer, which can cause a sunken appearance to the stand symptoms mentioned above (Figure 4).

Symptoms of brown ring patch have been observed over a wide range of air temperatures, anywhere from 59°F to 95°F. Dr. Randy Kane and Dr. Derek Settle with the Chicago District Golf Association have done some research with brown ring patch and they see symptoms develop in May and June. Researchers at the CDGA observe that the symptoms lessen greatly during the heat of the summer. Paul Koch and I have also tentatively diagnosed brown ring patch in Wisconsin and Minnesota during May and June. This is starkly different from what Dr. Wong observes in California. Brown ring patch tends to be more problematic when temperatures are above 83°F and the symptoms appear to get worse as temperatures increase.

There is an interesting side story with this disease. Someone asked me at field day, is brown ring patch problematic or going to be problematic in the



Figure 1. Brown ring patch of annual bluegrass in California. Note the yellow, scalloped rings.



Figure 2. Brown ring patch symptoms. Color has started to change from bright yellow to brown.



Figure 3. Brown ring patch pathogen colonizes crown and stolons of creeping bentgrass and annual bluegrass.



Figure 4. The brown ring patch pathogen appears to colonize the thatch layer and degrades it. As a result the patches can have a sunken appearance. See area on left side of plug compared to right side of plug.

Midwest? Well, Dr. Randy Kane observed the yellow, scalloped shaped rings in the late 1980's. He isolated a *Rhizoctonia*-like fungus from the diseased tissue and sent the isolates off for identification. The isolates were identified as *Rhizoctonia zeae*, a pathogen that induces brown patch and leaf blight in tall fescue under extremely hot and humid conditions in the Southeastern United States. However, the tools available for identification of *Rhizoctonia* species were not as well defined as they are today. *Rhizoctonia zeae* and the brown ring patch pathogen have very similar morphological characteristics and can be easily confused. What Dr. Kane observed 15 to 20 years ago could have been a different disease, however it is likely that brown ring patch has been around for a while.

If you start seeing symptoms that resemble brown ring patch what can you do about it? Well, research from the CDGA has shown that Prostar at 2.2 oz or at 4.4 oz works well for curative applications. They also documented good efficacy from curative applications of Heritage (0.4 oz), Banner Maxx (2 fl oz), and Triton FLO (0.55 fl oz). Dr. Wong in California, found Headway and Endore suppressed symptoms quickly following a curative application and maintained suppression for 21 days. Although, Trinity, Triton, and Prostar took two weeks to suppress symptoms in Dr. Wong's trials, these products provided the longest lasting control; up to 21 days for the two DMI's and 28 days for Prostar. Dr. Wong's recommendations are to tank mix any of the following products Heritage, Endorse, Medallion, Insignia, or Prostar with Banner Maxx, Triton, Tournay, or Trinity in order to obtain superior effectiveness. It is also recommended that fungicide applications should be watered in. An application of nitrogen aids in masking the symptoms as well.

I know you may find the previous paragraph confusing and there is a good reason for this. I mentioned that we know very little about the epidemiology of this

disease, consequently our recommendations can be muddled. These fine researchers are conducting "blind" fungicide research in order to provide turfgrass managers with an adequate solution until more of the biology and epidemiology of this disease can be studied. Fate would have it that the expert on this disease, Dr. Frank Wong, will be in our part of the U.S. for an extended period of time. Since he will be in the area, we are going to work together on the epidemiology of brown ring patch. I am very excited about this opportunity and I think Dr. Wong is too. So if you see me or Paul accompanied by Dr. Frank Wong do not be surprised. ♻

Welcome the following New Members to WGCSA!

Brad Carson, E, Bioverse Inc.
Pipestone, MN

Brian Johnson, S, Penn State University
University Park, PA

Jeffrey T Howe, A, Sycamore Creek Golf Club
Osage Beach, MO

Gary Peters, E, Peters Consulting Services
Williams Bay, WI

Franklin A Unran, SM, Geneva National
Trevino Course, Lake Geneva, WI

Kasey VandeBerg, SM, Scenic View Country Club
Slinger, WI

Kristopher J Woppert, SM
Geneva National Palmer Course, Lake Geneva, WI

Coming Events

November 18 - WGCSA Fall Business Meeting
American Club, Kohler

November 18-19 - Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium
All Water is Not Created Equal
American Club, Kohler, WI

Jan 13 - WTA Turfgrass and Greenscape Expo
Boerner Botanical Gardens, Hales Corners

Feb 2-7 - Golf Industry Show
New Orleans, Louisiana

Changes

By David Brandenburg, Golf Course Manager, Rolling Meadows Golf Course

Wow, where does the summer go. Our older employees often tell me the older you get the faster the seasons go. I usually answer the seasons are going so fast at 42, summer will only seem like a week when I am 60.

Fall is a great time for golf and golf courses. Water needs are greatly reduced and most courses are in excellent condition as the cool nights slow grass growth.

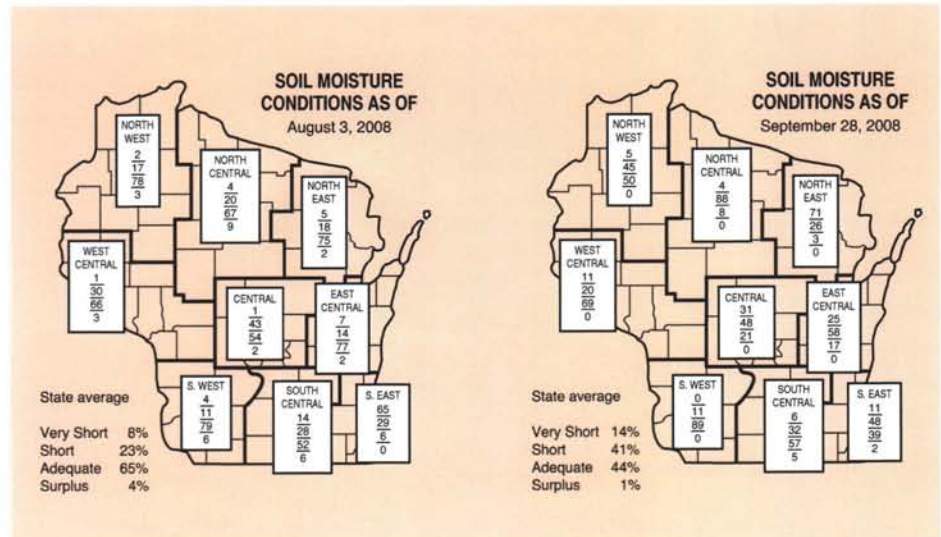
Fall also bring excitement as football starts and most importantly in my opinion baseball playoffs are underway. It is great time in the Badger state as the Brew Crew is playing October baseball for the first time in 26 years. Since we are not allowed to discuss sports on the Noernet I will use this podium to quickly say... Go Cubs!

After the spring rains and the summer mini-drought, conditions have been suitable in much of Wisconsin the past two months. The USDA's National Agriculture Statistics Service shows that in early August soil moisture conditions were mainly adequate with only the south east coming with very dry conditions.

The September 28 report shows the northern half of the state as dry or very dry and most of the south showing adequate or dry conditions. At both times little of the state faced the wet flooding conditions found in spring.

Going into late fall the golf courses and farmers will be looking for some all day rains to soak up the soil.

Despite the moisture extremes we faced this season, temperatures were mild all summer.



Milwaukee did not see 90 degrees until September 5th the first day of school for many kids. Disease pressure was low for the most part and budgets saved a little money.

It is hard to believe the Symposium is right around the corner. The topic, "All Water is Not Created Equal" will be valuable to all of us because the next drought can happen in the Midwest at any time. I am sure the course operators in Georgia and other states never thought they would have the water restrictions they have been seeing the past two years.

Save the dates of November 18th and 19th and look for the registration in the mail soon. The education will be well worth the investment of time!

The presidential election, along with important local races is underway. I hope all our readers will take the time to look at the candidates, their histories and where they stand on the issues

that are important to you at home and at work before voting.

The commercials have been underway for some time and I am sure the phone calls will start soon. It is unfortunate the no-call lists do not include political calls. I assume I am in the majority when I say I do not even like the calls from the candidates I support. The first time it was fun to get a call from former Governor Tommy Thompson or actor Ed Asner but the recordings get old in a hurry.

Aside from the hassle of the race, keep in mind that voting is a right, privilege and duty that should be used and taken seriously.

Last month I reported that GCSAA members will have access to the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF) through an agreement with the GCSAA and the Michigan State University's Turfgrass Information Center. This will allow superintendents easier access to the more than 130,000 records available at the TGIF.

Soon *The Grass Roots* will be found on the TGIF as Pete Cookingham and staff will be putting together a collection of *The Grass Roots*.

Rest assured the association does have bound copies of all back issues in storage. However it is very difficult to unbind the collection for the TGIF to do it's scanning. In result we do need your help as long time members in two ways.

If you have saved your past issues and no longer need them there are many issues the association collection is in short supply of and we could use some more copies to put in storage or give to Michigan State for cutting and scanning.

The other way you can help is to allow the TGIF to borrow issues we do not have at all. Those issues would be any publications before May/June of 1984 along with the July/Aug 86, Mar/April 88 and Sept/Oct 88.

Pete and the staff at TGIF guarantee me these limited issues would be highly protected and remain separated from the issues they cut up. It takes more work to scan complete copies than cut up issues but they do it all the time.

This is a great way to categorize the information that has been printed in *The Grass Roots* over the years and allow members greater access to it. We look forward to working with the staff at Michigan State and we appreciate them offering this benefit.

I appreciate the many condolences I received from the turf industry in the tragic bicycle accident that took my dad's life. Your thoughts helped my family and me though an unexpected change in our lives.

Accidents and deaths on the news used to seem so far away. It

happened to other people or in other cities. It is surreal when it is your life that is turned upside down.

My dad and I loved each other but would never be called best friends. I stick to myself at work and home so it is no surprise we were kind of a holiday / special occasion family. There if needed but not pals.

As we aged our respect and admiration for the leaders each of us had become at home and work grew, as did our relationship.

We shared many interests, golf included and I will never forget our annual Memorial Day golf outing with him and my two brothers at Rock River Golf Course in Horicon, followed by a family cookout and a double or triple-header of wiffle-ball.

I take two positives from this experience. One, I hope I learn (and continue to learn) the importance of family and the shortness of life. I want to be a better more positive person because life is too short to waste on being anything else. I also want to be there for my family and not let the hectic schedule of life rush by without appreciation for what it offers.

Secondly I look back at the wake and funeral and all the people I met and realize what a great life my dad had and what a great person he was. I was proud to stand in line and meet all the people he knew and hear all the admiration they had for him and his abilities as a coach, player, employer, employee and client.

He went out on top with a loving wife, a job he excelled at and was well respected for. He went out with his health by taking care of himself and doing activities he enjoyed. He was blessed with many gifts and he used them to live his life. I hope I can be half as successful in my life as my dad was. 🌿



Water Well Solutions

Toll Free 888•769•9009

Design, Service & Installation
 High Capacity Wells
 Well & Booster Pumps (All Brands)
 Same Day Service Response
 Annual Maintenance & Start up Programs

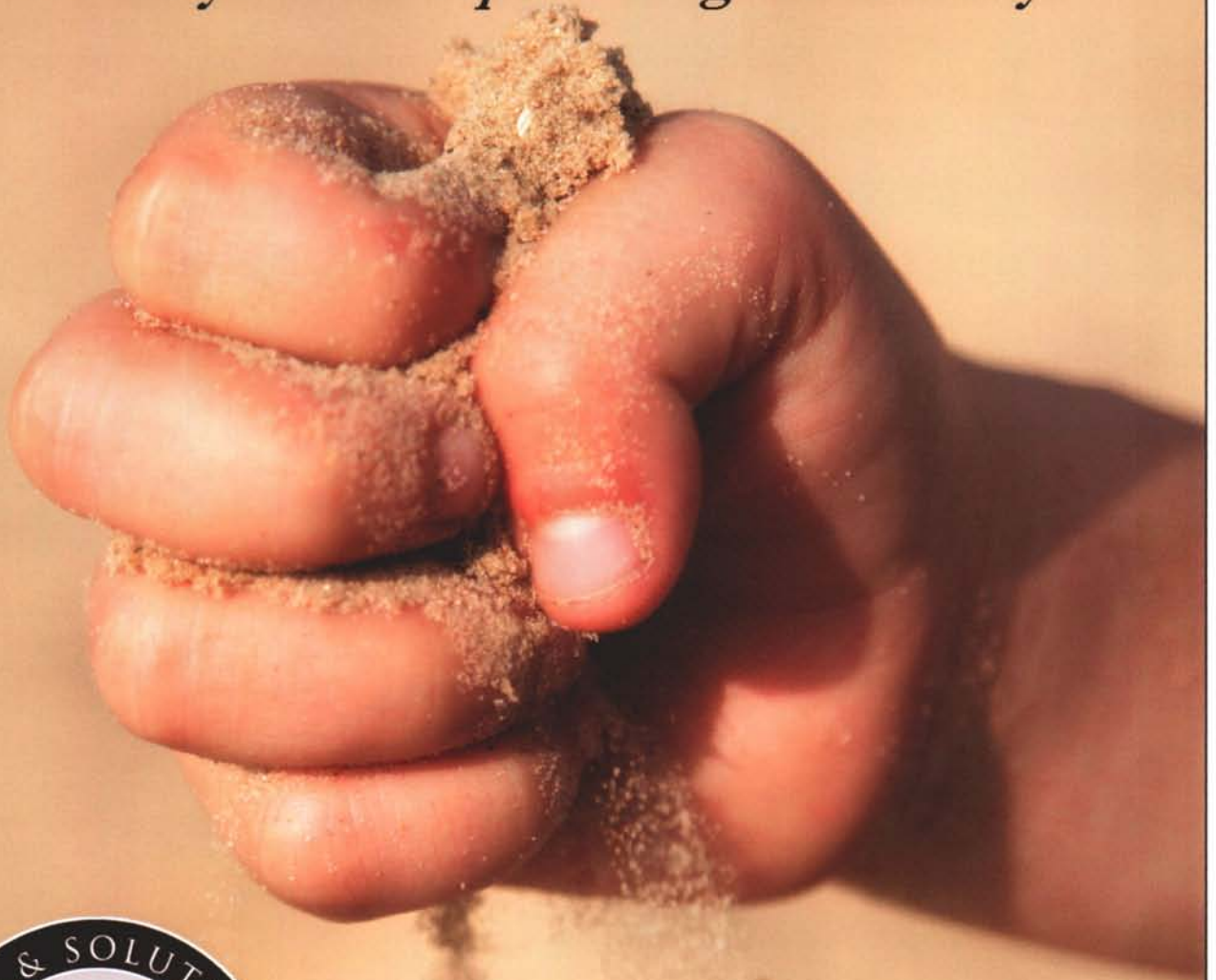
Oconomowoc, WI

Coal City, IL

www.waterwellsolutions.com

Punch Holes And Pound Sand

Schedule your fall topdressing loads today!



715-258-8566 • www.WaupacaSand.com

Proud supporter of WGCSA