

✓ ONE OF THE THINGS THAT KEEP A SUPERINTENDENT BUSY
"FLOOD WATERS ON HIS COURSE"

By Michael Klatte, Superintendent, Owatonna Municipal Golf Course

Owatonna is a quiet city located in the farm land area in Southern Minnesota. It is a very progressive city which, among other things, produces its own energy and power through the Owatonna Power Plant. The population is 15,341 and it is proud of its 41 businesses.

Golf has become a major sport in Owatonna. There are three courses in this city of beautiful parks. There is the Municipal Course owned and operated by the City, the Owatonna Country Club and the Havana Hills Course (a par 3 course owned and built by one of the better known Golf Course Superintendents in the State, Ray Hill, who is also the Superintendent at the Minnetonka Country Club in Excelsior, Minnesota). Owatonna with its three courses has become the mecca for most of the golfers of Steele County.

Some 10,000 acres of land drains through the Municipal Course by way of Maple Creek. Every spring the course gives way to unbelievable flooding. This past spring has been no exception. In April a "Flash Flood" swept through the course, pushing the facilities to the limits of self-existence.

There have been a number of things done to stop erosion and flooding, but success in solving the problem has been very limited.



The April storm which caused the "Flash Flood" yielded some 8-10 inches of rain in 24 hours. The creek did not reach its full crest until after the second day. The damage and loss afterwards was very severe. Five of the eight bridges were washed out and there was silt, mud and debris laying all over the place. The news media was very helpful in getting the story to the citizens of Owatonna and to the members of the Club which resulted in several people coming out over the following weekend to help clean up the course and repair the damaged bridges. The Owatonna Street Department was also very helpful and cooperative. They loaned us a tractor with front-end loader to pick up sand and silt piles laying on the fairways. After the damaged bridge abutments were rebuilt or repaired it was necessary to haul in fill to place against the abutments for support.

Things were cleaned up and the course was put back in shape for play. However, that was not the complete answer. Every time it rained thereafter during the summer additional damage was done. This meant that something more permanent must be done. A study was made and several solutions were proposed. It was decided to dig a reservoir with a channel outlet to the creek. This would replace the old plan of a 45 foot, 12 inch culvert across the fairway and a grass waterway draining into the creek. The help of the City Engineering Department was enlisted and a channel 20 feet wide and 2 feet in depth was dug where the old waterway system ran. A reservoir was dug inland on the opposite side of the fairway which will hold large volumes of water. A high bank was built on the side facing the fairway which will keep the water in the reservoir and off of the fairway. Tile lines will be installed where needed



for drainage to the creek, the area will be filled in, smoothed by covering the bad spots with rich top soil mixture resembling native soil, the area seeded and it is hoped that this will greatly improve the condition at the Municipal Course