



Technician checks for contamination on the final scoop from 12 feet below ground level.

AT FARIBAULT GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

Some Difficult Decisions Had to Be Made Regarding Underground Storage Tanks

**By DALE WYSOCKI
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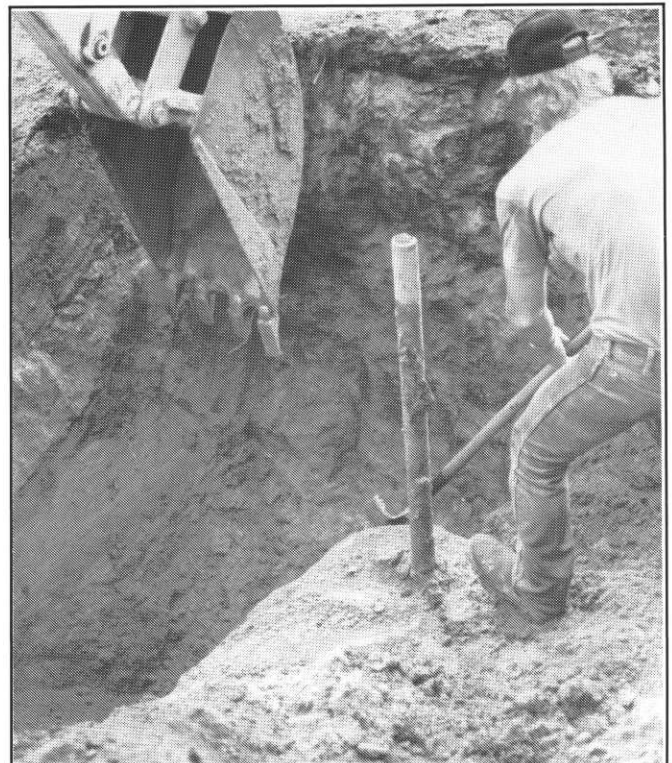
With all the new regulations facing USTs (underground storage tanks), the Faribault Golf & Country Club was faced with some very difficult decisions.

First, cost would be a major consideration. We were able to find out that our tank was installed sometime in 1970. The board decided that it would be in the club's best interests to remove the tank. After all, records kept since 1984 showed that inventory had been right on the money. Unfortunately, there are no records from 1970 to 1983.

On June 9, 1990, I contacted Witte Bros., an excavating contractor; Nancy Hunt of the MPCA and Byron Reed, Faribault fire marshal. We were required to give the MPCA a minimum of 10 days' notice, and I had contracted Twin City Testing (TCT) as our environmental consultant. TCT has the responsibility of reporting to the MPCA in the event of a spill or a leak and also does the chemistry on the contaminated soil or non-contaminated soil. The day reported to the MPCA for tank excavation was June 29, 1990. Everything was ready.

The time had come to remove the tank. As soon as the concrete pad had been broken and removed, and the back-hoe had removed about three feet of sand backfill, a strange, varnish-type aroma was noticed by the operator of the backhoe, his assistant and myself. I felt this was a normal reaction and no cause for alarm—yet!!

By this time TCT's project manager, Peter Sandberg, had arrived. He started checking around the excavated soil with a photoionization detector to check for hydrocarbons in the soil.



The underground storage tank is located.



Peter Sandberg of Twin City Testing uses a photoionization detector in the stockpile of contaminated soil.

Not more than 10 minutes later, the tank was out and it still looked like new. This was good. However, Pete Sandberg had come to inform me that he had found substantial amounts of hydrocarbon pollution. This was not good.

Immediately Pete had started to say "Think Petro-Fund." We had been standing next to a 20 cubic-yard stockpile of contaminated soil, finding all types of hydrocarbon contamination. Now we had the backhoe operator take the backhoe down as far as it would go—12 feet. Again, when the soil sam-

ple was brought up, hydrocarbon pollution was showing up in the clay soil.

TCT technicians went about their tasks collecting soil samples as per the MPCA's requirements. I went to notify the club president and green chairman that we had a problem. Next step was to notify the MPCA that the tank was intact, but over the past 20 years a spill had occurred. Hydrocarbons will remain in the soil for 30 to 50 years.

The next concern is to find out the extent of the pollution, and to see if there is any contamination of the ground water. This will be very expensive. Environmental consultants will determine what has to be done. A remedial investigation will be prepared and sent to the club and to the MPCA for its approval to clean up the spillage. When we clean up the contamination, according to the terms and specification set by the MPCA, we will then go to the Department of Commerce and apply to the Petro-Fund for a reimbursement of the monies spent for the clean-up. The Petro-Fund will reimburse the company up to 90% of the costs associated with an UST clean-up.

At the time I write this article, we are still waiting for another bid from another environmental consultant, and I had to convince some very skeptical members that this spill had been happening for the past 20 years, since there was just a sand/gravel road and no concrete pad for filling golf carts, tractors or turf equipment. Anytime a ½ gallon or a gallon of gasoline is spilled, it goes into the soil. Laws of gravity do apply here.

If you happen to think a spill is limited to a super tanker or to a fuel oil barge, it's time to think again. For information you can call Nancy Hunt, MPCA (tank removal 612-296-6300). To report a spill call 1-612-296-8100. More information on the Petroleum Tank Release clean-up fund (PetroFund), call Robin Hanson, Department of Commerce, 612-297-4017.

Turfgrass Foundation Creates Endowment

The Michigan Turfgrass Foundation (MTF) has pledged \$1 million to Michigan State University's turf program, creating an endowment to fund faculty and graduate student research.

The gift supports MSU's first university-wide capital campaign, MSU 2000: Access to Opportunity, a five-year effort launched in May 1988.

"This gift continues a longstanding partnership between the university and the state's turf industry," said MSU President John DiBiaggio. "We are extremely grateful to the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation for this gift and for the support of its members over the past 60 years."

The foundation's gift—its largest ever to MSU—will establish the Michigan Turfgrass Research Endowment Fund. Annual income from the new endowment will enable MSU to attract more graduate students.

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