

EDITOR'S CORNER

By Dale Wysocki
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An observation, as I sit with my peers at a meeting to listen to a self-proclaimed expert about the down side of pesticide use:

My mind is aghast with the comments made about just what the side effects of chemicals will do to the soil organisms, birds, cats, dogs, wildlife and my family. Granted, years ago when DDT was prevalent and used exclusively on almost everything, there might have been a case of over use.

But now, Golf Course Superintendents are so well-trained, the Superintendent can usually predict when Dollar Spot is going to hit what green within two days. Is that an overstatement? No, I don't think so. I can relate to IPM; it's either Integrated Plant Management or Intelligent Plant Management.

To look at "integrated" in the dictionary, you find it means to bring together, to make useful. Now when utilizing IPM, you bring together several facets, sampling, scouting, logging environmental conditions and identification. Once you have determined the pest, then you will decide to go into a problem solving mode.

I think the most overlooked aspect of IPM is like the "Intelligent" part. Golf Course Superintendents know that you can't do certain things, like grow Bermuda grass in Minnesota. Grass is a very viable plant; it is alive. Grass needs the micro-climate and the macro-climate. In the micro-climate and macro-climate there are living organisms that benefit the grass plant; it does not make sense to remove one's livelihood.

I read an article put out by the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. A comment was made that "golf courses must be one of the most chemically addicted systems in nature." It seems again that people are misconstrued about exactly what happens at a golf course. This time let's look at the Big Picture.

Let's start up the economic side. There's employment for people not just on the golf course either. There's the aesthetic view, and then there are trees and grass-producing oxygen and filtering the dust from the urban arena. Now, I suppose, you could put family values out on that golf course. My son misses the time we would spend together cutting cups and setting tee markers, good bonding time.

Are we chemically addictive? Not on your life! We use different ways to control diseases, and we know that aerification will provide us with healthier grass, even though our member-bosses dislike it. Years ago things might have been different, but, the future is now! And now we make our stand and educate ourselves constantly. I know sever-

al people who always have had a level of intensity several planes above everyone else; these are amazing people who can spin circles around the best. When it comes to IPM, these people know the route to take when dealing with pests of turfgrass, trees and aquatics, keeping in mind that the "Big Picture" will not be affected adversely.

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Congratulations to Jim Nicol, CGCS, for being appointed to the Golf Course Superintendent's position at Hazeltine National Golf Club.

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I had a chance to read an article in the Star Tribune about harvesting peat. The article was very informative and actually explained the process that is required for getting 3,000 to 5,000 year old reed sedge peat. I was amazed by the care that is exercised by the companies to "re-bog" these areas after the harvest is completed.

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The 1996 golf season is almost over. It's time to review and evaluate everything. The traditional questions remain. The comments from the Green Committee over the summer will be addressed and acted upon (if they haven't been already) and a new game plan for a successful 1997 will be implemented. The following list will offer you an idea.

- You must clearly identify what your responsibilities are as golf course superintendent.
- You must constantly analyze the methods you are using to implement strategies and determine the capabilities of your staff and equipment.
- Determine your goals for the season.
- When determining your goals, educate your membership through the club's newsletter or bulletin board for everyone to be aware. Communication is key!
- When training your staff, make them aware of your expectations and the goals that you have set forth. Make it so that the goals can be identified, practiced and implemented by the entire grounds staff.
- Plan for every conceivable contingency your staff will face, no matter how unusual the circumstances may seem.
- You should be as detailed and specific as your time and materials allow.
- Make sure you are using all the tools available to you.
- Recognize that the most important factor in your plan is the human element, and that the way you interact with your staff and membership affects any and all preparations you make.

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