

Turf Talk in Minnesota

Deadly Bacteria Turns Golf Industry Upside Down

What is everyone going to do about water coolers this year? Everyone chime in so we can get a handle on the current trend. My operation has yet to decide our method. - Paul Diegnau, CGCS, Keller GC

We have decided to get a 5-gallon office style cooler and put it up at the starter shack on the #1 tee. This unit will plug into an AC outlet. The starters can keep an eye on it. We will replace the bottles with freshly washed ones each time we fill them. This will eliminate the danger of a person touching the inside of the bottle or the ice (*since there is no ice needed*) I have seen these coolers for sale at Menards and other places \$80 - \$200 ea. The bottles are about \$8 each. We can have several bottles ready to uses at any time. Out first tee is pretty much in the middle of the course so it is accessible. As far as other places on the course, we will not have any other coolers. We also lowered the price of bottles water to \$1.00 for a 20oz bottle. This may not be practical for other courses since we have the benefit of our parent corporation owning a retail bottled water company (*We pay \$0 for all of the above products*). - Jim O'Malley, Kilkarney Hills Golf Club

Last season we reduced the number of coolers down from 17 to 3. We eliminated the coolers from our ball fields and tennis courts and left one near the midpoint on each 9 of the golf course. We did not get very many complaints from the ball players and tennis players, but our golfing community seemed to think we were trying to kill them off. One member even reminded us of the Korey Stringer incident. No one provides water for me while I am hunting or fishing or participating in other sports, but golfers seem to expect drinking water on every hole. Anyway, we send our igloo coolers thru the dishwasher every day. We have two sets so that one is always dry and ready to go. The rangers have been trained how to fill the coolers with a food grade hose and replace them on the course using all the proper sanitary guidelines. We provide free water at the snack bar and have added a refrigerated bottled water machine in the golf shop. We plan to con-

tinue this way, but will be checking out the new Par Aide system as well. We will be comparing cost, labor and safety issues. -- Randy Allen, Tartan Park

Jim, make sure you have a fool proof way to clean those bottles. If they are what I envision, with the small necks, they can be hard to keep clean. We used to have them in our shop but never did develop a good way to clean them. Grew some awesome algae though. -- Randy Allen, Tartan Park

Randy, you are correct for wanting to be cautious. The system we have access to holds six bottles at a time. We put the bottles in and press a button. The machine washes the bottles inside and out, and then a conveyer moves the rack to a separate compartment and sanitizes the bottles with fresh water and sanitizer. The unit works much like a commercial dishwasher. Since a golf course would not typically have a machine like this one, it is possible to washed the bottles by hand in the club house kitchen. This is where having several spare bottles would come in handy.

Could you also let us all know how the new Par Aide system works out? If it is economical and safe, we are always looking for ways to serve our customers better. -- Jim O'Malley, Kilkarney Hills Golf Club

I am leaning toward the Par Aide product. We have access to water on all 18 of our holes including 12 Igloos. It will be one more step in an already time taking

project. I would love to cut back, but don't need the headaches of unhappy players. What really kills me is the caddies using the water to wet their towels down! -- Jack MacKenzie, CGCS, North Oaks Golf Club

(Editor's Note: This article was reprinted from the University of Minnesota's Turf Talk website. You can join in the on-going conversations at www.turf.umn.edu)

MGCSA EVENTS

Monday, May 17
SPRING MIXER

Glencoe Country Club
Glencoe, Minn.

Host Superintendent: Jeff Vinkemeier

Monday, May 24
BASF CHALLENGE

North Oaks Golf Club
North Oaks, Minn.

Host Superintendent: Jack MacKenzie, CGCS

Monday, June 7
SCHOLARSHIP SCRAMBLE

White Bear Yacht Club
White Bear Lake, Minn.

Host Superintendent: John Steiner, CGCS

Monday, August 16
STODOLA SCRAMBLE

Somerset Country Club
Mendota Heights, Minn.

Host Superintendent: James Bade

Monday, September 13
MGCSA CHAMPIONSHIP

Edina Country Club
Edina, Minn.

Host Superintendent: Mike Kelly

Monday, October 11
FALL MIXER

The Crossings at Montevideo
Montevideo, Minn.

Host Superintendent: Terry Nigen



Dale Parske, Simplot Partners, takes a little break to play some ping pong with some MGCSA friends at the Keller GC maintenance facility.