Safety on the Golf Course: The Proper Perspective

Despite reports to the contrary, researchers indicate golfers should not be alarmed by the application of plant protectant materials on golf courses.

"Any discussion of health concerns must be based on accurate data," says Jeff Nus, Ph.D., director of research for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). "Any discussion must also include an accurate portrayal of risk."

According to Nus, safety begins with the professional responsible for the application of materials on the golf course, the golf course superintendent. Those in charge of treating golf courses must, by law, be trained and licensed, and their operations are subject to inspection. He notes application of plant protectants in excessive amounts and frequency is not only fiscally irresponsible, but unhealthy for turfgrass as well. Nus explains that golf course superintendents monitor the drying process to allow golfers access to the course.

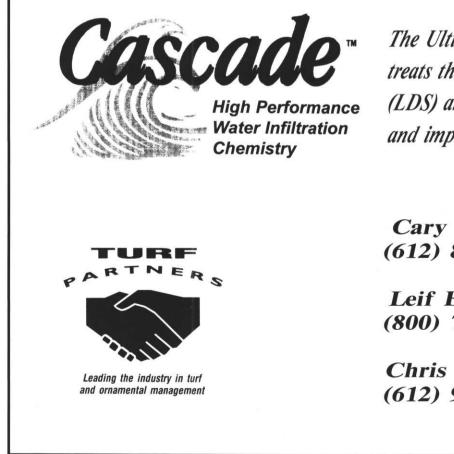
"Research has shown that once the pesticide dries on the leaf of the turfgrass plant, you really can't just casually brush it off," says Clark Throssell, Ph.D., and co-director of Purdue University's Turfgrass Research and Diagnostic Center. "To get any pesticide at all you have to take a rough cloth and vigorously rub the grass leaf. Obviously, no one out playing golf is going to do that in the course of a round. As we take another look at these pesticides, overall we're finding that they provide almost no risk for casual exposure to levels that would be of any concern."

Christopher Borgert, Ph.D., a toxicologist who has served as an advisor to the federal government on toxicity testing for pesticides and industrial chemicals, points to previous research that indicates those who apply chemicals for their livelihood do not suffer a greater degree of health problems than the normal population. Common sense suggests that these individuals are more highly exposed than golfers.

"From a personal standpoint, exposure to chemicals on the golf course under normal circumstances is certainly not something I would worry about," Borgert says. "My personal viewpoint is relevant because my family and I live next to a golf course. Any concern for hormonal disruption is unfounded. It is not supported by the available data or sound reasoning."

All agree, however, that the golfer bears some responsibility to make the golf experience as healthy as possible. Golfers should not put tees in their mouths, lick golf balls or put cigars or cigarettes in contact with the ground. Common sense should be the rule in making contact in any outdoor environment, including the golf course.

-GCSAA



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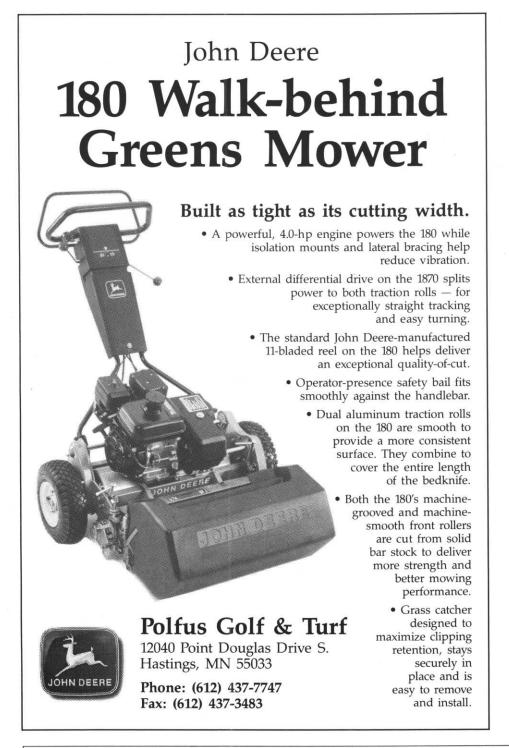
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Bunker Preparation-

(Continued from Page 28)

parallel to play from tee to green. While greenside bunker performance improved significantly, fairway bunker performance, unfortunately, did not. In fact, fairway bunker playability remained a hot topic.

Specific questions were posed to members to pinpoint where corrective measures were needed. These efforts exposed concerns about fairway bunker sand performance. Specifically, during dry weather the sand would become soft and present a difficult playing condition. A cuppy, slightly buried lie would result in spite of the low trajectory of the golf ball when it entered the bunker. Examining the playability of all the bunkers revealed that one particular aspect



of turf maintenance provided relief to the undesirable bunker condition. Where adequate irrigation coverage was available, sand performance could be maintained in the desired manner.

With this knowledge in hand, fairway irrigation was modified to provide a method by which to manage and improve fairway bunker sand performance. Irrigation heads were installed so fairway bunker sands could be irrigated on an as-needed basis. In fact, during the summer months, bunker irrigation is performed on a daily basis. A 20-minute cycle proved to be more than adequate while not negatively impacting playability. As an added benefit, the fairway bunkers can now be monitored regularly as to their ability to handle heavy precipitation. If drainage problems occur, corrective measures can be implemented and consistency is ensured.

"Complaints regarding inconsistent bunker performance are often a function of poor drainage."

Course maintenance goals in general and bunker maintenance goals in particular are directly related to the desires of the players. Steve's experience symbolizes the importance of utilizing strong communication strategies to meet the needs of the membership. Maintenance practices can be altered and in fact can evolve to produce effective results. When it comes to bunker preparation, experience speaks here: "It takes much more than a rake."

(Editor's Note: Keith A. Happ is an agronomist in the Mid-Altantic Region, visiting courses in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. Keith joined the USGA Green Section Mid-Atlantic staff in 1993. This article was reprinted with permission from the USGA Green Section.)



2000 ESA Call For Entries

Environmental Steward Awards (ESAs) were made to
 37 GCSAA members in 1999. In 2000, such recognition could go to you.

For the eighth year, the ESAs will be presented to GCSAA members around the world who have demonstrated a commitment to environmental stewardship efforts on the golf course. The awards are sponsored by Novartis Turf & Ornamental Products, Rain Bird, Textron Turf Care And Specialty Products with Cushman, Jacobsen, Ransomes and Ryan brands, and Pursell Technologies Inc.

The standardized application form focuses on environmental efforts in the areas of technology use, resource conservation, water quality management, integrated pest management, wildlife/habitat management and education/ outreach. Photos, videos and related materials will not be accepted with the entries, but will be later requested from those selected as national and international winners. Superintendents previously recognized as a national winner of the ESAs are not eligible to apply for the 2000 awards *unless* they have moved to a new facility from where the award was made.

Applications are available from the May issue of *Golf Course Management*, affiliated chapter presidents, the GCSAA service center (800/472-7878), program sponsors or the GCSAA web site (www.gcsaa.org), where it may be printed out or completed and submitted electronically. Entries are due to GCSAA on or before Oct. 1, and winners will be notified in November.

Since 1993, participating sponsors of the ESAs have donated more than \$125,000 to The GCSAA Foundation, and more than 200 golf course superintendents have been recognized.

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Applications for the 2000 Environmental Steward Awards are available from the May issue of *Golf Course Management*, the GCSAA web site (www.gcsaa.org), affiliated chapter presidents, program sponsors and the GCSAA service center (800/472-7878).

We'll look forward to receiving your application by October 1, 1999.





PURSELL.



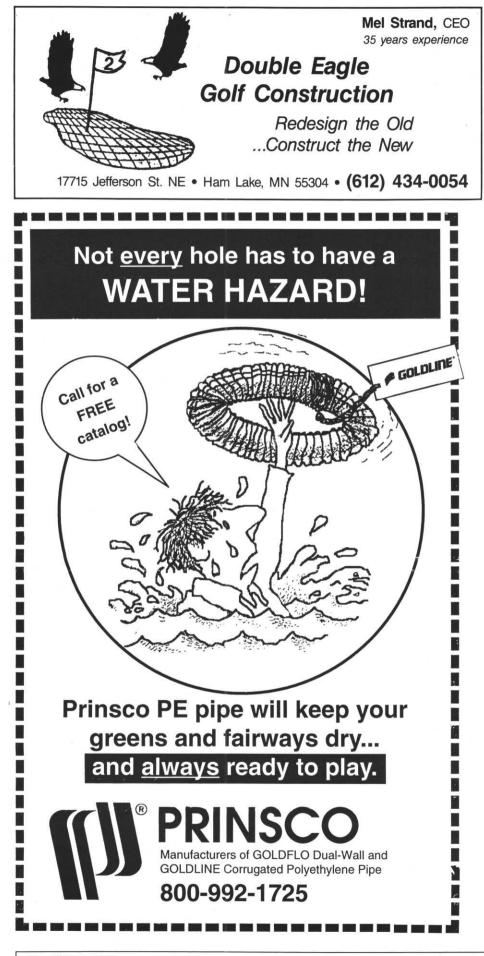




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Applications For 1999 MGCSA Scholarship Awards Are Available at the MGCSA Office

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Scholarship recipients are selected on the basis of academic record, potential to succeed, leadership and participation in school and community activities, honors, work experience, a statement of education and career goals and an outside appraisal.

Questions regarding the scholarship program should be addressed to:

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Applications must be postmarked by

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JUNE 1, 1999 - MAY 31, 2000

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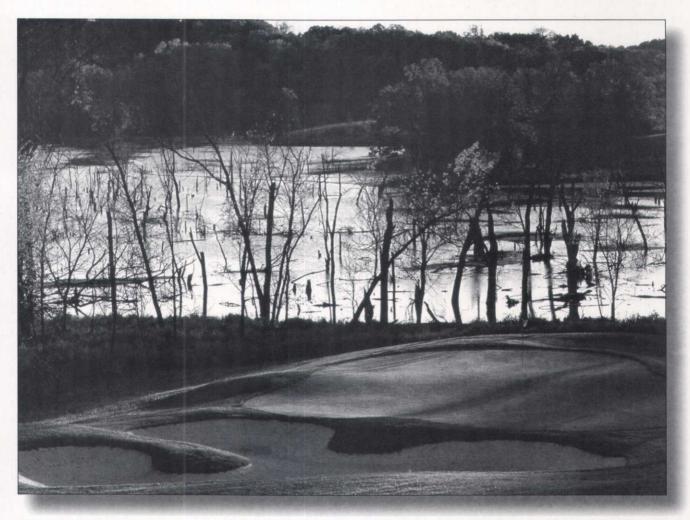
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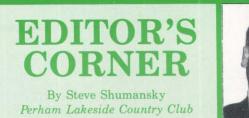
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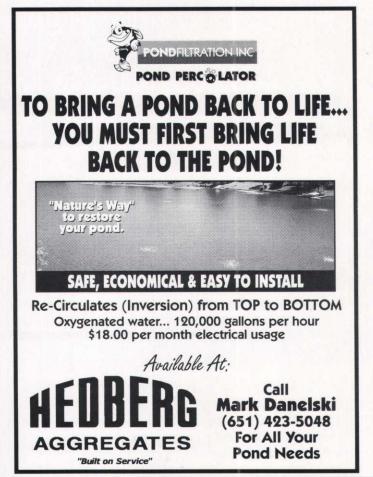
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Summer Stress?

Has it hit you yet? Has the greenspeed thing been brought to your attention yet? It sure has mine. Has the weather been screwing things up for you? We all enjoy a little rain, thunderstorms we can do without, at least the lightning. And the above average rainfall in May has certainly set some things back. Another early start as far as opening, a few warm days, and then, rain and cool temps has set the poa back a bit. For me here in west central Minnesota. I had some poa check out on me, and trying to overseed seemed to be somewhat of a lost cause because of the cool nights and soil temps not where I would have hoped. We all try to do our best, but we are all at the mercy of the weather. Something I remember someone once said, "There are those who have lost turf, and there are those who will." Just remember in the scope of things, it's only grass, don't beat yourself up over it, it'll grow back after a while. I'm no expert, but I have learned, just do what you can do.



A Lake, A Boat and.....

Some relaxing times I hope everyone that enjoys doing, does!! I don't know what it is about water that relaxes us so much. Be it pleasure boating, fishing or both. Loading the family up in the boat or going fishing with a few buddies. Just being out on a lake brings on a mellow feeling that makes us relax, and for those of us who fish, it has a bonus!! Something good to eat!! Fishing opener here in west central Minnesota was rather good this year. Of course there wasn't anything caught for the wall here, but we sure had enough for a few meals. A nice fire and wildlife to enjoy. I hope whereever you went, you had an enjoyable experience, too.!

Salary Survey

By now I hope you have received your results on the salary survey conducted this spring and find it useful for your needs. And at this time I would like to thank E. Paul Eckholm CGCS, and the rest of the research committee for their efforts in calculating the salary survey for the MGCSA. In talking with Paul over the past couple of months, he spent some time on it. I thought it was done in a way, well, easy to read and understand. There was no reason to get really nit picky on every detail. Short, sweet and to the point. Works for me!! And I hope it works for you as well.

Summer Vacation?

Have you planned one yet? Well....have you? I think I'll spend mine growing in a new nine holes....but before the tough times, I'm gonna take a break. I hope you do as well. Just remember, your golf course will still be there when you get back, and you're not going to impress anybody by saying, "I only had three days off so far this year." They're gonna think your nuts! Life is way too short. So plan on getting away from it all for a while and have fun and enjoy. With that I'll close. Keep smiling!

> -Steve Shumansky Editor



HEAD PROFESSIONAL Tom Kristo, left, and his assistant Brent Heit, handled the scoring at the May Mixer at Hillcrest CC.

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