

## Phosphoric Acid-

(Continued from Page 18)

on how it is applied, phosphite can provide protection for vulnerable plant species against the killer disease for up to five years. Phosphite is an environmentally safe, inexpensive chemical that is systemically transmitted throughout treated plants and has a very low toxicity to animals. This early success sparked a research effort, partly funded by Environment Australia grants, which was to continue over the next decade and included field trials ranging from the northern sand plain near Eneabba to the Fitzgerald River National Park east of Albany. Aerial application of phosphite to native plant communities was tested for the first time in 1993 in several reserves near Albany and proved a success. Aircraft allow for relatively cheap and rapid treatment of entire plant communities containing rare plant species, and are suitable for areas where ruggedness of the terrain would make ground application prohibitively expensive. One drawback with aerially applied phosphite, however, is that protection normally only lasts for about two years, whereas stem injection may provide protection for up to five years.

**As an energy element:** The phosphorus in potassium phosphite is in the form of "PO<sub>3</sub>" (H PO<sub>3</sub><sup>2-</sup>) rather than "PO<sub>4</sub>" (H PO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>) which is found in traditional fertilizers. It is theorized it was taking less energy by the plant to utilize PO<sub>3</sub> (H PO<sub>3</sub><sup>2-</sup>) than PO<sub>4</sub> (H PO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>).

**Mode of action:** In general, the mode of action of phosphite is not fully understood, but it appears that the progress of infec-

tion by phytophthora cinnamomi is halted when it comes into contact with phosphite in plant tissue. This may be because high phosphite concentrations interfere with the internal phosphorus utilization cycle essential for survival of the pathogen. The plant self-defense mechanism may also be triggered to wall-off and isolate the invaded root cells. Plants in poor health, which are treated in time, have been shown to fully recover and remain healthy for a number of years. Another literature cited by Smillee et al. (1989) stated that the phosphite has direct effect on the pathogen itself as a fungicide or fungi stat (an antimicrobial used to prevent mold or mildew from growing provided it hasn't already colonized) to either kill or halt its growth. They also opined that in addition to the phosphite, the other chemicals produced by phytophthora as a result of phosphite's direct action on the pathogen, might mobilize the plant's dynamic mechanism to ward off the invasion of root system. Another school of thought suggested that the potassium phosphate is not a naturally occurring substance and has a mixed mode of action involving direct toxicity to the plant pathogen, aided by natural plant defenses. Therefore, phosphorous acid is not classified as a biochemical. Another school of thought is evident that the action on plant diseases is both direct and indirect. It is almost certain that the phosphonate anion disrupts the phosphorus metabolism within the fungi, leading to fungi-stasis, and subsequently activating the host plants defense responses, giving an indirect activity of the phosphonate on the pathogen. As far as this indirect activity is concerned, it is stated that the phosphonates stimulated the production within the plant of phytoalexins. The phosphonate fungicides are the first in history to stimulate this effect in the plant (Schwinn and Urech. 1986).

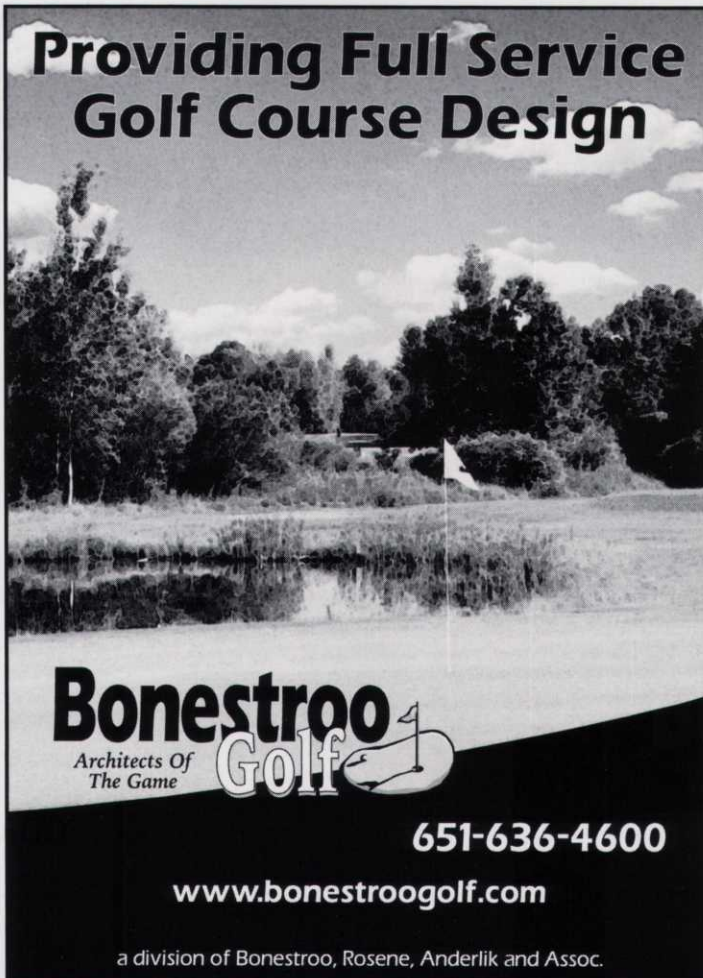
**What is of interest** to horticulturists and plant pathologists alike is that the presence of phosphonates in plants, at concentrations below those required to inhibit mycelia growth in vitro, seriously disrupts the activity of the pathogen. The main advantage of this complex mode of action is that phosphonate resistant pathogens do not appear to have arisen after 23 years of use (Guest et al. 1995). Its mode of action is either direct inhibition of the oxidative phosphorylation process in the sensitive fungi, or indirect activation of the plant's natural resistance to the specific Oomycetes.

Carswell et al. (1994) reported that phosphite has one less oxygen molecule than phosphate and, therefore, has a much higher degree of solubility and mobility. This unique characteristic permits phosphite to be rapidly absorbed or taken up across the membranes of plant foliage and/or roots. Phosphonate fungicides are derived from the reaction of phosphorous acid with bases in different solutions to form salts or esters of phosphorous acid. These then yield the phosphonate or phosphite ions (HPO<sub>3</sub><sup>2-</sup>) in solution. It is the hydrogen-phosphorus bond that forms the basis of the phosphonate fungicides. This P-H bond, which replaces the P-OH bond in phosphates, makes the phosphonate ion a poor source of phosphorus to a plant.

Plant immunization is possible through the appropriate selection of plant inputs either organic or synthetic. Usage of phosphonate fertilizers act as Induced Systemic Resistance (ISR) for practically possible phytophthora control in citrus. ISR resistance utilizes the plant's own defense mechanisms to restrict development of pathogens.

\* \* \* \*

(Editor's Note: Contact Jim O'Neill at 612-751-0305 or Doug Daniel at 612-868-9615 for more information.)



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# What is an Annual?

Courtesy of the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association

## What is an Annual?

Annuals are flowers that are used in the garden or landscape for one growing season. They are typically planted in the spring, bloom for most of the summer and are killed by the first hard frost. Annuals are used in hanging baskets, planter boxes, and mixed in the border of perennial and shrub plantings and can be planted anywhere you need a splash of color for the season. Commonly grown annuals include marigolds, petunias, impatiens and geraniums, but there

are many other varieties to choose from.

## Planting and Care

*"Newly planted annuals should be watered in thoroughly. A liquid plant starter fertilizer may be used to help get the plants off to a faster start. Once established, waterings can be reduced to once a week or when the soil becomes dry."*

With few exceptions, annuals prefer a warm soil and should not be planted in the spring until the danger of frost is past. Pansies, alyssum and snapdragons are the exceptions and will tolerate light frosts and

cool soil.

Good soil preparation is essential to success with annuals. Till or spade the soil deeply and add a slow release flower garden fertilizer at this time. If drainage is poor, you should consider raising the bed and improving drainage by adding topsoil, compost, peat or other organic matter to the bed. After planting, a mulch will help to control weeds and keep the soil uniformly moist and cool. Planters, pots and hanging baskets must have drainage holes and a potting soil that drains well.

## Water

Newly planted annuals should be watered in thoroughly. A liquid plant starter fertilizer may be used to help get the plants off to a faster start. Once established, waterings can be reduced to once a week or when the soil becomes dry. If possible, water early in the day so that the foliage has a chance to dry before evening thus discouraging plant diseases. Containers or hanging baskets will need to be checked daily for watering. Wind and summer heat will cause rapid drying making it necessary to water daily.

## Fertilizer

Fertilizing will provide extra nourishment resulting in improved plant performance. There are many types of fertilizers to choose from: liquid, granular, immediate release and slow release.

It is wise to incorporate both an immediate release and a slow release fertilizer when you are adding organic matter to the soil. For granular fertilizers, follow the label directions on the product and spread the fertilizer evenly over the soil surface. Then hand-till or roto-till the organic matter and fertilizers into the soil. Liquid fertilizers will only provide an immediate release for your plants.

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## Annuals—

(Continued from Page 22)

### Containers & Hanging Baskets

Containers are an excellent way of providing an accent of color around the patio, pool or other areas. Vines and petunias are some of the most popular container annuals but the possibilities are almost limitless. Plants that hang over or cascade make especially attractive basket items.

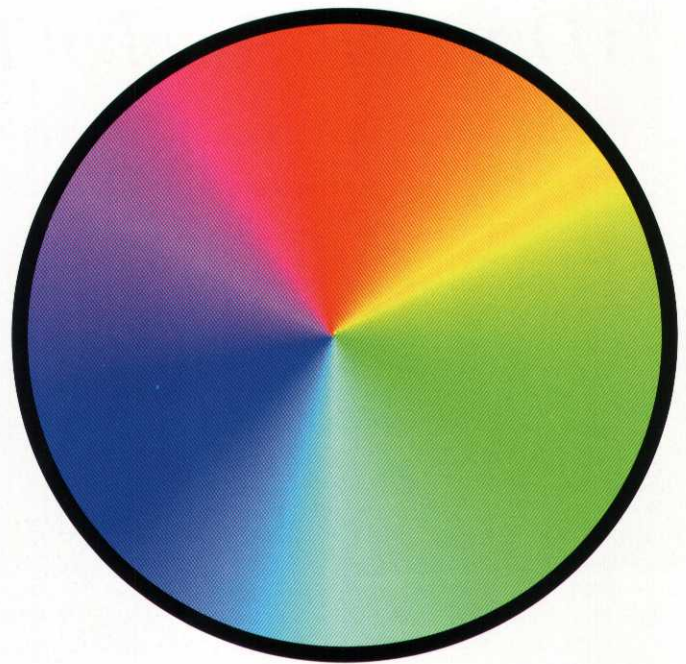
When deciding on a basket, consider one that is 10 inches in diameter or larger. A larger basket holds more soil and reduces frequency of watering and fertilizing.

For hanging baskets, always try to place the basket where the plants light requirements are satisfied. Since hanging baskets are exposed to wind and air on all sides, they are especially prone to drying out. To get the best performance from plants in hanging baskets, check the soil regularly for moisture. With all containers, check the moisture by sticking your finger in the soil before you water. Because they deplete existing nutrients quickly and have no means to obtain more, all plants in containers need to be fertilized with more frequency than annuals planted in the landscape.

### Color Wheel

from Annuals Catalog

**Primary Colors:** Combine primary colors - blue, red and yellow - to create a dramatic contrast.



**Complementary Colors:** Combine complementary colors, those opposite each other on the color wheel - such as purple and yellow - for a calming, soothing effect.

**Adjacent Colors:** Combine adjacent colors to create a mixture of hues and tones.

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# Is Drug and Alcohol Testing Worth the Cost?

By JUSTIN REED

USIS

First, let's look at some facts.

A study of workplace substance abuse revealed that companies that implemented a comprehensive drug-free workplace program (including a formal policy, employee education and access to an EAP and drug testing) resulted in an approximately 50 percent lower positive drug test rate.

A study of companies engaged in random drug testing in combination with pre-employment testing reduced their mean workers' compensation claims per 100 employees per year by 63.7 percent over a four year period while the "control group" of employers (employers not conducting drug testing), experienced a 19 percent increase during that same period.

Results from a study of employment applicants for the U.S. Postal Service determined that applicants testing positive for drugs were 66 percent more likely to be absent and 77 percent more likely to be discharged within three years of hire than applicants testing negative for illicit drugs.

The most recent results of the Quest Drug Test Index© (Quest Diagnostics is one of the largest drug testing laboratories in the U.S.) state that the U.S. workforce's positive drug test results have declined nationwide, from a high of 13.6 percent in 1988, when many companies first started implementing drug testing programs to a low of 4.5 percent in 2003, when over 67 percent of employers conducted drug testing.

In a recent study, rates of current alcohol use were 61.8 percent for full-time employed adults aged 18 or older. Rates for "binge" drinkers were 29 percent and 8.4 percent for heavy drinkers (those considered alcohol dependent). Additionally, many more employees drink to a lesser degree.

**A common misconception** is that alcoholics are responsible for most alcohol-related workplace problems when, in fact, casual drinkers account for far more incidents of absenteeism, tardiness and poor quality of work than the alcohol dependent.

A "light to moderate" drinker (one who sometimes binges, i.e. typically has six or more drinks) is likely to report to work "hungover." Hangovers are costly to employers in both absenteeism and poor job performance; plus, hangover-related health problems include an elevated risk of heart attacks, reduced cognitive abilities, and irrational behavior. Studies reporting on the secondhand effects of alcohol use found one in five workers report being injured, having to cover for a co-worker or needing to work harder due to other employees' drinking. Nearly one-third of workers who consider their jobs to be dangerous report experiencing secondhand alcohol effects.

**Alcohol-related job performance problems** are caused not only by on-the-job drinking but also by heavy drinking outside of work. Although obvious, it is important to state that there is a positive relationship between being "hungover" and feeling sick at work, sleeping on the job and having problems with job tasks or co-workers. [A telling example: Among pilots whose performance was tested in flight simulators, researchers found evidence of impairment 14 hours after pilots reached blood alcohol concentrations of between 0.10-0.12 Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC), and significant impairment eight hours after reaching a BAC of 0.10.]

cts, the benefits of drug and alcohol testing far outweigh the cost. One only has to look at the dramatic reduction in positive drug test rates between 1988 when employers first started drug testing and 2003 when over 67 percent of employers test. The positive rate was 13.6 percent in 1988 and it was down to 4.5 percent in 2003.

As we discussed last month, there are five critical components of an effective drug-free workplace program: drug-free workplace policy, supervisor training, employee education, employee assistance and drug/alcohol testing. Each one of these components is, in fact, critical and complementary. Drug/alcohol testing provides the following benefits:

Pre-employment drug testing goes a long way toward weeding out those individuals who are chronic/habitual drug users.

Random drug and alcohol testing serves as a deterrent and is the major factor in helping to ensure existing employees remain drug free. The majority of employees value their job and, when confronted with a random drug/alcohol testing program, will choose to remain drug free and non-dependent on alcohol.

**Reasonable suspicion drug and alcohol testing** identifies individuals in the workplace that are clearly under-the-influence and provides a tool to remove them from the workforce. All identifications must be made by trained supervisors.

Post-accident drug and alcohol testing identifies individuals who were under-the-influence at the time of an accident or incident.

Lastly, a comprehensive Drug-Free Workplace Program helps ensure a more productive and safer work environment. It saves money for the employer through the increased productivity and reduces liability by demonstrating a commitment to a safer environment for both workers and the public.

163 Yard Par 3 eighth hole at the Refuge Golf Club in Oak Grove, Minnesota.



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# Letters From Iraq—

(Continued from Page 12)

which is only fair.

On a positive note the elections were yesterday and they seemed to go very well. Quick, funny story... We watch the election workers or some of them anyway and we secure the ballot boxes. Well, the Iraqi soldiers were watching the election workers at our base and some of the election workers were tampering with the ballot boxes. The Iraqi soldiers caught them and they were going to shoot them on the spot. We had to jump in and ease the situation. It all worked out in the end but we must have taught them well because they are already trying to rig the elections. Anyway things went pretty well here. The Iraqi officials wanted us to stay away and let the local tribes handle security. We did and there were only a few acts of violence mostly aimed at coalition forces doing normal patrols. The turnout was much more than expected and some places did run out of ballots. We are all hoping that the government will quickly organize and decide that they don't need us here. I think it is realistic that they want us gone but they still need the troops and the money we are supporting them with.

The new job is going well. I have a really good bunch of guys and they are good soldiers. My new job takes me outside the wire more, but I feel pretty safe when I am out there. I got to meet a Bedouin sheep herder the other day. He moves his sheep and family around to where ever the grass is good. I have no clue what the hell grass he was talking about and I grow grass. There is dirt, sand, rocks and more sand. If it is green and in the desert, it is probably trash. I also met with a sheik of a local tribe. Pretty arrogant guy and you can tell he is playing both sides of the fence. Most people over here are. They don't want to be associated with the American forces because the insurgents have threatened them but they also know that when the violence ends we will leave. Like I said in an earlier update, a good majority of the insurgents are locals. You can tell from talking to the people that they have all these little fights among themselves. One tribe or family doesn't like the other so they will say that one of them is an insurgent and we go and arrest them and they say the other guy is an insurgent. They probably both are but who knows. This is not one big happy family over here. I think they all need some counseling. I say pull the troops out and bring in Dr Phil! Hope that everyone will have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Take care Rob

January 3, 2006

Hello all as you can see I have changed from weekly update to just update. I just don't get the time as much to sit back and write down all the things that are happening to me and over here. Which is probably what I should be doing more of since I get out and do and see more people. Things have been going pretty well. It has been kind of slow. The December elections went smoothly for us besides the possible voting fraud. I think now the people are just waiting for the results. God only knows what will happen when the people get the results. Things in Ramadi have remained about the same. We still have bad guys hanging around. On a possible positive note numerous sheiks from the area had a meeting the other day to try and get more involved with the police force and army in the area. I say possible because there were also a few insurgent leaders there. The local tribes and sheiks may be trying to get things turned around in the area or they may be trying to start up there own militia. We will find out shortly. I have met the main sheik that organized this meeting and he is probably playing both sides of the fence. Corruption is a part of the society over here. It kind of reminds me of The Godfather. The sheiks are like the mob bosses and they have their thugs out doing their dirty work like selling gas on the black market or smuggling weapons. That's how they make their money. Since most of the people here are poor, if you need something you go to your sheik for help. They give you a little money and in return you do favors like put out IEDs or take a few shots at U.S. forces, hide stuff for them or

report on what US forces do. It all works out pretty nicely for them. For the most part I think the people would like to be left alone. They like us being here because we protect them from insurgent groups, but like many other people feel, if we weren't here would the insurgents still be here? From what I see I would say yes. The people here are easy marks. Whoever has the power will come in and push them around and intimidate them and do what they want when they want. There is no law to government/police/army to stop it from happening. Even when one is established I think it will take a long time to get away from the corruption that is so prevalent here. Like I have said before, all we can do is put them in a position to try and get things worked out for themselves. Hopefully this meeting with the sheiks will get them together and moving in the right direction. Well that is enough rambling for the day. I hope that you all had a good Christmas and a happy new year. I am looking forward to being home in Feb. Hope to see you guys then. For now take care. Rob

\* \* \* \*

(Editor's Note: Rob can be reached at the following address or e-mail:

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Local Competitor 15-5-10 (215 SGN)



1 lb. of N per 1,000 = 290 lbs./acre = 2.0 particles per sq. in.

The matrix shown below demonstrates a dramatic increase in particle coverage (PPSI) by using smaller particle products versus increasing the rate (lbs.) of a larger particle product.

POUNDS/ACRE	Particles Per Square Inch Matrix									
	SGN 20-5-20 Fertilizer with 6% Nutrients					Local Competitor				
	80	100	125	150	175	215	240	300	300	300
100	15.0	7.7	3.9	2.3	1.4	0.8	0.6	0.3		
125	18.7	9.6	4.9	2.8	1.8	1.0	0.7	0.4		
150	22.5	11.5	5.9	3.4	2.1	1.2	0.8	0.4		
175	26.2	13.4	6.9	4.0	2.5	1.4	1.0	0.5		
200	30.0	15.4	7.9	4.5	2.9	1.5	1.1	0.6		
225	33.7	17.3	8.8	5.1	3.2	1.7	1.2	0.6		
250	37.5	19.2	9.8	5.7	3.6	1.9	1.4	0.7		
300	45.0	23.0	11.8	6.8	4.3	2.3	1.7	0.9		


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The illustration below shows the effect of using a non-uniform fertilizer product. Note the severe skewing and banding of different nutrients.


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## Musing the Minutes

By MATT MCKINNON  
MGCSA Secretary

On March 20 the MGCSA Board of Directors met at the old MGCSA business office for the last time. For everyone that does not receive e-mail, the MGCSA business office recently moved to: 700 Twelve Oaks Center Drive Suite 706, Wayzata, MN 55391. The new phone number is 952-473-2582.

**President James Bade reported he has met with Dr. Michaels, the Dean of the U of M Horticulture Department.** They would like to find a solution for the plant pathologist position, but the message from Dr. Michaels was cutbacks at the legislative level means do more with less. Dr. Michaels would like to meet again.

**Executive Director Scott Turtinen reported that 170 people attended the March Mini-Seminar** and the association made \$4,500. In the past only 100 to 110 people have attended the seminar and the goal was to make about \$1,000. Association dues have been coming in. As of now, there have been 100 persons that

have donated money totaling \$3,500. Last year there was 115 who donated money totaling \$4,400. Larry Thornton donated \$2,000 to the association. Here is the breakdown of the donation: \$600 towards Tee sponsorship, \$900 towards entertainment at Awards Banquet and \$500 towards Research or Scholarship fund. Rob Panuska made the motion to use the \$500 for the Research fund and Jack MacKenzie 2nd.

**Eric Peters reported that there are three finalists for the Scholarship fund.** They are Brad Johnson, Nick Morton and Erin Johnson. Erin Johnson won last year and was awarded \$1,500.

Dr. Brian Horgan reported he is finishing up with the architects on the design and cost for the renovation of the green houses. The building needs to be brought up to code. This will be the biggest expense for this project.

**Jack MacKenzie reported that Pat Miles was selected to be our 2006 Ambassador.** For the MTGF, Jack reported the election of officers went well. Mark Stennes of S&S Tree Service is the new President and Jack MacKenzie is the new Vice-President. There were issues with voting for a vendor representative due to

lack of Nomination and Election Protocol. The next MTGF meeting is set for April 19. Jack also reported that a subcommittee was formed of Bob Mugas, Brian Horgan, Paul Diegnau and Jack MacKenzie. This committee will address the problem with Funding Proposal Requests. Their charge is to develop a formal program to include reasonable expectation as well as cost breakdowns for future funding request. The total requests were in excess of \$166,000. Prior to the discussion and distribution of funds John Hopko moved the Board of Directors approve the establishment of a \$150,000 minimum balance in a reserve fund. Total monies approved for funding came to \$103,577. This includes the continuation of existing programs and some additional small expenditures.

Jack also reported that the *Hole Notes* publication continues to receive acclaim for its incredible offerings. Jack is always looking for more information and articles from members.

**Tom Proshek reported the 2006 Championship** will be moved from Wayzata CC to Windsong Farm GC.

I hope everyone is having a great spring. --MM

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## Sage Vinkemeier

Superintendent Jeff Vinkemeier of Glencoe Country Club and his wife, Sheila, welcomed their third daughter into the world. Sage Vinkemeier was born on March 22, 2006 weighing 7 pounds, 10



ounces and was 20 inches long. She is getting lots of love and attention from her big sisters, Lily and Daisy Belle. The whole family is doing well.

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## *In Bounds: Professionalism*

By JOHN "JACK" MACKENZIE, CGCS  
North Oaks Golf Club

A very good friend of mine is also a vendor at the Minnesota Green Expo. When the MTGF joined ranks with the MNLA and began attending the show a few years ago, my chum Paul said, "Jack, it was a pleasant surprise to see so many sport jackets and ties at the show. I can only attribute the radical change in professional attire to the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association because, prior to your appearance, the crowd was typically conspicuous in seed caps and work boots."

Indeed ours is a respectable organization and most of us express ourselves in appropriate manner with clean slacks, dress shirts, sweaters and even a blazer when attending professional functions, but there is room for improvement.

Recently I attended, as an invited guest, an educational program at a private country club. The format and content were exceptional, but the lack of professional attire was surprising to say the least. Many of the attendees were wearing baseball caps inside the building. A big oops if I am stepping on toes here guys, but when invited to a private club, or inside any building, show a bit of common courtesy. Regardless of the club rules, my mother always told me to take my cap off indoors out of respect for her and any woman in the vicinity. Being a gentleman, I will always cater to her request.

**Some will balk at my suggestion that they are uncouth to wear a hat indoors,** just look at the gangbangers and rap superstars who cop a cool attitude with oversized, slant angled and crooked hood

ornaments. They sure do epitomize respectfulness in my book. NOT! Maybe we should regress, I mean redress, with our pants down to our knees as if to express an anorexic plight. Or perhaps wear Carhart coveralls at our next golf event.

**Hardly practical or acceptable.** Dress professionally including the removal of a cap inside a building. You never know whom you will meet or the impression you will make with your visible state-

*"I have heard it said that the lies are in the eyes. Poor eye contact, or none in the case of sunglasses, often conjures up deception."*

ment.

And for the sake of the industry please wear clean clothes, a sport coat or a neat sweater. Leave the holey jeans at home along with the hooded sweatshirts and Sorel boots. Let me reiterate, we are invited guests and representatives of our profession when we attend functions at venues beyond our club borders. Why would anyone dress down when there is an opportunity to express our leading status in the green industry?

**Don't you think that golf professionals are easily recognized because they look good?** And how much respect would you give Dr. Vargas, Dr. Rossi or Dr. Horgan if they wore their polar fleece

vests when giving a presentation? They do not dress down and neither should we!

**It also strikes me as funny** to converse with someone inside a building when he or she is wearing a pair of dark sunglasses. Unconsciously two ideas cross my mind. The first "must have been a late night for my friend." And the second "I wonder if they are checking out my swimsuit area, I sure hope my fly isn't open!" But of course, more often than not, the individual just doesn't understand the discomfort they add to the conversation when their eyes are shaded.

**I have heard it said that the lies are in the eyes.** Poor eye contact, or none in the case of sunglasses, often conjures up deception. Bank robbers wear masks and eye coverings are commonplace at masquerade balls; both are used to cover the obvious. Because communication is more than just listening and talking, mannerisms such as facial expressions and eye movements can elicit opinions.

Not only should sunglasses be removed inside a building, but also it is a sure sign of respect and interest when an individual takes off their shades outside while talking with somebody. Wear a lanyard around your neck and allow your specs to dangle, hang them in your shirt, or simply hold the glasses in your hand when doing a meet and greet on the course or around the clubhouse. Don't leave them wondering where your eyes were wandering or leave them guessing that you were mind messing.

**A few would say that my suggestions are petty and that it is not my place to recommend the outfits my peers** should adorn, but guess what, we represent each other in our actions, words and yes, the clothing we wear. No longer should we be indicted by the impression left by Carl Spackler of Caddyshack fame. Take it to the next level my friends, "dress the professional turf manager... be the professional turf manager."

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