

GOLF

'Black layer' damaging nation's greens

It doesn't matter whether it's an old green, or a new one; in California or New Jersey; summer or fall. Black layer will strike greens anywhere, at any time.

James Snow, director of the USGA Green Section's Northeastern Region, says black layer is a layer of anaerobic material, rotting organic matter, resulting from poor drainage in the green.

Superintendents usually discover it when the turf becomes weak and develops poor root systems and the soil remains saturated. A soil probe will show the black layer at the same level in the green.

Snow says that a number of things could have gone wrong in the green's construction, causing black layer.

"The materials rototilled into the top layer may not have been mixed properly. Water backs up and rots the material," Snow explains. "Maybe they never sent materials to our soil lab in Texas. Or, maybe they did, but the sand they sent wasn't a representative sample."

Gary Watchke of the USGA in Connecticut fought black layer in his greens at Iowa State University. "We found root-rotting pythium and algae which thrive on free water," Watchke says. "I've seen black layer more frequently in high sand greens, maybe because superintendents water those more often."

Black layer can hit at any depth of the green. Snow recommends careful watering and frequent aeration, which helps break through the layer. Watchke says the fungicide systemic Aliette can fight pythium in the roots.

If the layer is deep in the green, it may need to be rebuilt. In some cases, however, Snow says drainage lines can be installed without rebuilding the green.

Black layer can hit at any time, but is more common in the summer when the green is under stress, and during persistent rainfall. Watchke says the problem will often resolve itself after several years when the soil regains a balance.

BUSINESS

Corporate 'bad breath' costly, expert warns

Telephone skills can be powerful tools for any landscape company. Telephone skills produce new business, promote company goodwill, build confidence, elicit cooperation, resolve doubts, and lower tension.

"In that first moment of contact, a well-trained receptionist is more valuable to the company than its highest-paid estimator," says Richard Lambert, author of a new audio cassette series entitled "Professionally Speaking."

But the opposite can also be true. "Corporate 'bad breath,' as we call it, can be a costly problem," advises



CUT A LOT MORE TURF

Loaded with features, the newest generation of highly maneuverable Power Quint mowers virtually guarantee you decades of the finest turf care

with even small PTO-equipped tractors. Adjustable reels work against heavy duty bedknives in individual cutting units that truly float over uneven terrain. And when the job's finished, this



© 1986, National Mower Co.

ASK ABOUT OUR NEW VERTI-CUT UNITS!

INDUSTRY

OMC Lincoln buys Brouwer Turf Equipment

OMC Lincoln, the parent company of Cushman-Ryan, has acquired Canadian-based Brouwer Turf Equipment. OMC president James Chapman and Brouwer president Gerry Brouwer agree that the Sept. 5 acquisition will provide growth opportunities for both companies.

"Our company was not for sale," Brouwer tells *WEEDS TREES & TURF*. "But OMC approached me with an interesting growth plan that changed all that. With an aggressive plan of introducing several new products in the



Gerry Brouwer (left) and James Chapman discuss business.

Bad Breath from page 6

Lambert. "Our surveys show that seven out of 10 people who decide not to do business with a landscape contractor make that decision because of the way they're treated on the phone. There's strong evidence to show that poor phone skills do real damage to a contractor's business relationships."

When consulting with contractors, Lambert says the telephone is usually his starting point.

"Creating a good first impression is critical when you're marketing an intangible such as landscape services. The telephone either helps or hurts you immediately.

The biggest complaint appears to be putting callers on hold.

Recorded on three audio cassettes with an accompanying study manual, "Professionally Speaking" is available for \$68 postage paid from The Idea Bank. For more information, call (800) 621-1136—in Arizona, (602) 829-1233.

years ahead, we now have the resources to accelerate their introduction."

In 1985, Brouwer reported sales of more than \$10 million in the U.S.

OMC's sales were about \$880 million.

"As the turf installation and turf care business grows, so does the demand for turf equipment," Chapman notes.

ATHLETIC TURF

Athletic turf tips (continued)

WEEDS TREES & TURF has received many inquiries about the athletic field articles which appeared in our September issue. Here are some answers:

- We encourage you to promote safer playing fields to your community. Tell your P.T.A. and administration the critical role safe fields play in education. Show them the articles.

- If you want copies or reprints, contact Kathleen Mac-

iuszko at (216) 826-2839.

- Since the articles carry a copyright, you are bound by law to request permission if you wish to use lengthy excerpts from them. Always credit WT&T and send us a copy of how the article is used.

- We would also like to hear the reaction you get within your community or school system. Please write us: *WEEDS TREES & TURF*, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130.

WITH LESS TRACTOR

11 1/2' unit folds up its outboard reels automatically for easy trailering and storage.

For all the details and a free demonstration, call or write today for the name of the dealer nearest you.

National Mower Company
700 Raymond Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55114
612/646-4079.



CONFERENCES

Landscape Expo has comprehensive slate

The Second Annual Landscape Expo March 3-5 in Chicago will have 30 seminars in private sector, public sector, and technical tracks.

The preliminary program for private sector landscape managers includes such topics as leasing, lawsuits, computers, pricing, hiring, firing, and compensation.

The preliminary program for those in the public sector includes topics like collective bargaining, the media, recruiting personnel, vandalism, budgets, estimating labor, and "The Parks and Playgrounds Crisis: A Legal and Insurance View."

Technical topics include ground-water, thatch, herbicides, PGRs, and renovation.

Expanded 3½-hour workshops are titled: "Development and Implementation of an Employee Training Program," "Estimating and Management Principles for Landscape Contractors," and "Tips on Buying and Maintaining Power Equipment."

The Expo will be held at the O'Hare Exposition Center in Rosemont, Ill. More than 150 manufactur-

ers of products for the green industry have already registered as exhibitors at the trade show.

PESTICIDES

Pesticides require special handling

Here are several points to remember when handling pesticides to reduce exposure:

1. Do not smoke while using pesticides.

2. Do not carry lunches in the vehicle containing pesticides. If it must be done keep the lunch in a tightly sealed metal lunch pail. Don't use a paper bag.

3. Wash hands before eating. The back of the hand absorbs almost twice as much pesticide as the front. Wash thoroughly before eating, after using concentrates, and at the end of the day.

4. Avoid beards, but if you have one, wash it thoroughly each day. Beards readily absorb and hold pesticides and make it difficult to get a tight fit with a respirator or gas mask.

5. Keep fingernails short so dirt and pesticides do not absorb under the nails.

6. Avoid pants with cuffs; cuffs hold excessive pesticides.

7. Change clothes daily and wash clothes separately.

8. Keep pesticides in containers with tight lids. All items should fit tightly so they do not move, tilt, or spill when stopping. Avoid the use of wooden boxes for liquid pesticides as they readily absorb pesticides and therefore, emit vapors.

9. When handling pesticide concentrate, use non-cloth lined gloves.

10. Carry and use a funnel when pouring pesticides to reduce chances of spillage.

11. Place the funnel in a tightly sealed container when not in use.

12. Use paper towels instead of rags for wiping hands.

13. Within the vehicle, store pesticides in areas outside of where the driver sits. Always keep the window cracked.

14. Line the bottom of the truck (or vehicle carrying the pesticide) with a plastic liner; cover the liner with a pre-cut piece of cardboard. If a large spill occurs, the plastic prevents the pesticide from saturating the trunk.

15. Carry pesticide-absorbent material for small spills. Commercial absorbent used in garages is sufficient.

SDI TURF SPRAYERS

Trouble-Free Turf Maintenance Year Round!



The most advanced spraying devices in turf care that work season after season with trouble free start-ups.

- Nationwide Service Centers •
- Non-Corrosive Materials For Long Life •
- 50 to 1,000 Gallon Tanks Available •
- 46 Models to Choose From •

A full line of spray units for Lawn, Turf, Trees and PCO. Send in for free brochure listing all types of units to do the right job for you. Remember, the right equipment goes a long way!

SEND FOR FREE BROCHURE

SDI

And find out why SDI is the fastest growing spraying manufacturer in America!

Spraying Devices Inc. P.O. Box 3107
Visalia, CA 93278 (209) 651-1306

Cut Maintenance In Half With SDI