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cost of laying a pipe to get it to the course was too expensive.

The course did experience some runoff problems during grow-in. Once, Neumann recalls, he was roused from a deep sleep by a caller informing him that the course was flooding the municipal airport located across the highway. Rushing to Highlands, he discovered one stuck sprinkler head.

Neumann says he was skeptical when the course's ET-based control irrigation system began operation.

"However I find myself relying more and more on it," he says. "I've also found that we can save



Kentucky bluegrass fairways at Highlands are overseeded with high-endophyte ryegrasses.

somewhere in the neighborhood of 25 to 30 percent of our water costs by relying on the ET-based system to make the decisions that I had been making in the past."

Neumann says he's pleased, and a little bit surprised by how well golfers have accepted the changes at the course.

"Areas that we didn't think would be acceptable at a municipal golf course have become the talk of the golfing community," says Neumann.

"I firmly believe that environmentally sound management practices are economically sound management practices, too."

Supers included in new cooperative buying alliance

■ If a cooperative purchasing program can work for colleges and universities, why not for country clubs? Or for professionals at those clubs, like golf course superintendents?

Why not indeed, wondered Jeffery Dykehouse who, earlier this year, formed the United States Country Club Association (USCCA) to do just that.

In 1994, he worked with a similar program administered by the Midwestern Higher Education Commission for post secondary schools. "I saw how the process worked and, being a golf fanatic, I did some research and found out no one is offering a comprehensive cooperative purchasing program to private clubs," Dykehouse tells LM.

As its name indicates, the USCCA is accepting membership applications from private country clubs for charter membership through August 31. It's marketing services to a 10-state region: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Jersey and New York. Dykehouse says there are about 1450 private clubs with golf courses in the 10-state region, but private clubs from elsewhere can join too.

Dykehouse tells LM that interest from



Jeffery Dykehouse says private clubs are responding to cooperative.

country club general managers is strong for USCCA's Cooperative Alliance for Purchasing (CAP).

Fundamental to making CAP work will be the development of member advisory committees. Separate committees will be set up for each product or service provided. The committees will be made up of general

managers, golf pros, superintendents, and other leaders responsible for each area of business.

A Maintenance Equipment Committee made up of superintendents would then, for instance, assist with developing a survey for other member superintendents that determines just what types of products or services they would like to pursue for costs savings.

Initially, Dykehouse says, general managers and superintendents have indicated interest in insurance programs, maintenance equipment, fertilizer and chemicals, and golf cars. After the membership says just what it wants, USCCA takes that information into the marketplace and negotiates with purveyors and manufacturers.

"It's real important for us to include our members in every step of this process," says Dykehouse.

USCCA will also be building a Resource Sharing Program whereby superintendents can share the cost and use of maintenance equipment that would otherwise be too expensive for a single club.

Another benefit to members will be USCCA-coordinated regional meetings for member clubs and their staffs.

The USCCA strives to compliment other industry organizations rather than compete with them, adds Dykehouse, founder and president.

For further information contact: USCCA, 500 Cascade West Parkway, Grand Rapids, MI 49546; (616) 949-9411.