



## President's Message

As fall rolls by and we usher in the winter season, I always enjoy looking at the season past and begin to make plans for the season to come.

It's been a good year for turf in West Michigan and many projects on the golf

course have been accomplished. Most of these, if not all, would not have been completed without the hard-working people we have on our crews. I'm always thankful for the amount of pride and genuine effort that these people put forward to make playing conditions better for our customers.

Long range forecasts of weather say we should have a normal winter this year. This I would guess would mean more snow than the past few years. It has been a dry fall and snow

would help replenish some of the ground water.

Others that have worked hard this year are the members of the West Michigan Superintendents Board. Many people do behind-the-scenes work to make sure meetings and education become reality for the members. Please thank them next time you are at a meeting. Have a great Hunting and Holiday Season.

Sincerely,

Alan C. Bathum, President

## Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program recipient of GCSAA's 2001 President's Award

The GCSAA's 2001 President's Award for Environmental Leadership was given to the Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program. This award signifies GCSAA's commitment to honor excellence in environmental efforts in golf, and helps our industry gain recognition for its positive role in protecting and enhancing the environment.

"This program is a most deserving recipient of this major award," said GCSAA president, R. Scott Woodhead, CGCS.

## Go for the Green! Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program

Michigan has more golf courses per capita than any other state in the country! Many feature some of Michigan's most precious environmental assets, such as the Great Lakes, premier trout streams, forests, wetlands and wildlife.

The course you play today may be a member of the Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program. As a member, this course is committed to environmentally sound golf course management practices designed to prevent pollution and protect natural resources.

Join us in these efforts to protect Michigan's prized natural resources.

An environmentally aware golfer...

- recognizes environmentally sensitive areas on the golf course, such as the wetlands, ponds, streams and natural vegetation;
- supports efforts taken by course managers to protect the water, wildlife and surrounding natural resources;
- recognizes the "environmentally sensitive

- area" designation in the rules of golf;
- appreciates the value of natural habitat areas for Michigan's native plants and a diversity of wildlife;
- knows that wetlands do more than eat golf balls—they are excellent at filtering water;
- helps the course managers in their efforts to protect the environment by following rules of the course; and
- places trash in its proper place.

You can also join us in the protection of Michigan's natural resources by checking the actions listed below that you will do at home.

- Leave the clippings.** Grass clippings are a great source of slow-release nutrients for your lawn.
- Mow high.** Taller grass has deeper roots, which tolerate hot, dry conditions better. Recommended height is 2.5 to 3.5 inches.

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## SERIALS

Editor's Note: Please write me if you have any corrections or if you are interested in doing an article for us at:

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
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## Go for the Green! *continued*

- Don't guess... get a soil test.** Find out what your lawn needs, if anything, to be healthy. Water run-off containing fertilizers and pesticides can pollute our waterways.
- Never fertilize right before it rains.** Fertilizing right before a rainstorm can move fertilizer off your lawn and into the storm drains, which can pollute our waterways.
- Follow label directions for applying fertilizers.** Don't use the "if 5 pounds is good, 10 pounds would be better" theory. Apply only what is recommended.
- Never allow fertilizer particles to remain on paved surfaces.**
- Remember that the curb or ditch in front of your house connects your property to local streams.**
- Don't refuel your mower or trimmer near the water.** An accidental spill could cause considerable damage.

The Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program, which is

the first of its kind in the nation, was developed at Michigan State University in cooperation with several state agencies and the turfgrass industry. For more information, contact Debbie Swartz 517-353-3208 (email: swartzd@msu.edu), or Greg Lyman 517-353-0860 (email: lyman@msue.msu.edu); or write to Environmental Stewardship Program, Michigan State University, 286 Plant & Soil Science Building, East Lansing, MI 48824-1325.

## The Economics of Equipment Acquisitions

By Jennifer Richter

Today, golf course superintendents are not only responsible for operating and maintaining their courses, but also for acquiring turf care equipment. Oftentimes, that means developing creative financing solutions.

That's why it's important for superintendents to understand the different payment options available for acquiring equipment. Once superintendents understand these choices, they can make wise equipment investments—investments that please everyone from golfers and grounds crew members to management.

There are three basic avenues to acquiring turf care equipment. Superintendents can purchase the equipment with cash, finance it through a conditional sales contract, or lease it with a tax lease.

**Assessing the Options**—"Financing is still the most popular avenue for acquiring equipment, but the trend is toward leasing," says Dan Gilmore, director of leasing and financing, Textron Golf & Turf, Racine, Wis. "In the next few years, the majority of turf care equipment will be purchased through tax leases."

Why has leasing become the wave of the future? "Most superintendents are tied to their equipment budgets," explains

Gilmore. "They need the most reliable, up-to-date equipment to maintain an attractive course, but they're limited by budget constraints. A tax lease allows superintendents to maximize their equipment purchases while staying within their budgets."

With a tax lease, the golf course makes a monthly payment for a specified term, typically three to four years. At the end of the term, the course can return the equipment, purchase it for fair market value, or renew the lease. The entire monthly payment may be tax deductible, and the lessor takes full depreciation of the equipment.

Under a conditional sales contract, the golf course owns the equipment at the end of the specified term. Only the interest portion of the monthly payment is tax deductible, and the course takes full depreciation of the equipment.

If the equipment is purchased with cash, the golf course obtains ownership of the equipment without paying interest. There's a drawback to cash purchases, though. They consume a large portion of working capital that could be used for other projects, such as course improvements.

**Acquiring Affordable Equipment**—There are several advantages to leasing equipment. Perhaps the largest advantage is that it makes new equipment more affordable. "A lease enables superintendents to acquire the equipment they need today," says Gilmore.

Nobody knows this better than Lou Quick, superintendent for Anglebrook Golf Club in Lincolndale, N.Y. Quick began leasing a fleet of Jacobsen® mowers and several Jacobsen walk-behind aerators in the spring of 1997, just prior to opening the pri-

## Need Your Help!

While at the chapter delegates meeting a fellow superintendent who I have gotten to know over the years from Oregon (because of his involvement in GCSAA and his chapter) was in attendance and is dealing with cancer. During the meeting we were told that this person has a flag collection and we were asked when we got back if we could to send him a flag.

A few days ago I received a call from this person and he was very up-beat and excited. It seems since the delegates meeting his flag collection has exploded and only in his unselfish way he is looking to make a positive out of it. Thinking of all of us instead of himself and his disease. He informed me that he did not have a flag from Michigan. I said that will change and it has. He said that he has contacted GCSAA Foundation and is working with them on

an idea of taking this flag collection and making it into a 365-day calendar with money going to fund scholarship(s). He said how excited he was and how he felt this was what God had given to him to work on. He is not able to work full days.

So, my fellow superintendents from Michigan, let's show this man and the rest of our fellow superintendents around the country how giving and supportive we are. Please send a logo flag to:

Walter Mattison, CGCS  
61272 Killowan Lane  
Bend, OR 97702

I thank you for your support and God bless you and hope you had a great season and have a joyous holiday season.

Jon D. Maddern, CGCS

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## Equipment Acquisitions, *continued*

vate 18-hole course. "Leasing was a way for us to reduce our cash outlay while the course was being built," he explains. "We needed to put our capital toward other expenses, such as building the clubhouse and maintenance facility."

But affordability isn't the only reason why Quick prefers to lease equipment.

"I like the option of getting new equipment every four years. It's like getting a new car," he says.

Another advantage to leasing equipment is fewer repairs. "With a lease, you can return the equipment before most major repairs are needed. You usually don't have to worry about rebuilding engines or hydraulic motors," notes Quick, who plans to renew his equipment leases at the end of their term. "Once some equipment gets beyond four years, you have to consider replacing expensive parts just from normal wear and tear."

While Anglebrook leases its high-use equipment (e.g., mow-

ers), the golf course finances other equipment, such as trailers, tractors and sweepers. Generally, any equipment with a 10-year or more life span is financed for five years, explains Quick.

Dakota Golf Management, which comprises three municipal golf courses, Elmwood, Prairie Green and Kuehn Park, also sees the value in leasing turf care equipment. Based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, the golf management company leases a variety of equipment, including Jacobsen and Toro<sup>®</sup> mowers, Cushman<sup>®</sup> utility vehicles and Yamaha<sup>®</sup> golf cars.

"I like the flexibility that leasing offers us," says Tom Jansa, vice president of Dakota Golf Management, who has leased equipment for five years. "We can purchase the equipment at the end of the term or return it for newer equipment."

"Leasing allows us to have higher quality equipment on hand," he adds.

**Linking with a Lender—** Once superintendents opt to

lease or finance turf care equipment, a lender must be chosen. Several types of lenders are available, including captive leasing companies and local or national leasing companies. Banks also are a potential source for financial assistance.

"The best place to lease or finance equipment through is the manufacturer that sells the equipment," says Gilmore. This is known as captive leasing. Unlike other types of lenders, captive leasing companies offer customized leasing and financing programs, which are tailored to the turf care industry.

Case in point: Captive leasing companies typically provide a six-month-on, six-month-off payment plan to golf courses in a northern climate. This arrangement only requires the courses to make payments from May through October, when revenue is at its peak.

Local and national leasing companies typically charge higher rates than captive leasing companies, notes Gilmore. Al-

though banks offer competitive rates, they don't provide customized payment plans.

"When shopping for new turf care equipment, superintendents should ask their dealer salesperson about the leasing and financing programs available," recommends Gilmore. "It's his or her responsibility to provide product information, as well as acquisition alternatives."

**Finding Financial Freedom—** "As time goes on, we're going to see more and more equipment acquired through leasing," predicts Gilmore. This trend is true for all types of golf courses: public, private, municipal and daily-fee.

"All golf courses share the same maintenance challenge," says Gilmore. "They're tied to their budgets, which dictate equipment purchases." Leasing offers freedom from these financial restraints.

*Reprinted from  
"The Board Room"  
September 2000*

## Prestorm Planning Minimizes Risk and Reduces Loss

*By Thomas Marks, Executive Vice President, Bollinger, Inc., and Peter West, Vice President, Highlands Services Corp.*

When a windstorm crisis or catastrophe arises, it is too late to plan and implement an adequate response in the wake of the confusion, emotional distraction, and muddled coordination. The physical integrity of the property and the continuity of the operations may very well depend upon the effectiveness of a sound pre-planned windstorm crisis management plan.

A major loss in a windstorm is that of important trees, and property damage or personal injury as the result of flying branches or fallen trees. Therefore, an effective windstorm pre-

paredness plan must include an effective tree maintenance program.

The two primary goals of a windstorm preparedness plan are to protect lives, property, and other assets of the organization; and to ensure a prompt and efficient transition from normalcy to emergency operations and back to normalcy. Failure to implement proper loss control practices can produce a direct, tangible loss that must be paid for in part, or wholly, with dollars that would otherwise be used for operations and investment.

When formulating a windstorm preparedness plan for your facility, it is extremely important to understand the effects that the particular crisis or catastrophe could have on the

property and continued operations. For instance, a hurricane can be foreseen by monitoring weather forecasts and allow time for efficient implementation of precautionary actions.

A less foreseeable crisis that gives less warning, such as a tornado, requires more specialized planning involving the implementation of time related loss reduction controls and procedures designed to reduce loss severity. Properly planning for these crises by implementing pre-loss and post-loss objectives will help you reduce potential losses arising from natural catastrophes.

The Windstorm Preparedness Plan Checklist (in this issue) addresses two areas: Prestorm actions (including various loss prevention and loss reduc-

tion measures), and Post-storm recovery actions.

The seven basic steps associated with developing a formalized windstorm preparedness plan include the following:

1. Obtain management or board of directors' support and prepare a written policy and program.
2. Establish responsibilities and authority for managing and executing the plan.
3. Implement a Tree Maintenance Program (described in further detail in later section of this article).
4. Establish pre-storm actions and responsibilities to reduce potential damage.
5. Establish post-storm actions and responsibilities to handle

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# Prestorm Planning, *continued*

any arising emergencies, manage and limit damage, and insure effective communications.

6. Educate and train personnel.

7. Audit and update the plan periodically.

These basic steps are outlined and described in further detail within the Windstorm Preparedness Checklist.

**Tree Maintenance Program**—The majestic trees that grace your grounds are a valuable asset. Their great beauty, however, can become a destructive force if they are neglected and allowed to deteriorate.

Falling trees and limbs take a heavy toll on automobiles and buildings, and present an exposure to personal injury. Trees not maintained present serious exposure under windstorm, heavy rain, or snow conditions. Dead or weak limbs can easily break away and become airborne under high winds, and diseased or damaged trees are susceptible to falling.

Even during normal conditions, trees not maintained present a serious exposure to property and people around them. There have been many accidents involving falling limbs striking golfers or trees which have fallen on buildings or automobiles from moderate winds, heavy rains, flooding, or snow loading. Trees, like any other club property, need inspection and maintenance.

**Systematic Inspection is Key**—The primary concern should be to protect people and property from falling trees and branches. This can be accomplished with a pre-planned, annual maintenance program conducted by a tree expert.

The club should have on staff, or retain through contracted services, a certified tree expert and arborist. Your tree expert should start by concentrating on trees that present the greatest exposure to people and

buildings.

This would include trees that expose the club house, pro shop and other structures, patios, caddie waiting areas, first and tenth tees and greens, staging areas, outside or lightly enclosed dining areas, parking lots, cart paths, swimming pool areas, play areas, and driveways.

Dead, dying and diseased trees and dead wood must be removed. Weak branching problems may be corrected with bracing. Lightning rods can be installed to protect specimen trees.

Golfers frequently hit their shots left or right of the fairway into the trees. Make sure these wooded areas contain no deadwood waiting to fall on unsuspecting golfers, caddies or groundskeepers.

**An Ounce of Prevention**—Groundskeepers, while they are not usually tree experts, can play an active role in tree care. They should look for potential problems such as: decaying or cracked trunks, dead branches, peeling bark, insect infestation, etc. Such defects should be reported to a tree expert for necessary action. Major jobs can be performed most efficiently in the winter when access is good and play is at a minimum.

**Windstorm Preparedness Checklist**—Although the threat of these catastrophe hazards may seem remote, it is always better to be prepared for emergencies before they happen. Don't wait to deal with a crisis. Be prepared.

**Facility Susceptibility Review:**

- Evaluate all structures (including buildings, amenities, storage buildings, utility buildings, antennas, etc.) as to their maintenance and susceptibility to damage from high winds or collapse from water ponding or snow load. Consider modifications or

additional reinforcements to those structures that would be highly susceptible to collapse or wind damage.

- Regularly inspect the grounds for condition of trees. Dead, dying and diseased trees and dead wood must be removed since these can cause significant damage or personal injury during high winds. For large trees and expansive properties, it is strongly suggested that a Tree Maintenance Program be implemented utilizing a certified tree expert and arborist.
- Survey the property to identify equipment, inventory, stock, furniture, decorations, etc. that are kept outside that would be susceptible to damage or being uplifted during high winds. Such items should be listed and actions established for pre-storm precautions.

### **Pre-Storm Precautions:**

- Establish a Storm Emergency Team and action plan. Employees should understand their duties for facility protection before a storm; and cleanup, salvage, and restoration operations after the storm.
- Review and update action plans annually.
- Develop a list of emergency phone numbers of contractors, and appoint a designated person to monitor weather reports daily.

### **Buildings:**

- Close unnecessary openings and make windows and doors weather-tight.
- Check windows for broken panes and nail down loose window framing and shutters.
- Provide storm shutters or board up all windows and doors at first sign of advancing storm.
- Close all windows on the windward side of a hurricane. During a windstorm, strong winds from a single direction can enter window openings and pressurize the inside of a building. Closing these windows will reduce the possibility of roof uplifting resulting in severe roof damage.
- Open all windows on the side of the building away from a storm's approach. This helps reduce the dangerous pressure differential. Undertake precautions for water damage.
- Inspect roof coverings. All loose coverings should be nailed down or covered with sandbags (without blocking roof drains).
- Inspect ballasted (stone) roof coverings.

## Obituaries

**John James**, Golf Course Superintendent at Hastings Country Club, passed away Saturday, October 28, 2000. The cause of his death was cancer. John was 53 years old and is survived by two sisters and several nieces and nephews. He spent 35 years at Hastings and was the superintendent for the last 27 years. As well as being an avid outdoorsman, John was a die-hard U of M football fan. Needless to say, he was a fixture at Hastings Country Club and he will be missed.

**Joe Briggs**, Golf Course Superintendent at Coldwater Country Club, passed away Sunday, November 12, 2000, of complications. Joe was 69 years old. His wife Deema and grandson are still employed with Coldwater Country Club.

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# Prestorm Planning, *continued*

Ensure that roof ballasts are uniformly dispersed. If scoured, the ballast should be redistributed or additional material provided.

- Inspect roof perimeter flashing. Nail down loose sections. Replace rusted nails or anchor bolts as needed.
- Brace unsupported structural members with struts, cables or additional diagonal bracing, and laterally support all non-reinforced block walls on both sides at construction sites.
- Secure or remove work in progress, temporary storage, temporary structures or trailers, and scaffolding.

## **Stock, Inventory, Outside Furniture/Amenities, Storage or Equipment:**

- Review inside storage arrangements and relocate all susceptible materials to safe areas away from windows and other openings. Provide skidding for stock that is susceptible to water damage.
- Remove outside furniture and building amenities (such as awnings, lamps, etc.) that would be susceptible to high winds relocating them to inside areas. Anchor yard storage or furniture that cannot be moved.
- Secure, remove, or otherwise protect fine arts and valuables inside, especially those items close to window openings.
- Secure hoisting or loading equipment such as cranes and bulk cargo loaders.
- Anchor, brace or secure combustible/flammable liquid tanks.
- Relocate outside combustible/flammable/chemicals liquid drums or portable contain-

ers inside or to a properly sheltered area.

## **Utilities/Electronic Data Processing Equipment:**

- Institute an emergency repair program with utility contractors in the event of loss of electric or gas power, telephone services, or public water supply.
- Anticipate worst-case scenarios and evaluate the need for systems providing emergency power.
- Ensure data processing software, files, records, etc. are properly backed up and transported offsite to a "safe" location.
- Shut off all gas supplies.
- Shut off electrical equipment in areas that might be flooded. If the entire facility is exposed, shut off building power at the main building disconnects.
- Shut off all electrical equipment at locations that rely on electricity to keep materials from solidifying (specifically molten metals).
- Shut off all flammable and combustible liquid and gas lines at their source to prevent the discharge of such materials from piping broken by windblown debris. Support or protect exposed piping, if possible.
- Establish a reserve fuel supply equal to the normal supply or provide a safe alternate fuel source for sufficient duration.
- Fill emergency generator or other backup power source fuel tanks.

## **Fire Protection Equipment/Domestic Water Lines/Plumbing:**

- Keep fire protection equipment operational.

Install barriers around sprinkler risers and control valves to protect them from floating debris from possible floodwater.

- Inspect and repair all fire protection equipment. Activate all systems as soon as possible.

The following precautions are needed in the event of flooding caused by the wind-storm:

- Lubricate sprinkler control valves and locks to reduce future rusting and ensure ease of operation.
- Label location of outside sprinkler control valves and hydrants for easy visibility. Routinely inspect valves.
- Review location and condition of hand-operated domestic valves that prevent the backflow through plumbing fixtures or drain sewers. Install valving if necessary.
- Clear floor and yard drains. Monitor these drains during the storm to make sure they remain clear.
- If water is expected to enter the facility despite all physical barriers, apply a rust preventative compound to pumps, blowers and compressors that can't be relocated.
- Develop an emergency contingency plan in case the surrounding area is impassable.
- Contact manufacturers and contractors of critical machinery to establish a contract for priority support with backups.

## **Post-Storm Actions:**

- Immediately initiate salvage activities in-

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# Classifieds

The Meadows Golf Club at Grand Valley State University is accepting bids for used equipment listed below. Sealed bids will be accepted until 4:00 p.m., December 15, 2000, at 227 Lake Michigan Hall, GVSU. Equipment sold to best offer, as is, where is, no guarantees. Owner reserves the right to refuse any and all bids. Equipment available for inspection between 6:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Call for appointment: contact Chad Johnson at (616) 895-1005 or Kathy Antaya CGCS.

**Greens King 2**, skeleton.

**Greens King 4 #1**, good condition, 3647 miles, \$4000.

**Greens King 4 #2**, good condition, 3793 miles, \$4000.

**Greens King 4 #4**, poor condition, used, \$500.

**Cushman Utility Vehicle #1**, poor condition, used, 4866 miles, \$1000.

**Hijet**, doesn't run, includes some parts, used, 11,970 miles?, \$500.

**Jacobsen 810 Utility Vehicle #1**, fair condition, new starter 2000, new engine 1999, plus parts, \$1000.

**Jacobsen 810 Utility Vehicle #2**, fair condition, new starter 2000, new engine 1999, plus parts, \$1000.

**Dodge Dakota 1985**, fair condition, 4WD, 105,131 miles, \$2000.

**Vicon 402 Fert. Spreader**, good condition, \$1500.

**Cushman Core Harvester**, good condition, extra hose connection, \$1500.

**8 HP Giant Vac Blower**, fair condition, \$200.

**8 HP Giant Vac Blower**, excellent condition, \$350.

**Toro Greens Aire**, good condition, \$3500.

**Toro Fwy Verti-Cuts (5)**, like new, only used three times, \$2500.

**Toro Fwy Baskets (5)**, rarely used, \$250.

## Prestorm Planning, continued

cluding: Returning fire protection systems to service; looking for downed live power lines, leaking flammable liquid or gas transfer lines, and structures in danger of collapse; separate damaged materials from undamaged materials; covering equipment and stock that is now exposed to weather; utilizing the "Hot Work" Permit System when necessary, eliminating ignition sources as much as possible; and instituting a fire watch until normal operations are resumed.

- Develop plans to secure facility against looters and trespassers.
- Contact your insurance carrier's Claim Department for adjusting and related services.

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