



GCSAA AFFILIATE

# Turf Times

Monthly Update  
Feb. 1995  
Vol. 24, No. 2

The newsletter from the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association

## NMTMA to sponsor Feb. 8 & 9 GCSAA Seminar

NMTMA will sponsor our second GCSAA seminar February 8th and 9th at Treetops Sylvan Resort. With the great success an turn out at our 1994 seminar we are offering in the same environmental lines these two one day topics: "Wildlife Management and Habitat Conservation" February 8 and "Wetlands and Golf Courses" February 9th.

Wildlife Management and Habitat Conservation will be instructed by Ron Dodson, President and CEO of the New York Audubon Society. This seminar places emphasis on effectively and responsibly managing wildlife and natural habitats on golf courses to promote desirable bird and animal population. Additional consideration will be given toward- environmental planning - managing for wildlife (space, water, food, and cover)-habitat manipulation - IPM-creating a wildlife inventory - pond management and wetland facts.

Wetlands and Golf Courses will be instructed by Charles Newling - Wetlands Science Applications, In./Wetland Training Institute, Inc. of Tacoma WA and Barbara Beall, a wetlands specialist for LA Group, Sarasota Springs, New York. The purpose of this seminar is to raise the level of awareness regarding wetlands among seminar participants enabling them to act responsibly in the light of the resources they may impact and the laws that protect those resources. Participants will learn how to avoid the costly consequences of even inadvertently violating those laws.

Registration can only be made by contacting GCSAA at 1-800-472-7878. Cost of the seminars is \$100.00 each for GCSAA members and \$150.00 for non GCSAA members. NMTMA will again subsidize \$50.00 to NMTMA members that are not members of the GCSAA for each seminar.

Treetop sSylvan Resort 3962 Wilkinson Road Gaylord, MI will be the sight of both seminars, and again this year

they have set aside rooms at a reduced rate of \$61.00 per night. Participants needing overnight accommodation must call Treetops at 517-732-6711 to make reservations.

- By David Little



GCSAA Seminar comes to Northern Michigan

Mark your calendar for this important educational opportunity.

Call GCSAA for registration information.



Wildlife Management and Habitat Conservation

February 8, 1995  
Gaylord, Michigan

Wetlands and Golf Courses  
February 9, 1995  
Gaylord, Michigan

### NEXT MEETING:

Annual GAM/NMTMA Seminar  
Tuesday, March 14  
Treetops/Sylvan Resort  
Wach Turf-Times for Details

## IMPORTANT NOTICES!

### ADVERTISERS

We need your support. Please return your advertising reservation form soon.

### MEETING SITES NEEDED FOR '95

If you are interested in hosting a meeting and golf outing this season, call Jeff Dorrell or Tom Reed at (616) 943-8343.

## NMTMA Bylaw Revisions

The following Bylaw revisions will be voted on at our March or April Mini-conferences. Watch *Turf Times* for further details. (Revision or addition indicated in bold print).

Addition: Sec. V

I. Class "M", Mechanics. To qualify for class M membership, an applicant, at the time of application, must be employed by a regular member of NMTMA. Class M members shall have all the rights and privileges of the Association, except that such members may not vote or hold office.

Revision: Sec. V

K. Annual Dues. The annual dues shall be the sum fixed at any regular meeting of the Association as approved by the voting membership in attendance thereat. **The annual dues shall be payable on or before the first day of October. The annual membership year shall begin on the first day of January. Any member or members who have failed to pay dues by December 31st shall be automatically dropped from the membership of this Association and all rights and privileges benefited from the Association shall be terminated. Any member dropped from the membership in this manner shall be notified thereof by the membership committee. Reapplication for membership can be made at any time, as long as the application is accompanied by the annual dues for the year along with any assessments and all accounts in arrear.**

Revision: Sec. V

E. Class "E", any Class A, B, D, F, or G member reaching the age sixty (60), who is retired and no longer seeking employment within the scope of his activities of any membership class of the Association, may apply to the Board in writing for Class E membership, the annual dues for which shall be one-half (1/2) the amount paid by a Class A member. **Retired Class EA, EB, or EG member have all rights and privileges of this association including that of voting, but not that of holding office in the association. Retired Class ED or EF or any other retired member of "Class E" have all the rights and privileges of this association but can not vote or hold office.**

Revision: Sec. IX.

**Class "EA", "EB" or "EG" members will be permitted to vote but not hold office.**

## Classifieds

**POSITION OPEN:** Grounds Manager, *Shanty Creek Resort*. Landscape/Hort. degree or 3 to 5 years experience in grounds management. Contact Brent Nelson at 616/533-7066.

**GOLF COURSE GREENSKEEPER:** *Grand Hotel*, the country's largest summer resort facility, seeking working groundskeeper. Ideal candidates must have strong supervisory skills, solid knowledge in bent and blue grass care and maintenance, proven abilities in chemical application and usage, and possess hands-on skills in all phases of irrigation systems. The successful candidate will also have the motivation to work both independently and as part of a team. Send resume to: *Grand Hotel*, Attn: Human Resources, 2177 Commons Parkway, Okemos, MI 48864. EOE/M/F.

**ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT POSITION:** *Shanty Creek G.C.*— min. 2 yr. Turfgrass degree or 3 yr. experience req. Must have pest. ap. cert. within 60 days of hire. Contact Pete Hohn for more information: 616/533-7066.

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## Is a statewide newsletter just around the corner?

The days where local chapters publish their own individual newsletters, etc., may soon become a thing of the past. There is a growing interest among the leadership of Michigan's superintendents chapters to cooperatively produce a statewide publication. This venture would join together the NMTMA, Western Michigan GCSA, Michigan and Boarder Cities GCSA, Mid-Michigan GCSA, and possibly the Northern Great Lakes GCSA into one entity.

This new entity would be governed by a committee of equal representation selected from each chapter participating. The purpose of a statewide publication would be to unite everyone by a single publication which would be dedicated to common information, useful to all. The content of this publication would be primarily of an educational format, with superintendents writing most articles. Each chapter would have **equal space** to insert any specific information which would be relevant to that chapter (for example the NMTMA would have two pages dedicated to information concerning northern Michigan).

Just a few things that a statewide publication could do:

- Stop material from being duplicated one chapter to the next.
- Publish information which effects entire state (DNR mandates).
- A statewide membership directory?
- A statewide job referral system?
- A statewide used equipment "For Sale" listing?

How much is this going to cost you? Total cost to fund the publication would most likely be covered entirely by the sale

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## Is a statewide newsletter just around the corner?

(Continued from Previous Page)

of advertising. The NMTMA may still publish material from time to time as needed, but probably not to the extent of which we do now. One of the main benefits to the NMTMA would be to ease the burden of publishing our own material which has been done in-house by Mike Morris. This is an overwhelming undertaking for which Mike receives little compensation (what an excellent job you've done Mike!).

As it stands now, a trial publication (newsletter type) is being considered as of the MTF conference. The date, size, and scope of the real thing has yet to be worked out, but I would guess it to be 1-2 years away at this time. If you have any input or thoughts concerning the formation of this publication, good or bad, please contact a board member and let us know how you feel. Now is the time for decisions and planning to be made.

— By David Pretznaw

### OOPS!

Credit where credit is due: Thank you, Jon Madern for your fine article on "Promoting our Profession" in the last issue.



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## Winter is a Good Time to Plan & Perform Golf Course Tree Care

KENT, OH— A winter decrease in golf activity on courses throughout the United States provides many golf course superintendents with time to plan and perform tree maintenance. If you have limited funds and resources, pruning and planting tasks will help make effective use of this time.

Proper winter care will get trees off to a good start. During the winter you can prune trees, inspect recently planted trees and select new planting sites for the spring. By helping to prevent problems, proper pruning and planting reduces tree repair and replacement costs.

### Pruning

**Selecting the best time to prune.** Although maintenance pruning of most shade trees can be done year-round, intensive pruning should be performed in the dormant season. Late winter to early spring, just before new growth begins, is a good time to prune trees. Proper pruning cuts made in the winter close more rapidly than cuts made at other times of the year.

When trees lose their leaves in the winter, it is easier to spot problem areas and place pruning cuts, says Richard Rathjens, a technical advisor with The Davey Tree Expert Company. "The new leaves that emerge the following spring will help hide cuts made in the winter," Rathjens says. "Also, pruning in late fall and early winter minimizes sap flow from pruning cuts on trees such as conifers, maple, birch and walnut."

Winter pruning also minimizes damage to some tree species. The bark of some trees, such as maple and ash, are more susceptible to tearing loose during climbing and pruning in the spring.

**Making the proper pruning cut.** Proper pruning improves the health and appearance of trees and prolongs their life by removing dead, weakened, diseased or insect-infested branches.

Untrained workers often prune incorrectly. Professional arborists place pruning cuts outside the branch collar, the swollen area where the branch attaches to the main trunk. You can easily see the branch collar on many trees. "The whole idea behind proper pruning is to avoid injuring the trunk," Rathjens says. "Once the trunk is damaged, it can lead to decay and death of the tree."

A common pruning mistake is making one straight cut through a branch. When cut this way, the branch's weight can cause the wood to splinter and pull bark from the tree. To help avoid tearing, a cut should be made on the branch's underside, a foot or two out from the trunk, about one-third of the way through the branch.

A second cut should be made on top of the limb a few inches farther out from the first cut. These two cuts remove most of the branch's weight. The stub is removed with a final cut made just outside the branch bark ridge and through the collar.

Another frequent error is painting a cut. In most cases, painting is not recommended because the paint traps moisture on the freshly cut surface, which provides an environment conducive to fungal growth. Painting should only be done in rare instances, such as on trees that are susceptible to oak wilt and Dutch elm disease during periods of beetle flight.

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## Winter is a Good Time to Plan & Perform Golf Course Tree Care

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### PLANTING

**Scheduling planting.** Although properly prepared and protected planting stock can often be successfully transplanted during any season, there are specific times of the year when planting is most successful. Winter is a good time to determine which trees you want to plant. Planting at the correct time encourages the growth of healthy trees.

In general, plants are best moved when shoots are not actively growing—the resting or dormant stage. Deciduous trees are normally planted in the fall after leaf drop and before the soil freezes or in early spring before bud break.

Narrowleaf evergreens also may be planted in the fall or in the spring before new growth starts. Broadleaf evergreens should be planted in the spring in climatic zones where soils freeze. In northern regions where the soil freezes early and deep, spring planting of evergreens is perhaps the safest, says Len Brukhart, Ph.D., a horticulturist with Davey. “In the south with its mild winters, fall planting is preferred,” Brukhart says. “Winter planting is fine for plants with a root ball large enough to contain undisturbed roots that supply branches with water until spring.”

Transplant success often depends on soil temperatures. The soil must be warm enough to permit the growth of new roots immediately after planting and continue until adequate root growth can support the plant’s water-absorbing potential. “Roots grow best when soil temperatures are between 40°F and 90°F,” Brukhart says. “Trees should be transplanted at least four weeks before soil temperatures drop below 40°F to allow proper root development in the fall.”

**Preparing the planting area.** Current research shows that a shallow planting area should surround the transplant hole. To make a planting area, the ground around the hole should be shovel-dug or rototilled to at least a 10- to 12-inch depth. This depth is appropriate because the tree’s roots that absorb water and nutrients are located within an 18-inch depth of the soil surface.

The planting area should be three to five times the width of the root ball or, at least, the soil should be loosened or tilled well past the current-year drip line so roots can spread horizontally into the native soil. Roots spreading out in this manner create stronger base for the tree, especially in times of drought.

**Digging the hole.** A planting hole should be dug near the center of the planting area after the area has been rototilled. The hole should be deep enough so that the tree’s base is at or slightly higher than ground level. The root balls should not sit on the fill soil, but on the bottom of the hole. This prevents the root ball from sitting too low in the ground. “No plant should be planted deeper than it was at its original planting site,” Rathjens says. “Err on the side of planting too high, as opposed to too deep.”

The size of the plant’s hole should be at least two times the root system (for bare-root plantings) or root-ball diameter. The hole should be larger when possible and dug with sloping sides at about a 45° angle from the ground surface. The slanting sides direct roots to spread horizontally, not downward.

If a hole is dug deeper than necessary, some fill soil should be added to the bottom of the hole. Stone, rocks or cement chips should not be added to the bottom of a hole dug too deep.

**Adding backfill.** Soil removed from digging the hole

should be used as backfill. Organic matter can be added to the backfill for sandy or heavy soils. No more than 10 to 20% of the volume should be added because as the organic matter decomposes, the backfill settles in the hole, causing the root ball to fall below ground level.

If the backfill is more than 20% organic matter, it changes the backfill’s physical characteristics. Backfilling with soil that is lighter or better drained than the native soil can result in stunted or dead plants because roots may have difficulty growing into the soil surrounding the planting area.

The area around the soil ball should be watered to eliminate air pockets. Watering puts the soil into direct contact with the roots. Backfill and water then should be added alternately.

**Applying mulch.** Include mulch application in your planting plans. Mulch has many benefits. It is attractive and helps suppress weed growth and protect trees from moisture loss. Mulch slows soil water evaporation, providing trees with a consistent source of water.

Mulch also protects root systems from temperature extremes by insulating the roots. Mulched soil doesn’t cool as quickly in the winter or warm as quickly in the summer as unmulched soil. For mulch to be effective, it should be applied before temperatures change drastically.

Mulch should be two to three inches deep, and it should never be piled against the tree’s trunk. Too much mulch reduces air and water exchange, and the roots suffer.

**Staking trees.** One of the most common planting mistakes is improper staking. Many people don’t know when to stake (and *not* stake) a tree. As a general rule, most trees with a diameter greater than three inches don’t require staking. Plan to purchase staking materials for smaller diameter trees.

Proper staking can help newly planted trees withstand strong winds. Staking anchors and supports young trees that can’t stand alone after transplanting. However, staking is expensive and time-consuming. So, staking should only be done when it is necessary to the tree’s health.

If staking is done correctly, the tree roots and trunk will become strong enough to stand unsupported. Improper staking can damage or even kill a tree. Trees should be staked to bend with the wind only if they are unable to stand against the wind.

A common staking mistake is these of only one stake. Two stakes with a flexible tie on each will provide better trunk support and reduce the potential for injury.

A tie should have a flat, smooth surface and be somewhat elastic to allow slight movement of the tree. Rubber hosing is a good staking material. Wire covered with a hose or tubing should not be used.

The concepts of tree pruning and planting are the building blocks of tree care. To help preserve your trees’ beauty and the value of the course, your tree care plans should include hiring professional arborists. Workers not trained in tree care basics can damage trees, destroying beautiful vistas and the play of the course. Repairing or replacing the damaged trees can be costly, as well.

The Davey Tree Expert Company provides tree care and grounds maintenance services and arboricultural and horticultural consulting to utilities and residential, commercial and municipal customers in more than 40 states and five Canadian provinces. Davey is employee-owned with more than 5,000 employees coast to coast.

# OSHA Safety Laws . . . Are You In Compliance?

By Ralph Kepple, GCS East Lake Country Club

If the U.S. Department of Labor visited your Club, would you pass their inspection? After having been through the process recently, I have to believe most of us would not. There are a myriad of potential violators, and most of them are probably totally unaware that they exist. Another thing you may not be aware of, OSHA fines you if any violation is found before they give you a chance to comply!

What I want to do is discuss my violations so that you may be aware of a few things OSHA may cite you for.

"29 CFR 1910.219(d) (1); Pulley(s) with part(s) seven feet or less from the floor or work platform were not guarded in accordance with the requirements specified at 29 (FR 1910.219) (m) & (o)."

"29CFR 1910.219 (e) (3) (i): Vertical or inclined belt(s) were not enclosed by guard(s) conforming to the requirements specified at 29 CFR.219(m) & (o)."

Yes, these are two separate citations. In my case, a back lapping unit did not have the guards over the pulleys and drive belts. Make sure yours does— it could cost you at least \$750!

"29 CFR 1910.2536(b) (2) (ii): Inside of buildings, cylinders were not stored in a well-protected well-ventilated, dry location, at least 20 feet from highly combustible materials such as oil or excelsior."

You cannot store you oxygen and acetylene tanks together unless they are on a cart and hooked up to your torches. They must be at least twenty feet apart, or separated a fire wall from flammable substances. How many of you knew this? I didn't, and it resulted in my largest fine. Expect to pay at least \$1,000 for this citation!

"29 CFR 1903.2 (a) (1): The OSHA notice was not posted to inform employees of the protections and obligations provided for in the Act."

Call your local Department of Labor Office and get this notice (OSHA Poster #2203) for free. I had to pay \$500 for mine!

"29 CFR 1904.2 (a): A log of all recordable occupational injuries and illnesses. (OSHA Form NO. 200) or Equivalent, was not maintained at the establishment."

You are required to keep this log for each year, and must post the previous year's log where all employees may see it. Surprise! No fine was assessed for this one.

"29 CFR 1910.1200 (e) (1): Employer had not developed or implemented a written hazard communication program which at least describes how the criteria in 29 CFR 1910.1200 (f), (g) and (h) will be met."

I think we are all aware of this one. I had actually developed a written program before I started the job at East Lake (one month prior to the inspection). Unfortunately, my Assistant had taken it home to read it over the previous day, and he had the day off when the inspection took place. I wasn't fined for this citation, but I did not feel I deserved it.

One other thing I discovered but was not cited for is that gasoline must be stored in self-closing cans if it is stored inside your facility. I know many of us are not in accordance with this law.

While my OSHA inspection was not a pleasant experience, it was a learning one. The Department of Labor is simply trying to protect employees. My only problem is their method. I strongly believe that a company should be given a chance to comply before being fined. On the other hand, I am now more aware of safety problems in the work place. If any of you have ever gone through this procedure and know of some violations that we may not be aware of, please write a letter to the Editor to make us aware of them. That is the reason I sent this article in. For the sake of our industry and our biggest asset— our employees — please commit to compliance!

Reprinted from the July-August 1992 issue of *Through the Green*

## Mechanics Corner

### The Mechanic, the Superintendent, and the NMTMA

One of the most valuable individuals on a maintenance crew is the golf course mechanic. In most cases the golf course mechanic is the one member of the crew with the most seniority. The success of the entire golf maintenance operation is pivotal upon the proper operating condition of the equipment. Therefore, the relationship between the golf course mechanic and the superintendent is a very critical one.

A superintendent must have the utmost trust in the mechanic. The mechanic is responsible for the maintenance and proper operating condition of all equipment. He or she usually accomplishes this feat with a large degree of pride, almost as if they owned the equipment themselves. Just knowing that the mechanic is taking care of this aspect of the maintenance picture is a huge relief to the superintendent.

Communication is key to making this relationship a success. Mechanics need to be able to approach the superintendent with ideas for such things as improving maintenance on equipment, cost cutting, eliminating waste, and reporting on how the crew is treating the equipment from day to day. The mechanic also has an important role in advising on new equipment purchases and evaluating demonstrator models.

For a mechanic to continue to perform these and other duties year-in and year-out with a high degree of expertise, he or she must have the opportunity to participate in continuing education and exchanges with their peers. One way to accomplish this is for superintendents and managers to support their mechanics involvement in the Mechanics Association of the NMTMA. Mechanics must be given the time to attend meetings, as well as some minimal financial support (cost of fuel, meals, or dues). This is a very good investment to insure that you equipment fleet and maintenance shop all run in tip-top form.

— David Pretznow, McGuire's Resort

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