

Northwest TURFGRASS TOPICS

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LET'S BE CALLED PROFESSIONALS

by Norm Whitworth
President

The world of turf management is changing rapidly in today's world of electronics, mechanization, scientific turf management, and budgets unheard of a few years ago. Today's turf managers have a staff of employees upward to double figures, budgets for operations consistently over \$200,000, and irrigation systems that become more complex every year.

With owners and administrators expecting more and more every year, we have to be professionals at every phase, starting with professional budgets and damn good personnel managers. Today's turf manager is expected to be part accountant, part scientist, part engineer, part heavy equipment operator, construction superintendent, landscaper, part manager, and another hundred jobs you are expected to know how to perform. All are subjected to pressures and demands that would stagger the average corporate manager.

Salary levels have increased. But (except in government) medical insurance, long term disability, pension and job security are unknown for the vast majority of turf managers.

I feel it is, in the words of one recent newspaper article about turf managers, "Time to bid adieu to the Greenskeeper and recognize the Professionals." It's time to work together as an association, to educate those whom you work for.

A high percentage of our turf people do not receive *any* benefits — this sure takes away glamour and hope for longevity in the industry.

NORTHWEST TURFGRASS CONFERENCE

Plans are well underway for the 36th Annual Northwest Turfgrass Conference. The conference will be held at the Towne Plaza Motel in downtown Yakima, right adjacent to the Convention Center on September 21, 22 and 23. As usual, there will be a golf tournament for all conference participants on Monday, September 20, and registration will be going on in the afternoon of the 20th and each morning thereafter. The educational program will begin on Tuesday, September 21, at 8:00 a.m. and run through 1:00 p.m. each day and will allow you ample time for relaxation, recreation, private conferences, or just spending the time with your family or friends.

The program committee, headed up by Jim Chapman, has a very exciting and complete program with a host of excellent speakers for this year's conference. For the first time we will have a one-half day split session specifically for parks and school attendees. Specific topics related to golf course management will be represented in the other session after which all attendees will come together for general sessions.

Yakima, Washington is very centrally located in the whole Pacific Northwest, and cuts down travel distance for everyone. The City of Yakima has plenty to offer for the enjoyment of all. Always remember that the sun always shines at Conference Time in Yakima, and there should be plenty of delicious, ripe fruit available for you to take home.

Mark these dates on your calendar now and plan to attend the conference and bring along someone else you think should also be there. Reservation cards and pre-registration forms will be mailed to you at a later date well in advance of Conference Time.

TURFGRASS FIELD DAYS — 1982

The annual turfgrass field days will be held at the Western Washington Research and Extension Center at Puyallup, Washington, on June 15, 16 and 17. On Tuesday, June 15, the field day is designed specifically for golf course oriented turfgrass managers. With this group we will be discussing and showing sand putting green management with nutritional programs, low maintenance turfgrass programs for putting greens and fairway type turf, growth regulators and other management programs.

The field day on June 16 will be solely for State, Federal and County turfgrass workers.

On June 17, we will be conducting the general turfgrass field day for all persons in industry, home lawns, parks, cemeteries, schools, etc. These groups will view the entire turfgrass program with the exception of intensive putting green management.

The Field days will start at 10:00 a.m. at Farm 5 which is approximately 6 miles east of the Main Experiment Station and will conclude at approximately 1:00 p.m.

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Turfgrass Field Day at Prosser, Washington

There will be a turfgrass field day also at the Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center at Prosser, WA, on Tuesday, June 8. This will be an opportunity for interested persons in Eastern Washington to see some of the turfgrass varieties that are performing well in that area and also to hear discussions on turfgrass management practices including weed and disease control from a number of different specialists.

Mark these dates on your calendar now and take advantage of this learning experience.



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MANAGING SURFACE TREE ROOTS

(Reprinted from "Tech Turf Topics", Virginia Tech, July, 1981)

Surfacing tree roots constitute perennial problems in lawns. The lawn mower bounces across the uneven plant roots creating a very real safety hazard for people near the lawn mower and damages the mower as well. Some of the causes for surfacing tree roots are:

1. Improper plant selection. Trees such as maple, poplar, willow, and sycamore should be avoided to minimize surface root problems.
2. Any large growing tree, given sufficient time, will have surfact roots, which will interfere with lawn mowing.
3. Root growth. The majority of roots are initiated 4-8 inches under ground. As the root continues to grow, it will surface. For example, if a root was initiated 4 inches under ground, once the root is 8 inches in diameter, it will become a surface root.

There are several steps that can be taken to correct these problems.

1. Remove the offending roots. Roots should be cut cleanly with a sharp instrument to minimize the size of the wound. This may be the only possible solution where roots are disturbing driveways or sidewalks. Shallow excavations of only one foot will remove the majority of the functioning roots of a tree.
2. Topdressing. One to two inches of a well drained medium such as sand applied over the offending roots will reduce damage to the tree roots and smooth the surface. Topdressing with more than 2 inches of material may become detrimental to the tree.
3. Planting ground cover rather than grass may provide an attractive solution to the problem. The surface roots are still present, but hidden by the higher growing ground cover. A number of ground covers are also more tolerant to shade than most turfgrasses.
4. In general, surface rooting can be reduced by selecting smaller size trees at their mature growth. At least with the roots produced, they will generally be smaller than the larger trees.



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THE SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

By Dick Malpass

The average golfer, or athlete, or user of park facilities, or homeowner seldom gives a thought about the grass on which he is walking or playing. He doesn't worry about fertilizers, or which fungicides are used to keep disease under control, or possible compaction, or insect control, or a host of other problems that may beset the turf. He is out for a good time, or to win a game, or perhaps to enjoy the beauty of his surroundings. He seldom is concerned with the type or variety of grasses used and why or what would happen if a turf disease were left unchecked, or if those moths mean that lawn grubs will soon destroy his turf, or what happens when turf is overused.

We wonder if he has ever thought about the years of research that were necessary to develop the grass on which he putts, or plays football, or baseball, or other sports using turf. Does he know that those grasses were specifically designed to take the beating it is subjected to and still remain vigorous? Or that literally millions of dollars are sometimes spent to find and test a chemical that will keep a disease in check that could destroy turf in a short time? Or why sulphur is needed on turf in some areas and not in others; or why Western Oregon and Washington need lots of lime and the reverse is true east of the Cascades. We could go on and on in the same vein, but what we are trying to emphasize is the fact that research is the answer to all these questions and research costs money. And there is always a shortage of research money. Riverside Golf and Country Club is a member of the Northwest Turfgrass Association which was formed nearly forty years ago by a number of people who were concerned by the lack of knowledge concerning the proper maintenance of turf in this area. During the past forty years much has been accomplished in the areas previously mentioned. A lot of this research work has been carried on for the entire Pacific Northwest at the Research and Extension Center at Puyallup, Washington. Turf plots are maintained, and there new grasses are studied as to their response to diseases found in the Northwest, to cutting heights, to compaction of soils as would be found on football fields or other playgrounds. Fertilizer studies are ongoing as well the testing of new chemicals developed by various companies for disease control, weed control, or insect control. The results obtained from these studies has materially benefitted golf courses, school athletic facilities, parks, homeowners, and others using turfgrass.

What has it cost us, you ask? Would you believe \$40.00 per year. Are fine greens worth it — or beautiful fairways? We hope that you think so. The Northwest Turfgrass Association needs more funds for research and it needs it badly. They are looking for more members to help and for Association Members (individuals) at \$15.00 per year. Think about it! Anyone can be a member of this association and benefit from participation — either as a full member or an association. Ask your friends in business or others if they will join.

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I pulled into a parking lot and asked the policeman if I could park over there. He replied, "No." I proceeded to ask why all those other cars were parked over there. He replied, "They didn't ask."

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CHARLES G. WILSON HONORED

Charles G. Wilson of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the man who pioneered the U.S. Golf Section Green Section Regional Turf Service in 1952, has been named the recipient for the 1982 Green Section Award, presented by the USGA in recognition of his distinguished service to golf through working with turfgrasses.

Wilson received the Green Section award during the 26th Annual U.S.G.A. Green Section educational conference at the New Orleans Hilton in New Orleans, LA, Wednesday, February 3, 1982. Steven J. Horrell of El Cahan, CA, Chairman of the Green Section Award Committee, made the presentation.

The theme of the U.S.G.A. Conference was "The Good Earth Needs Good Golfing Turf". For the second consecutive year the conference was held as part of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America International Turfgrass Conference and Show at the invitation of the GCSAA.

The U.S.G.A. established the Green Section Award in 1961 to honor those persons requiring special recognition for distinguished service to golf in any phase of work with turfgrasses such as research, education, extension, superintendents, maintenance, management, etc.

Furthermore, the U.S.G.A. believes that there are many individuals who have made immeasurable contributions respecting the arena upon which the game of golf is played. Their contributions and services may be evidenced by their achievements over a number of years or by a single act.

In presenting the Green Section Award the U.S.G.A. wishes to identify, celebrate, and hold up for emulation individuals such as Charles G. Wilson who exemplify outstanding dedication to golf through their work with turfgrasses.

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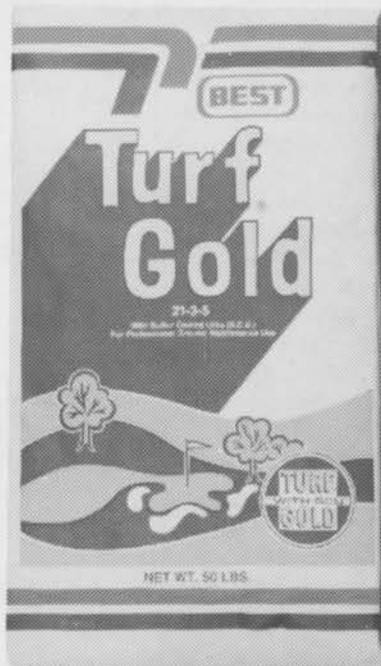
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Water Management

By Dr. Roy L. Goss

How many reasons can you think of why you should do a better job of managing water? I can think of many reasons, but just to list a few, let's consider some of the following:

1. It is a diminishing natural resource.
2. It is becoming more expensive each year and we "ain't seen nothin' yet".
3. It takes energy to pump and distribute the water, and this also costs money.
4. Water is in short supply in certain areas and in nearly all areas at certain times.
5. We can grow healthier plants when we supply just the right amount of water.
6. We can destroy our soil structure through excessive applications of water and intensive compaction.
7. We enhance many diseases with over-irrigation.
8. We leach valuable nutrients and pollute ground water, streams and other water bodies through abusive water practices.

These are just a few of the reasons why we should do a better job of managing water.

There have been many articles written about water and why we should take better care of it. It is a humbling thought to ponder that there is no new water and the water we are using today was used by Adam and Eve. It is frightening to consider that in the United States we have areas that are using water five times faster than nature can give it back. Such areas are Tucson, Arizona; San Antonio, Texas; Miami, Florida; and others. Much the same as oil, the people in the U.S. consume as much water as a population many times our size. It is further humbling to consider that water available for our use is less than 1% of the total in existence. The remainder of the water is tied up in polar ice caps and salt water oceans, etc. When we consider that we are polluting that 1% faster than nature can purify it, it is very frightening indeed.

What About Water Managers?

Turfgrass installations such as golf courses, parks, cemeteries, school grounds and other large areas are quite often irrigated on a hit-or-miss basis. There is no real science applied, it's just a matter of keeping the area from turning brown. Ask yourself seriously, could you afford to hire someone to manage the total watering program and irrigation system at your facility? In many cases you cannot afford it because you are too small. But this individual could become well-trained and become an expert in this area of water management while performing other necessary functions as well. Many areas are large enough to have one man totally responsible for the irrigation program and water management on all of the plants.

This individual should be well versed in not only watering systems and methods of applying water, but an expert on the needs of different plants for water. He should have a thorough knowledge of drought tolerance plant materials and be well versed in the characteristics of the soils.

Many municipal golf courses have found that their water bill is the biggest cost they have in operation, and as I said earlier, you ain't seen nothin' yet. Wait until the next hikes in water bills come into effect, and also the increased costs of energy.

According to Bob Cloud, a Los Angeles based associated irrigation consultants incorporated firm, we have had a need for water managers for years. All we have to do is figure out how we can save \$20-\$30,000 on perhaps \$100-\$150,000



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water bill, and this one individual becomes a reality rather than a luxury.

At this point, we are considering only dollar factors, but just think about soil structural deterioration, the loss of desirable turfgrasses and reduced value of the facility for normal functions. All of the money in the world could not get any more water in California in 1977, and water management in the highest degree had to be practiced.

According to a national conference on water at St. Louis, Missouri in 1977, the following conclusion was made: "Overall, most parts of the nation are short of water now and consumptive use nationwide will increase by 33% by the year 2000." This message was sent to President Carter at that time. Just how serious are we really taking this most vital issue?

TANK MIXING HERBICIDES

By Roy L. Goss

One of the best weed control measures is a dense and vigorous turfgrass stand. To produce this type of turf we must practice good fertility management, watering, mowing, disease control, and all the good things that go into good management. Essentially, this is integrated pest management at its best.

Thin, weakened stands of turfgrasses or those that have been badly injured by insects and diseases, improper watering practices or possibly mistakes, are readily invaded by a host of broadleaf weeds and weedy grasses. Fewer herbicide applications for weed control are needed if good maintenance programs are carried out.

Weeds will always encroach to a certain extent even on well managed turfgrasses. Therefore, applications of herbicides cannot be deleted from good management programs. Timing of herbicide applications is very important for effective weed control. Essentially, herbicides can be applied to weeds any time that they are effectively growing and usually produce reasonably good control. Older weeds and those that are hardened off from various stresses, particularly in mid summer, are more difficult to control. In general, the best control period is September-October or April through June.

Weeds vary in their sensitivity to applied herbicides. If the weed populations are dominated by dandelion and plantain, 2,4-D amine is the best, and safest material to apply. Generally, the weed population is composed of a broad spectrum of weeds and 2,4-D will not effectively control such things as mouse-eared chickweed, English lawn daisy,

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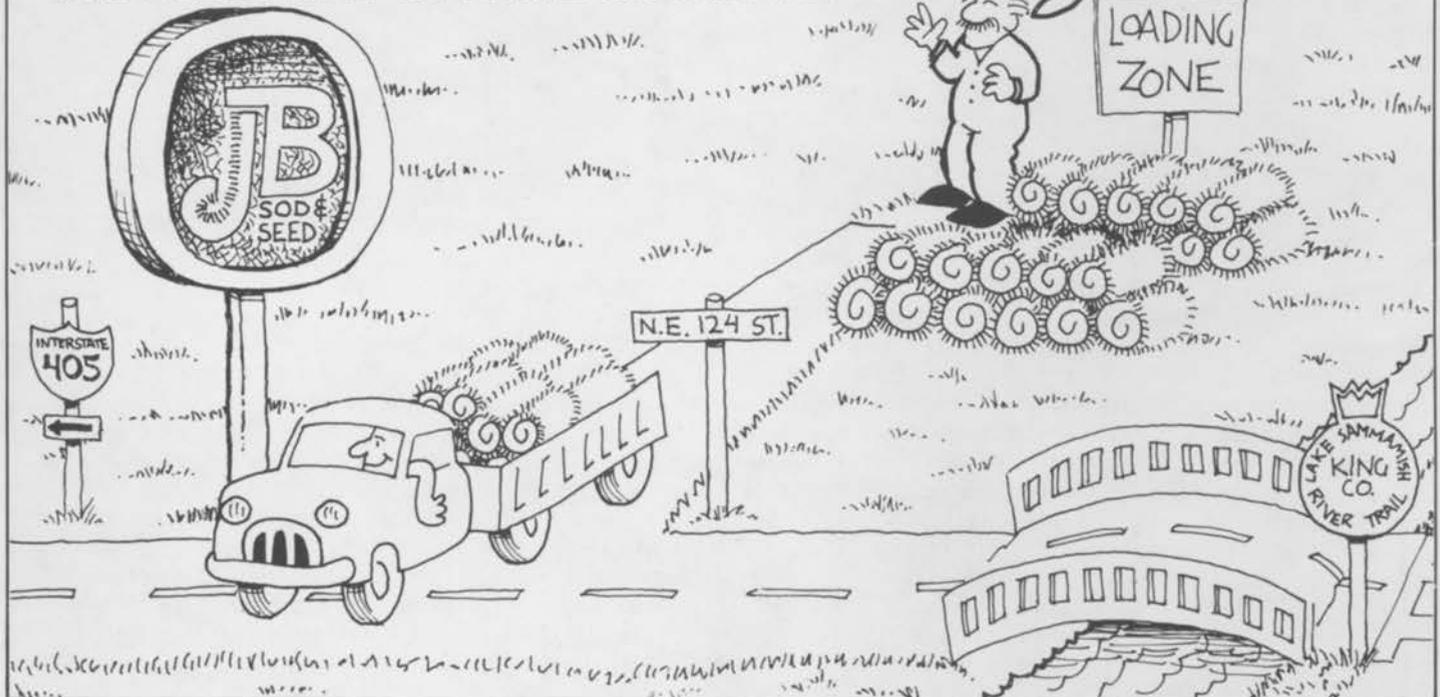
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Continued from Page 6, Column 1

yarrow, clovers and a few others. It becomes necessary, then, to select the herbicide that will cover a broad spectrum

Commercial preparations are available on the market that contain 2,4-D, MCPP and Dicamba and will control a broad range of broadleaf weeds. It may not always be necessary to apply all three materials.

Formulations of herbicides will vary from one manufacturer to another and, they are not always compatible when mixed. If you maintain separate quantities of 2,4-D, MCPP and Dicamba, there are times when you wish to tank mix your own materials. The following precautions will help to avoid problems and disaster:

1. Never mix the concentrates together, but add them separately to a filled tank.
2. If you do not know the compatibility of herbicides, mix a small but proportionate quantity of each material in a jar, shake it up, let it stand for a period of time and observe for the formation of any gels, clabbering or separation of the material. If there is separation, shake the material again and see if they mix thoroughly. If so, you are okay.
3. Herbicides are available as amines, esters and salts, and it is best to always tank mix the same type of formulation.
4. The herbicide effect is additive. For example, you may wish to apply 2 lb active ingredient per acre for 2,4-D amine if it were to be sprayed alone, and perhaps the same for MCPP and possibly up to 1/2 lb active ingredient per acre from Dicamba to 1/4 to 1/2 lb active ingredients per acre. Never use the full rate unless you are using them singly.

5. Be sure to read the label for any precautions about tank mixing.
6. Even though the herbicides may be physically compatible, their efficacy may be changed through combination. It would probably be best if you are experimenting to mix a proportionate small amount as suggested above and spray these on a small area and observe for effect. You can obtain results in about one week.

Just remember that mixtures of herbicides may not always be necessary and possibly one or more expensive ingredients may be wasted or unnecessarily used in the environment. Know the area you are spraying and the susceptibility of ornamental plants within the area. Materials such as Dicamba will leach readily into the root zone of susceptible ornamentals and cause extreme injury or kill them outright.

In final analysis, be sure that you thoroughly know the target you are after and have positive identification of the problem.

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A CORRECTION FOR THE DECEMBER 1981 ISSUE OF TURFGRASS TOPICS

It is gratifying to know that some of you do read the Turfgrass Topics and find the errors. It was called to my attention that on Page 6 there was something strange about the identification of two of your directors. It seems that the printers did some minor reshuffling in organization and got the names switched between Milt Bauman and Roy Goss. Milt and I have discussed this and have come to the conclusion that we had just as soon retain our own individual identities. Just remember, Milt is the guy with the hair! One reminder of our error came as far away as Rutgers University from Dr. Henry Indyk.

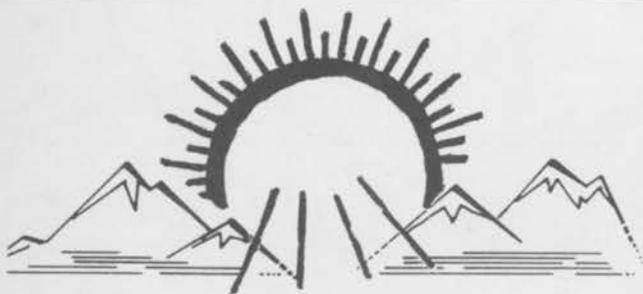


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