

Experience Spoken Here

February 14, 1999, Orlando, Florida

FOR THE 18TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR the annual Green Section Education Conference was held in conjunction with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America International Turfgrass Conference and Show. This year more than 1,000 people attended the Green Section's program on Sunday, February 14, at the Orlando Convention Center. Joe England, Chairman of the Green Section and member of the USGA Executive Committee, welcomed the group, and James T. Snow, National Director of the USGA Green Section, served as moderator for the afternoon's program of 18 speakers who addressed this year's theme, "Experience Spoken Here."

THE BEST TURF TIPS OF 1998

One of the most popular annual features of the Education Conference is the Best Turf Tips. This year, 16 of the Green Section's agronomists reported on some of the helpful ideas and ingenious innovations they came across while visiting golf course superintendents in every part of the country during 1998. The Turf Tips appear throughout this issue.

Flood Insurance

Filter fabric provides protection against floodwaters.

by JIM SKORULSKI

ANY golf course superintendent who experiences a flood event learns to respect the powers of Mother Nature. The extent of turf injury and property damage can be tremendous and cleanup operations immense. Dealing with one flood event in a lifetime is enough for anyone, but imagine facing the challenge two and even three times in a single season!

Such is the case with Bruce Packard, CGCS, at Stockbridge Golf Club in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, where the normally placid Housatonic River meanders through the golf course. Spring runoff from melting snows in the Berkshire Mountains or rain from unusually heavy thunderstorms can cause the river to overflow its banks and flood greens, tees, and fairways on the golf course. Mr. Packard and the

staff have, out of necessity, become very adept at cleaning up the silt and flood debris deposited on the golf course. A simple but ingenious idea also has evolved from the many battles waged against the Housatonic floodwaters. It involves a method to protect submerged irrigation valve boxes from sedimentation and is the basis of this Turf Tip.

Mr. Packard uses DuPont Typar spunbond filter fabric, cut to size and installed in the valve boxes, to filter the floodwaters. The fabric is placed on the inner lip of the valve box that supports the lid. The sides of the fabric are folded upward around the edges of the box. The fabric is punctured, allowing for the installation of the fastening bolt that secures the cover in place. The cover is then carefully installed over the fabric,

taking care not to disturb its placement. The filter fabric prevents silt and fine debris from entering the valve box. The fabric is installed in fall prior to the winter months and left in place throughout the season, unless there are mechanical problems with the valve or the fabric is in need of replacing. The use of the fabric has protected the valves and saved significant time with cleanup.

The filter fabric is relatively inexpensive and may be available at your local hardware store. It is easily cut to size with a utility knife or scissors to fit the dimensions of the valve boxes on your golf course. Mr. Packard and his staff have prepared and installed the fabric for nearly 200 boxes in two working days.

Flooding will continue to create havoc on golf courses and maintenance operations. The high costs associated with the damage and cleanup created by the floodwaters may be unavoidable. However, this simple and inexpensive idea provides some degree of protection to the irrigation valve boxes and should eliminate one facet of a difficult cleanup.



Filter fabric is installed on the lip of the irrigation valve boxes and folded upward around the lid to prevent sediments from entering the submerged valve box.

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