



Cold weather covering of automatic control center for watering systems is easily achieved as shown above. A plastic bag is first placed over the console (Figure 1, left). A heavy insulation material (Figure 2, center) next goes over the plastic cover. Finally the whole thing is enclosed in a wooden box built to fit securely over the unit (Figure 3, right).

Winter Protection for Automatic Controllers

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The golf course superintendent has learned a great deal about the installation, the flexibilities and reliabilities of automatic watering systems. One of his most important realizations is that the automatic controller is the "brain" of the system and therefore must be functional at all times.

During the spring or early summer periods when desiccation is most prevalent on many Eastern courses, little can be left to chance. The insured protection of the controllers, which are scattered throughout the course, now be-

comes an important factor in the success the golf course superintendent will have with his turfgrass maintenance program.

Winter months are the most critical time of year for the controller, for this is when damage may occur most easily. Although the controllers are not needed at this time for distribution of water, the accumulation of moisture and rust formation on working parts may lead to unnecessary deterioration of the mechanisms. This in turn can lead to the failure of the early spring irrigation program.



Another way of protecting automatic controllers is to use a large steel barrel over the unit to keep out harsh weather (Figure 4).

Controllers stand like pyramids facing all elements of nature: freezing rain, sleet, blizzards and the accumulation of drifting snow. Therefore, additional protection, above that already provided by most manufacturers, must be furnished.

Manufacturers of various controllers now on the market have built-in safety factors which will cut down on moisture, rust damage, etc. Heating elements and rust-proofing of the controller are two of the basic requirements now provided.

Bob Capstick, Superintendent of the Country Club of New Canaan, New Canaan, Conn., has given every consideration to the protection of his controllers throughout his course. Figure 1 shows the first step Capstick employs, putting a plastic bag over the controller. In Figure 2 heavy insulation is placed over the plastic bag. Figure 3 is the final step. He has constructed a wooden box to fit snugly and securely over the controller.

This added protection assures Capstick that when spring comes his controllers will be operational. Should he have to work on the controllers during the winter, it is easy to remove the wooden box, insulation, and plastic bag without chipping ice away from hinges or thawing out the lock. The chance of moisture getting into the controller, causing rust or hindering working parts, is minimal.

In Figure 4 we find what Vernon Burnham, Superintendent of the Country Club of Darien, Darien, Conn., does for the added protection of his controllers. By placing a 55-gallon drum over each controller, he has obtained excellent results in keeping the elements of nature away from the controllers on his course and preventing damage.

Even though Capstick and Burnham have additional protection for their controllers, they recognize the importance of continuing to cycle them during the winter. One of the more common practices is to cycle them from 15 to 30 minutes daily, while other practices call for continuous cycling for the entire winter.

Manufacturers are continuing their efforts to assure operational success of their equipment. In addition, the golf course superintendent must still use his ingenuity to give added protection to meet his own local conditions.

Solution of Crossword Puzzle for Last Issue

