

TURF TWISTERS

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE

Question: Is there a difference in wetting agents that are used in turfgrass management? (Iowa)

Answer: Ionic wetting agents are phytotoxic and some may even affect soils. Non-ionic wetting agents are normally used. These materials are bio-degradable; they will not build up in the soil. They also reduce bulk density and soil tension.

TOPDRESSING WITH

Question: What makes topdressing work? (Massachusetts)

Answer: The most important effect appears to be the physical alteration of the thatch microenvironment, best achieved by keeping the topdressing material intimately intermingled with the thatch through frequent, light applications.

SALT

Question: Our golf course is situated next to a college that enjoys a large enrollment. In recent years, the school enlarged its parking area which drains onto our property and into our irrigation pond. Our problem concerns the heavy use of salt on roads and the parking lot to melt the ice in winter. Will salt have a detrimental effect on our irrigation water? If so, what can we do about it? (New York)

Answer: Without question salt will have a detrimental effect on your golf course soil and turf. Sodium will not deteriorate; therefore, it will accumulate in the pond. Also, high concentrations will impair turf quality; sodium also causes a breakdown in soil structure. It will be especially harmful when your pond level is low and the sodium concentration is high.

It would be most helpful to your predicament if you could persuade the college officials to switch to urea or calcium chloride in place of sodium chloride to melt the ice on their parking area and roads.