

TURF TWISTERS

ABUSED

Question: Although I have not seen any specific guidelines or recommendations for the use of liquid fertilizers on greens, they appear to be gaining in popularity and are believed to promote uniform growth. What do you think? (South Carolina)

Answer: Liquid fertilizers are effective in putting green management, but only as a supplement to normal granular fertilization. They offer a quick shot, and if applied at light rates (no more than $\frac{1}{8}$ pound to $\frac{1}{4}$ pound actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per application) immediately following a stressful situation, such as a tournament, aerification, or a moderate vertical mowing, will help grass recover more quickly. If used at all, consider a complete liquid fertilizer (i.e., one with N, P and K). In recent years, some superintendents have successfully applied the liquids at very light rates, along with fungicide applications. However, liquid fertilizers are easily abused. Overstimulation, shallow rooting, and wide leaf blades frequently happen in a short time if they are relied on extensively.

BUT NOT GUILTY

Question: I haven't seen or heard very much lately about Agent Orange (a mixture of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T). What's the latest information on this material? Is it safe or not? (Wisconsin)

Answer: Agent Orange has been exonerated three times and specifically as a cancer- or birth defect-causing material. First came a not-guilty report from the Center for Disease Control, in Atlanta, Georgia, following a national study on veterans. Then a similar verdict from the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, and recently (July, 1985) a final report from the Royal Commission on the Use and Effects of Chemical Agents on Australian Personnel in Viet Nam. Agent Orange has been found not guilty of poisoning veterans. The Australian report noted, "The number of veterans with health problems is small, probably smaller than among their peers in the (non-veteran) community." Cancer rates among Viet Nam and non-Viet Nam servicemen were virtually identical in this study.

THAT'S FOR SURE

Question: What are the latest cost estimates for building a green to USGA Specifications? (Connecticut)

Answer: There are so many variables from one locale to another, it's difficult to be precise. However, you might start the bidding around \$4 to \$5 per square foot. Are you doing the work, or is a contractor doing it? Is irrigation included? Bunkers? Will fill be needed? How large a green? But there is one thing for sure. If the green is worth building or rebuilding, it's worth doing right. The USGA Specifications are about as right as you can be.