

THE USGA TURFGRASS INFORMATION FILE GOES ON-LINE AUGUST 1, 1988

AND NOW it is a reality! The world of turfgrass professionals will never be quite the same. After four years of construction and development, TGIF (the USGA Green Section's Turfgrass Information File) computer at Michigan State University Library goes on-line on August 1, 1988. It will support remote searching and electronic message transmission. Turfgrass re-

searchers and practitioners around the world now have access to over 13,000 research and informational entries stored in the TGIF computer. New entries are added each week.

TGIF can be of significant help in supporting the literature review process for researchers. It can be equally beneficial to the golf course superintendent, green committee chairman, or any pro-

fessional in the field of turfgrass management as a reference tool. It will become increasingly valuable as new categories are entered. Indeed, it is designed to replace and update all the informational filing cabinets now in turfgrass managers' offices. To the increasingly complex world of turfgrass information management, TGIF offers a practical and simple solution.

(Below) The Michigan State University Library housing the Turfgrass Information File.

(Opposite page) A data retriever — remote personal computer with phone modem.





For further information, complete the enclosed request card, affix a 15¢ stamp, and mail. And for additional information on "How to Make the Right Connections," read Jim Moore's article (of the same title) in the May/June, 1988, issue of the GREEN SECTION RECORD.

An entirely new territory is about to open. Only you can determine if you want to explore and use it to your professional advantage. Send the request card today.

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

The Winner in the Long Run

by **LARRY W. GILHULY**
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A PLANT MANAGER for a large company painstakingly completed a long-range plan for future growth. He carefully determined regular maintenance requirements and how they would maximize profits. The plan was presented to his superiors; they approved and immediately placed it in operation. But the following year and every succeeding year, someone else changed the plan, refocused direction, or instituted an entirely different long-range plan. My question is, Do you think this company is still in business with this type of philosophy, or has it filed for Chapter 11?

While this example may not occur often in the business world, it is a common practice in the operation of golf courses. The problem is caused by the constantly changing green committees and green committee chairmen.

The chairman is a vital link between the golf course superintendent and his operations at the club. The frequent changing of this position requires constant re-education. Sometimes philosophical differences occur that in the worst case may lead to outright termination for the golf course superintendent.

We have all seen or heard of horror stories of this kind. Golf course mainte-

nance operations are big business. They should be treated in exactly that manner.

What can be done at a club if this revolving-door policy is in effect? The answer could lie in one of the following:

1. A new green committee chairman should serve as an active green committee member for at least two to three years before he becomes chairman. In this manner, he is acquainted with the golf course superintendent's operations and the club's long-range program. He is less likely to institute changes or personal preferences that could affect the golf course. The constant re-education program of chairmen is one of the major problems facing superintendents today.

2. The chairman should not have to be a board member. A board liaison can be an active participant in every green committee, yet he does not have to be the chairman. In this way the club can assure continuity of effort even though the board of directors is ever changing.

3. Provide longer terms for the chairman. If the superintendent and chairman operate well as a team, work within budgetary requirements, and maintain the golf course to the satisfaction of the members, then changing chairmen is

wasteful. A minimum of a three- to five-year term is suggested, unless this key working relationship begins to deteriorate. At this point, it has to be determined if the maintenance operation is being mismanaged or if it is simply a personality conflict between the chairman and superintendent. If the former, the superintendent may be dismissed. The latter requires a change of green committee chairman.

4. Invite the green chairman and golf course superintendent to the monthly board meetings. While this team certainly does not need to attend to other matters concerning the club, they should always be in attendance at every meeting for the discussion of pertinent golf course matters. This is particularly critical if the green chairman is changed on a regular basis and technical questions need to be answered. As any business has its regular meetings for discussing past, present, and future strategies, so should the operation of the golf course maintenance program.

Replace that revolving door with a standard model that is built solidly, yet has some flexibility. The golf course and golf course maintenance operation will be the winner in the long run.