

SUPERINTENDENT

The Magazine for Golf Course Superintendents

DECEMBER 2003

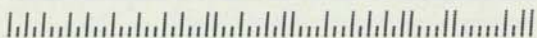
Hard Water Headaches

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Wetter Water

Overcoming hard water issues

by Anne Morris

Soon after Stan Mickle created the Canyon West Golf Course in Weatherford, Texas, he discovered he had definite water problems. "We're on the Trinity Aquifer," he said, "and that's very hard water. The first three years of taking water from the lakes, we built up a hard layer that was tough to penetrate without agricultural products, and we were burning out our course." He was a big user of sulfur burning, to help penetration.

No matter how much they watered, the course looked brown, which was not good for golfers and unappealing to those developing the area around the course. Mickle knew about a Minnesota-based company called ECOSmarte Planet Friendly that featured ionization and oxygenation of water, especially for swimming pools. He called them up and asked, "Do you have a way to make water wetter?" He admits that he was thinking about the way water feels when you take a shower with really soft water. It feels slick, because the soap is harder than the water.

Mickle believed that really wet water would penetrate and nourish his course.

Larry Couture, CEO of ECOSmarte, decided to see what he could do to help Mickle

solve his problems, even though they had not worked with golf courses like this before.

"He had a unique situation in soil and water quality," Couture said. "No matter how

much he watered in [the] first four years, it stayed pretty much brown."

As Couture explains it, wetter water involves greater surface tension for the water.

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