



-MISSION STATEMENT-

The Utah GCSA is dedicated to improving the superintendents' position in the golf industry through education, networking, advocacy and to grow the game of golf.

-VISION STATEMENT-

The Utah GCSA is a community of golf course management professionals and a go-to information source to enhance and grow the profession.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- ✓ July 20: Assistant's Meeting & EM Meeting @ Willow Creek CC
- ✓ August 17: Chapter Championship @ new location TBD
- ✓ October 5: Assistant's Meeting @ Glenwild Golf Club & Spa



OFFICERS

- President: Alan Davis - Willow Creek Country Club
- Vice President: Nate James - Soldier Hollow Golf Course
- Secretary/Treasurer: Brian Roth, CGCS - Oquirrh Hills Golf Course

DIRECTORS

- Mike Valiant, CGCS - Glenwild Golf Club & Spa
- Josh Virostko - Lakeside Golf Course
- Wes York - Oakridge Country Club

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

- Brecken Varah - Willow Creek Country Club

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- Phill Miller - Stotz Equipment
- Ross O'Fee, CGCS - Empire Turf, Inc.

PAST PRESIDENT

- Justin Woodland - The Barn Golf Club

NEWSLETTER EDITORS IN CHIEF

- Alan Davis & Kara Davis

UTAH GCSA OFFICE

- Natalie Barker, Chapter Executive
- P.O. Box 572583 Murray, Utah 84157
- Phone: (801) 282-5274
- Email: intermountaingcsa@gmail.com

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Silver Lining

One of many redundant themes throughout this Covid-19 experience has been record numbers of rounds. Seemingly every course I have heard from has experienced this. Golf has seemed to fill a void when so many normal daily activities have been either eliminated or drastically reduced. Those that may have played twice in a year have played twice this month.

Fortunately, golf is a great way to take a walk. Notice I didn't say drive, which was on purpose. Carts and I don't get along. When all recommendations were to be separated from others, avoid touch points, be in the fresh air, many found themselves at their local club. So, what did that mean for us? So many golfers that the golf shop runs out of carts. A driving range that has more sand than grass on it. More divots and ballmarks than typically happen in a year. Reduced crews so just getting through the basics daily is not even a given.

I am a silver lining guy. **I always like to say I am solution based, not problem based. I must remind myself of this repeatedly because it doesn't come naturally.** What we have been handed essentially, is a seemingly endless river of problems with this pandemic. How do we maintain distance? What can they touch, what can't they? How much disinfecting is enough? What's our reaction if someone gets sick? There are challenges, many of which we have never dealt with, at least in such an extreme sense. We were charged with finding solutions quickly and repeatedly. The silver lining is all of these solutions we have come up with are now in the playbook. Not necessarily for another pandemic, but many are worthy to look over when all of this is said and done. See what could be relevant daily. Whether for the club as a whole, or for your individual department. Many clubs have seen a drastic reduction in pace of play. We have had to tweak fertility programs in areas to deal with the extra play. We have had to get by with less, while still trying to maintain the same quality.

It has been a year of not stepping outside the box, but being forced outside the box. Sometimes that's a good thing. Somewhat of a forced audit of your operation. We have been asked to clearly define wants vs. needs. I've found this to be eye opening at times. I truly believe there is something to be learned from nearly every experience in life, and this one is certainly no exception.

I hope this letter finds you all in good health.

Best,

Alan B. Davis



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CHAPTER EXECUTIVE'S CORNER



Hi Everyone! What a year it has been so far! Hope you are all surviving, and things are somewhat back to normal for you and your families.

Here are a few reminders and items of interest...

1

We are trying to pin down dates and locations for future events. It has proven difficult as we are living in uncertain times and gathering numbers remain limited. As soon as we have things set, we will get it out to you quickly.

2

Did you know? GCSAA knows your career may have been impacted by the global COVID-19 Pandemic and they want to provide you with support in this challenging time. **Now through the end of 2020, all career coaching services are FREE to GCSAA members.** This includes resume critiques, resume writing, LinkedIn profiles, cover and thank you letter creation, mock phone interviews, individual consultation, and more. Contact Carol D. Rau, PHR, career consultant, at carol@careeradvantageresumes.com.

Stay healthy & safe,

Natalie Barker, Chapter Executive



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We are underway for the Superintendent, Assistant and Salesperson of the Year awards!! This is a great opportunity to nominate an individual that you think is doing a stellar job. Please take a few minutes and submit a deserving member of the Utah GCSA for these awards by August 15.

Nominations

- Nominate a Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and/or a Salesperson.
- To nominate, submit the name, course and justification to the UGCSA office.
- Nominations may be emailed to intermountaingcsa@gmail.com
- Or, nominations may be mailed to UGCSA P.O. Box 572583 Murray, UT 84157.
- Superintendents can also be nominated by golfers via UGA website.

Requirements

- Nominations must be submitted by **Saturday, August 15, 2020**.
- Nominees should not only be exceptional turf managers but also active in chapter activities, developing their staff, being a team player, and a champion in growing the game of golf.
- Winners must be a current 2020 member of the UGCSA.

Winners

- Winners will be chosen by the current UGCSA Board of Directors based on the number of nominations and justifications provided.
- They will be announced at 2020 Annual Education Conference & Trade Show.
- Winners will receive a plaque, full event package to the Annual Conference and a \$100 Visa gift card!!!

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Utah Golf Course Superintendents Association



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VISIT WWW.UGA.ORG**

The Golf Course Superintendent is the professional who manages the largest asset of the facility - the golf course. They are a vital piece in maintaining all aspects of the course including course condition, labor, equipment, financial resources and environmental sustainability.

The Utah GCSA is a community of golf course management professionals and a go-to information source to enhance and grow the profession.



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SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT



Sabrina Naulu

My name is Sabrina Naulu and I am from Spanish Fork, Utah. I love anything to do with sports, art, or the tv show Friends. I am the Assistant Superintendent at Logan Golf and Country Club. And I am currently a junior at USU getting my degree in Plant Science - Horticulture and Agronomy. I am extremely grateful for this award! It helps ease some of the financial burden and stress that school can cause, which in turn allows me to work less hours so I can focus more on my education.

Sabrina received a \$4,000 scholarship to use toward her education.

CALL FOR UGCSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

If you would like to run, or nominate someone you think would do a great job on the Utah GCSA Board of Directors, send us your/their name and course. The following positions will need to be filled:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary/Treasurer
- (2) Directors
- (1) assistant superintendent liaison
- (1) affiliate/vendor representative

The time requirement is very minimal; however, we are looking for members who are dedicated and enthusiastic about improving our chapter. The board meets on an as needed basis in a central location or via video call.

We've come a long way and need your help to keep our chapter successful!

Voting for these positions will take place at the Annual Education Conference & Trade Show.

The deadline for nominations for the 2021 UGCSA Board of Directors is

August 15, 2020.



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8505 WILLOW CREEK DRIVE, SANDY 84093

Clubhouse (assistants) - Maintenance Facility (EM)

Assistant Agenda:

- 10:00 – 10:30 Check-in, networking & introductions
- 10:30 – 11:45 Presentation (Alan Davis, Superintendent)
- 11:45 – 12:30 Lunch sponsored by Winfield
- 12:30 – 1:00 Interactive activity
- 1:00 – 1:45 Guest speakers & Q&A session
- 2:00 – 3:00 Golf outing



EM Agenda:

- 10:00- 10:30 Check-in, networking & introductions
- 10:30 – 11:45 Roundtable
- 11:45 – 12:30 Lunch sponsored by Hydro Engineering
- 12:30 – 1:30 Roundtable & closing



Due to health restrictions, space will be extremely limited.

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BACK2GOLF: GUIDELINES FOR OPENING UP THE GOLF COURSE DURING COVID-19



GUIDELINES FOR ALL PHASES: INDIVIDUALS

- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.
- Maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet.
- Strongly consider using cloth face coverings when social distancing can't be observed.

CONTINUE TO PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE – PEOPLE WHO FEEL SICK SHOULD STAY HOME

- Do not go to work.
- Contact and follow the advice of your medical provider.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL PHASES: EMPLOYERS

Develop and implement appropriate policies, in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations and guidance, and informed by industry best practices:

- Maintain 6 feet social distancing and protective equipment.
- Temperature checks for staff.
- Testing, isolating, and contact tracing.
- Sanitation of maintenance equipment, hand tools, etc.
- Disinfection of common and high-traffic areas.

Monitor workforce for indicative symptoms. Do not allow symptomatic people to physically return to work until cleared by a medical provider.

Develop and implement policies and procedures for workforce contact tracing following an employee a positive COVID test.

PHASE ①

Avoid gathering in groups of more than **10** people

PHASE ②

Avoid gathering in groups of more than **50** people

PHASE ③

Resume **UNRESTRICTED STAFFING** levels

CONTINUED...



BACK2GOLF: GUIDELINES FOR OPENING UP THE GOLF COURSE DURING COVID-19

HOW TO CLEAN EQUIPMENT AND SURFACES

Employers are required to increase regular cleaning and sanitizing of common-touch surfaces.

Employers must:

- Establish a housekeeping schedule to address regular, frequent, and periodic cleaning.
- Provide appropriate and adequate cleaning supplies for scheduled and spot cleaning and cleaning after a suspected or confirmed coronavirus case.
- Ensure floors, counters, and other surfaces are regularly cleaned with soap and water, or other cleaning solution, to prevent build-up of dirt and residues that can harbor contamination.
- Make sure high-touch surfaces are properly disinfected on a frequent or periodic basis using a bleach solution or other EPA-approved disinfectant.
www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2
- Be sure employees follow effective cleaning procedures and use protective gloves and eye/ face protection (face shields and/or goggles) when mixing, spraying, and wiping with liquid cleaning products, like diluted bleach.
- Make sure shared utility vehicles are sanitized after each different person's use.
- Keep Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) for all disinfectants on site.
- Don't mix chemicals — many are incompatible; and be sure to dilute and use chemicals per manufacturer label directions.
- Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may be used.

Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used if appropriate for the surface.

- Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection, and ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening, may not be suitable for disinfection.
- Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
- Leave solution on the surface for at least 1 minute.

To make a bleach solution, mix:

- 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, irrigation controls, and remote controls:

- Consider putting a wipeable cover on electronics.
- Follow manufacturer's instruction for cleaning and disinfecting.
 - If no guidance, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

ON COURSE SETUP

Bunker rakes

Depending on your operation, use one of the following practices for golfers to mitigate spread of the virus:

- Supply one bunker rake per cart. Supply each golfer with CDC recommended disinfecting wipes to wipe down the rake handle before and after each use. Then, sanitize the rake after each round and at the end of the day.
- If rakes have been placed back on the course, supply each golfer with CDC-recommended disinfecting wipes to wipe down the rake handle before and after each use. Then sanitize all rakes at the end of the day (or multiple times a day).
- If the other options are not possible at your facility, do not return rakes to the course and have golfers continue to use their shoes to smooth out bunkers.

Flagsticks

- Supply each golfer with CDC-recommended disinfecting wipes to wipe down the flagsticks before and after each use. Then sanitize all flagsticks during course set up the next day (or multiple times a day).
- If you are unable to provide wipes, do not remove cup inserts. Maintain a "no touch" flagstick with the use of cup inserts.

Watercoolers

- At this time, do not return coolers to the course. Supply bottled water or encourage golfers to bring their own individual water containers.

Benches and other course amenities

- At this time, do not return benches, ball washers, etc. to the course to minimize touch points.

EQUIPMENT, UTILITY VEHICLES, HANDTOOLS

- Sanitize all hand tools prior to and after use.
- Assign staff pieces of equipment/carts to eliminate sharing.
- No one should ride together in maintenance vehicles, carts etc. Single riders only.
- Spray all equipment with CDC approved disinfectant on all touch points (steering wheels, gear shift, keys, switches etc.).
- Disinfect fuel pump handle after each use.

GUIDELINES FOR GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE

- No outside visitors permitted; employees, contractors, vendors and deliveries only.
- Increase communication with your team. Utilize apps such as WhatsApp or GroupMe.
- Restrict access to certain areas of the building, e.g. only equipment managers should be allowed in equipment repair area.
- Stagger shifts to minimize the amount of staff on property at any given time.
- Assign each team member a spray bottle of sanitizer.
- Block doors open to avoid touching doorknobs.
- Place hand sanitizer throughout the maintenance area.
- Supply cloth face coverings to your team.
- Eliminate time clocks or assign management/one individual the responsibility of punching employees in/out.
- Use appropriate disinfecting practices for telephones, computer keyboards, tablets, etc after each use.
- Eliminate the use of refrigerators, coffee machines, microwaves.
- Hold team meetings outside or in the equipment maintenance area where appropriate 6-foot separation can be maintained.
- Consider moving job board out of break room to equipment storage area or use a web-based job board.
- Adjusting break/lunch times to limit contact between employees.
- Consider setting up seating areas outside for employees to take breaks and lunch.
- Remove all personal items from employee lockers.
- Only 1 employee in the bathroom at a time. Disinfect after each use.
- Sanitizing touchable surfaces/carts/equipment/bathrooms/ breakrooms daily (or multiple times a day).

CONTINUED...

SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES

Do your part to get
Back2Golf

wearegolf.org/back2golf

<p>1. ALWAYS stay six feet apart from others.</p> 	<p>2. STAY HOME if you have a fever or feel sick.</p> 	
<p>3. AVOID large gatherings on the first tee, driving range or after the round.</p> 	<p>4. If in doubt... DON'T TOUCH IT.</p> 	
<p>5. ALWAYS mark your ball clearly.</p> 	<p>7. AVOID handshakes and high-fives.</p> 	<p>8. RESPECT the game and all involved.</p> 
<p>6. WEAR a facial covering when taking a lesson.</p> 	<p>9. REMEMBER to wash your hands after playing.</p> 	





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Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

By Brecken Varah, Assistant Superintendent @ Willow Creek Country Club



At the beginning of every new season we all hire new employees, and these new employees need training. Those that do the training, use their previous training and experience, and pass it on to these new employees. But how do we know everyone has received the proper training? We could just assume and see what happens, but we all know how this can sometimes turn out. To make sure everyone receives proper training it is best to have a resource we can rely on year after year. That is where SOPs come in.

WHAT ARE SOPs? According to Wikipedia, a standard operating procedure (SOP) is a set of step-by-step instructions compiled by an organization to help workers carry out complex routine operations. SOPs aim to increase efficiency, quality output, and uniformity of performance, while reducing miscommunication and failure to comply with industry regulations.

WHY HAVE SOPs? They help keep training consistent, no matter who is training, and employees can reference them when they have questions. Knowledge is power!

HOW DO YOU CREATE SOPs? In collaboration with the superintendent and other assistants, I started by listing all the different jobs we perform each day/week/month/year. We then came up with a template of what we wanted our SOPs to consist of. For example:

1. Job Name
2. Job Summary
3. Equipment Needed
4. PPE Needed
5. Tasks to Perform
6. Mow Pattern
7. Where to Park while completing task
8. Numerous task specific details

In conclusion, SOPs create an environment of consistency year over year. Additionally, there is consistency from person to person. No matter gives the explanation for the task, the result is the same. It creates a sense of accountability for the employee. They are provided with all the tools they need to do the task completely and correctly. We have found them to be an incredibly useful tool. I hope you will as well.

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Retain Magnum (7 lb pellets for wet well application)

- Same make up as the Retain Max hand water pellets but for large area applications. Use 1 large pellet per 15-20 Acres being irrigated. Use the magnum nylon bag and hang in the wet well prior to night irrigation. ** Great one time per month during hot months!

Humwet G (2.3lbslbs/1000)

- Water management for 3 months, 14% Humic Acid and a 3 way wetting agent, quick to apply when spot spreading on exposed mounds and bunker faces, or perennial dry areas. SGN 75-100.

Brandon Haddick
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2021 DOG DAYS OF GOLF CALENDAR

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Submit your entry today:

<https://www.gcsaa.org/dog-calendar/submit-dog-calendar-photo>

Submissions for the 2021 Dog Days of Golf Calendar will be accepted through **Aug. 3, 2020**.

From the submissions, 14 dogs will be selected. Owners of the selected dogs will be notified in September, and the calendar will be distributed with the November issue of GCM magazine.

Plan now to stop by the LebanonTurf booth at the Golf Industry Show in January to place your vote for the 2021 Dog of the Year. The winner's owner will receive a \$500 prize and \$3,000 for his or her GCSAA-affiliated chapter. A \$2,000 charitable donation will also be made to K9's for Warriors by GCSAA and LebanonTurf in honor of the winner.

LebanonTurf has been supporting golf course superintendents and their chapters through the Dog Days of Golf Calendar for more than a decade.

Questions? Contact Cynthia Spondello at LebanonTurf at 800-532-0090, ext. 253.



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new Equipment Managers members

Brack Crouch, Talisker Club @ Tuhaye

Adam Valdez @ Alpine Country Club

all other new members

Sabrina Naulu, Assistant Superintendent @ Logan Golf & Country Club

Chad Oakey, Assistant Superintendent @ Lakeside Golf Course

Shane Shaffer, Assistant Superintendent @ The Country Club

Jonas Muramoto, Assistant Superintendent @ Glendale Golf Course

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Golf Uses Less Water Than You Think

How Golf Courses are Saving Water and Saving Money Through New Technology and Conservation Efforts

by Adam Schupak

April 2019

It's not unusual for Justin Mandon to wake up in the middle of the night and check his smartphone. But unlike most users reading text messages or scanning their social media accounts, Mandon, the superintendent at Pasatiempo Golf Club in Santa Cruz, California, is looking at an app to monitor the course's water treatment plant.

In 2017, the highly-regarded public course built a recycled water treatment facility – storage tank, filtration station and pump station – behind its 13th green. The project cost \$9 million, but it's paying quick dividends: Pasatiempo saved over 40 million gallons of potable water in its first season (May-October 2018) with the facility, according to Mandon, and about \$500,000 in potable water costs.

It has given the facility three water sources: recycled water from Scotts Valley, potable water from Santa Cruz and water from its own well. These resources are invaluable given the risk of drought conditions that affected properties such as Mountain View Golf Course, a daily-fee course in Santa Paula, California, north of Los Angeles, which closed on Jan. 2 after 50 years of operation. Course operators cited the low level of the Santa Clara River, which has dried up four years in a row, that led to restrictions in watering fairways, according to an article in the *Ventura County Star*.

“We happen to think that long-term, water is going to be the biggest obstacle to the game of golf, more than participation, more than anything,” said Mike Davis, the USGA's executive director.

That's because water remains a precious commodity — and an increasingly expensive one — that the golf course industry needs to effectively manage and conserve. It's an issue that touches every sector of the golf industry, from municipal and daily-fee courses to private country clubs and resort courses.

CONTINUED...

Golf Uses Less Water Than You Think (cont'd)



A superintendent employs Rain Bird's irrigation connectivity on a tablet as rotors run in the background.

The goal, says course architect Forrest Richardson, is to get the highest form of control so courses aren't delivering any more water than is absolutely necessary. Today, this can involve drone mapping, new high-tech irrigation systems, and water-saving devices that measure soil moisture, plant health, and other aspects of the course.

The good news is that the industry has been proactive.

"Golf is a business, and it's our courses and owners who have to pay for water — they have a vested interest, and over the years it has been golf that has pushed the agenda for better and more refined coverage and conservation," Richardson says. "The golf industry has paid for nearly all of the advanced irrigation technology brought forward in the past 40 years."

Richardson notes that the irrigation manufacturers — including NGF Top 100 companies like Toro, Rain Bird and Hunter — have led the charge for better rotors, valves and control. The computer-controlled systems first found on golf courses were the predecessors to those now available at Home Depot in smaller devices to control backyard irrigation.

Golf Uses Less Water Than You Think (cont'd)

Reducing the Footprint

In addition to computerized central irrigation systems, facilities have instituted the use of on-site weather stations and are switching to reclaimed water rather than risk having water officials impose restrictions that could turn the courses into sunburned badlands. These steps have produced positive outcomes.

Golf courses in the U.S. used almost 1.9 million acre-feet of water in 2013, compared with approximately 2.4 million acre-feet in 2005, according to a report entitled “Documenting Trends in Water Use and Conservation Practices on U.S. Golf Courses,” and published in the scientific journal *Crop, Forage & Turfgrass Management*. This represents a 21.8 percent decrease, or an annual savings of 519,537 acre-feet compared with 2005. (An acre-foot is a unit of volume equal to a sheet of water that covers one acre at one foot in depth.)

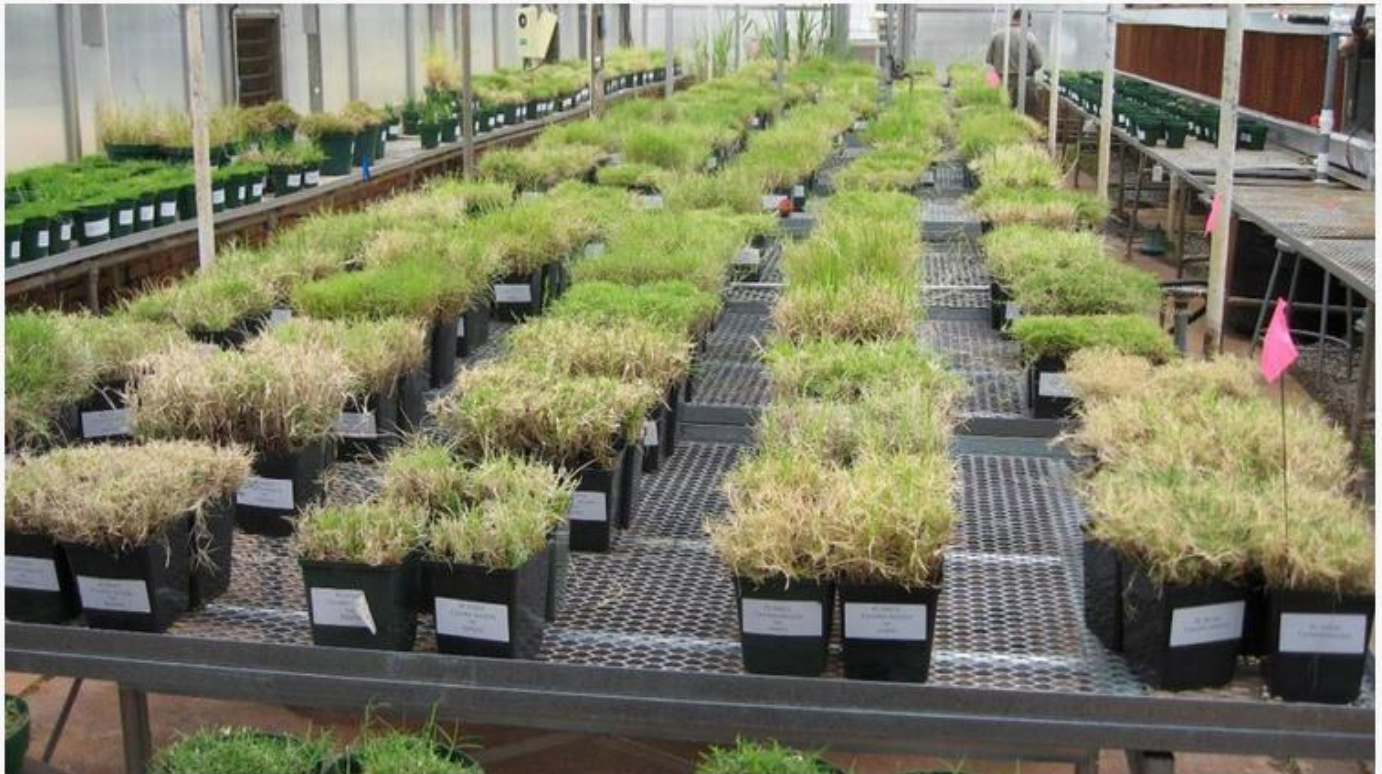
Some of that savings, of course, can be attributed to acreage reduction and course closings, but also highlights the great progress toward more efficient use of water and water conservation practices superintendents are employing on the golf course and that are making them better managers.

“It’s a significant accomplishment but in some ways it’s just the beginning of what we are going to need to do,” said Rand Jerris, the USGA’s senior managing director of public services.

The data collected in the “Trends in Water Use” report also identify areas where further improvements can take place, from reducing the amount of acreage being watered and maintained to embracing water sensors and other innovative technologies, and new varieties of grass.

The USGA, which distributes approximately \$2 million to various land-grant universities across the country, has teamed with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the University of California at Riverside to fund research to develop warm-season grasses that maintain heat, drought and salinity tolerance — think Bermuda and zoysia grass — and also retain their color in the winter. This best-of-both-worlds scenario would require no need for overseeding, over-watering or replanting in spring. The study started with 640 strains of grass in 2016, and 12 hybrids showing the most promise have advanced to the next stage of the trial.

Golf Uses Less Water Than You Think (cont'd)



The USGA Green Section in recent years has placed an emphasis on developing turfgrasses that survive periods of high heat, extreme cold, drought or tolerance of poor quality water. During the past 30 years, the USGA has helped golf courses make significant accomplishments toward conserving water through improved turfgrass water use and adaptation, soil management, and irrigation scheduling.

Improving the Bottom Line

The USGA also developed a cloud-based app that allowed John Sanford of Sanford Golf Design to create significant cost savings at Crandon Park, a city-run facility in Miami that is the only course in North America with a subtropical lagoon. Using GPS to track golfer movement, Sanford was able to generate heat maps that identified 19 additional acres for turf reduction. That land will be converted to natural crushed stone. An additional 12 acres will convert to naturalized plantings and another eight acres to aquatic plantings, thereby reducing the irrigated turf area by over 30 percent.

In 2019, Miami-Dade County will save \$150,000 on a \$1.1 million water budget from increasing efficiency of sprinkler heads and optimizing watering patterns using smart technology. Once the site master plan is completed, it will amount to \$350,000 in annual cost savings.

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Golf Uses Less Water Than You Think (cont'd)

Likewise, Pasatiempo eliminated 25 thirsty acres of irrigated turf several years ago, dropping from 90 to 65 and letting those native grasses – usually between fairways or around teeing areas – subsist only on winter rains. Richardson, who used a drought resistant Paspalum turf in his re-design of Baylands Golf Links in Palo Alto, California, notes a new-found willingness among courses to reduce the turf footprint.

“In the early days of this movement it seemed that courses needed a financial incentive handed down by the government, such as in California where credits for every square foot of turf removed was passed along,” he says. “Now the wake-up call is that it simply makes sense to the bottom line.”

At Lookout Mountain Golf Club in Phoenix, Richardson removed two decorative lakes from the course. Millions of gallons of water were being lost to evaporation and underground seepage. So, he converted the man-made lakes to desert hollows, while preserving the strategy and aesthetics of the golf course. The annual water savings is estimated to be more than ten million gallons.

“Everyone wins, mostly the savings in water cost,” Richardson said.



At Lookout Mountain in Arizona, desert hollows replaced two man-made lakes.

Golf Uses Less Water Than You Think (cont'd)

'Brown is Beautiful'

Jerris contends that if the industry fails to make significant changes in the way it consumes water, there could be a day where golf in this country looks like skiing, becoming a very seasonal activity and confined to where there is enough natural rainfall to support turfgrass. At the fifth Golf Innovation Symposium held in Japan in March, the USGA presented a challenge statement for the industry to improve golfer satisfaction by 20 percent while reducing critical resource consumption by 25 percent by 2025.

"It's not inevitable that the future is grim," Jerris said. "What's inevitable is that we have to move quickly to embrace some of these new technologies and embrace different attitudes to maintaining golf courses."

That is why the U.S. Opens at Pinehurst No. 2 in 2014 and Chambers Bay in 2015, which showcased the concept of "maintenance up the middle" and that "brown is beautiful" were important conversation starters.

Embed from Getty Images



"It highlighted what we can do on golf courses and still provide a quality golf experience," said Kimberly Erusha, head of the USGA Green Section.

For all these efforts, it isn't hard to find headlines screaming that golf is a major drain on the water supply or criticize "water-guzzling" golf courses.

"There's still a public perception that golf consumes too much water, but we're doing a lot better than you might think," said Craig Kessler, Southern California Golf Association's director of governmental affairs. "The reality is that less than 1 percent of the potable water in California is consumed by the golf industry."

Golf Uses Less Water Than You Think (cont'd)

Indeed, golf courses consumed 1.44 percent of all water used for irrigation in the U.S. in 2013.

Almost all regions increased their use of recycled water, particularly the Southwest, Southeast, and Pacific regions. Just as importantly, hand-held soil moisture sensors, which are available to most every course in the range of \$800, help superintendents make better decisions about when to apply water to a golf course.

“Water is a concern nearly everywhere, even in places where there may be little or no water cost to the golf operation,” says Richardson.

Even so, technological advances can't solve every issue.

After Pasatiempo finished building its well on No. 12, PG&E, the local utility company, told club officials they couldn't install a meter without a physical street address. That proved to be a problem since the well is situated alongside a fairway, not a street. Eventually, Pasatiempo general manager Scott Hoyt connected with a county official who created an official address – “Mr. and Mrs. Well” now live at 86 Pasatiempo Drive collecting a lot of junk mail, he jokes.

The solution placated PG&E and allowed the club to complete the project, allowing the cost savings, and water conservation, to begin.



The recycled water treatment facility at Pasatiempo Golf Course in Santa Cruz, California.



Adam Schupak

Adam has written about golf since 1997 for the likes of Golfweek, Golf World, Morning Read, LINKS and The New York Times. The New York native is also the author of Deane Beman: Golf's Driving Force.



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