

PEER-TO-PEER: BETTER TURF THROUGH NETWORKING

MGCSA Superintendents were asked: Has your budget gone up, down or stayed the same?

I love my budget meetings. Every year it is "Spend what you have to and waste as little as possible.". This year is no different. Our equipment fleet is aging and for us used equipment is the new "new." The only cutback is that we have no projects on the agenda and therefore our summer help hours will decline somewhat. - *Jason Swanson, Superintendent, Hidden Greens Golf Club, Hastings*

At **Madelia Golf Course**, which is city-owned, my budget was cut drastically. After spending hours and hours trying to cut the budget back myself, basically a "lights on only" budget with no fat to trim off, the City Council cut more out! Areas the City Council decided to cut were in the areas of maintenance and repair, gasoline/diesel, and fertilizers/chemicals. The Council also stripped my Capital Outlay. To help out all I can, I will be adding more "No Mow" areas on the course, and eliminating all overtime from employees. As tough of a year as it sounds, I won't complain, I'm THANKFUL TO HAVE A JOB!! - *Shawn Swenson, Superintendent, Madelia Golf Course, Madelia*

At **TPC Twin Cities**, our budget has gone down about 5%. The cuts are across the board. The cuts were mandated by the TPC Network. - *Roger A. Stewart Jr., CGCS, TPC Twin Cities, Blaine*

At **Hillcrest**, we had to cut our budget 10%; most of it is coming from labor. I cut a second assistant position and 5 seasonal workers. - *Tom Schmidt, Superintendent, Hillcrest Golf Club of St. Paul*

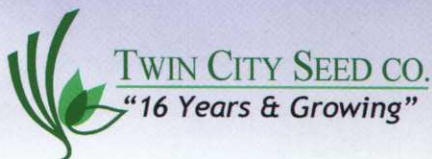
Our budget at **The Ridge at Castle Pines North** has gone down about 5%. Cuts were made by myself to various programs but mainly in fungicide, sand, irrigation repair and equipment repair. Payroll was left alone, for the most part. - *David J. Soltoedt, CGCS, The Ridge at Castle Pines North, Castle Rock, Colorado*

At **Hiawatha**, our budget stayed the same for the most part. - *Robert Porter, Superintendent, Hiawatha Golf Course, Minneapolis*

At **Windsong**, the overall operating budget number has stayed the same. However, line item dollars have shifted or were otherwise altered to maintain course integrity and some projects have been delayed. The largest change was in labor. Basically, the overtime hours have been nearly eliminated. This simply means we will have to closely track hours and be a little creative in scheduling. I am looking forward to the challenge. - *Scottie Hines, CGCS, Windsong Farm GC, Independence*

Our budget has stayed the same at **Hollydale**; we are just trying to adjust where the money should go and what areas can use less. We really can't see lowering our budget without some setback to the course. Last year we tried to expand our no-mow areas. That lasted about two weeks and the golfers were already complaining about lost balls. With the economy being the way it is, we are assuming the rounds of golf will continue to go down. We are planning on keeping most of the maintenance practices

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Peer-to-Peer-

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the same, hoping the golfers have a great experience and continue to come back and play our course. - Casey Flatten, Superintendent, Hollydale Golf Club, Plymouth

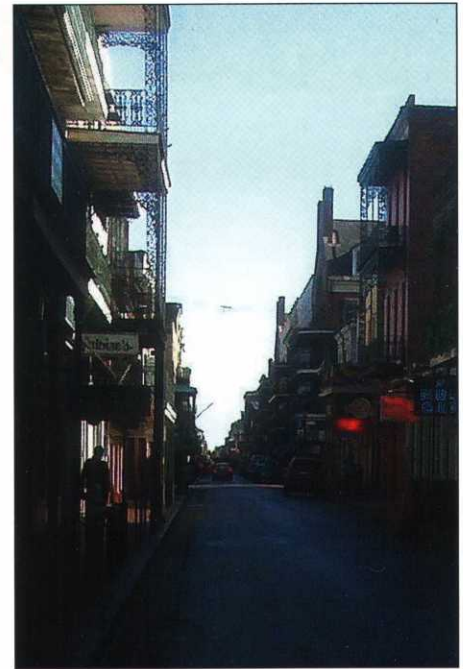
Hong Kong Golf Club's operating budget for 2009 has stayed the same with some additional funds added for a newly developed Turfgrass Research Center. - Randy Witt, CGCS, Hong Kong Golf Club, China

At **Tanners Brook**, my budget was cut 20% from what was done last year. The owners feel this is necessary to survive the present economic downturn. All maintenance inputs will be reduced. It has come down survival mode. The goal for our golf course is that we will be open in the spring 2010. - Kevin Clunis, CGCS, Tanners Brook GC, Forest Lake

At **Dellwood Hills**, our budget (Labor and Operations) was cut 8% with \$0 for Capital. I made all the cuts but was directed by my General Manager that we were to cut all overtime. My full time seasonal staff have been getting about 10 hours of overtime each week. Eric H. Peterson, Superintendent, Dellwood Hills Golf Club, Dellwood

Our operating budget at **Northland** was reduced by about 8%. Most of the cuts were made in the areas of labor, pesticides and fertilizers. On the labor side we feel that after two years we have identified methods of being more efficient with our labor. We will also be working a 36-hour work week and bring in about 5 "weekend warriors" to keep the weekend hours worked by the crew at a minimum. Cultural practices put into place over the past two years have allowed us to reduce the fertilizer and chemicals used on the course and those budget areas reflect this. All and all I am comfortable that even with the reductions we can and will continue to present the conditions our membership has become accustomed to the past two seasons. - Chris Tritabaugh, Superintendent, Northland Country Club, Duluth

(Editor's note: In last month's Peer-to-Peer, the response from Dacotah Ridge Golf Club was inadvertently credited to Riley Keiffer. Tony Rahe wrote the response to the question.)



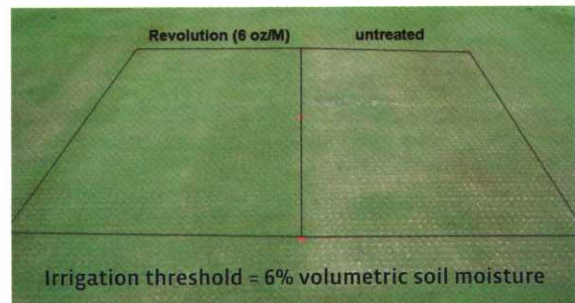
Bourbon Street in New Orleans was a little quieter the morning after the MGCSA Hospitality Night in early February. 143 MGCSA members and guests attended the event. Thanks again to all of our generous sponsors who made the fun night possible.

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