

## Weather - You Like It, or Not

By Bob Costa, CGCS

There was a time before I got into the golf maintenance business that I thought high pressure and low pressure were terms used to describe the air in the tires of my car. Phrases like "pineapple connection" I was sure, referred to a tropical drink served on the beaches of Hawaii. A "front" was the opposite of back and the expression "heavy at times" was how I felt after the holidays. Well, it wasn't long after I became a superintendent that I realized that these expressions were common words used to describe the weather and that over the years they would become a part of my regular vocabulary.

Another aspect of my life that has changed since I made the decision to choose golf course maintenance as a career are my radio and TV habits. My pre superintendent years were spent enjoying rock and roll as I traveled about in my car. Not any longer. If your a passenger in the car with me now, you're more likely to hear Mike Pekners 6 day weather forecast on KCBS than the Doobie Brothers China Grove. Unfortunately, my fascination with the weather doesn't end there. When I get home my obsession with the weather persists. Jim Vanderswan, the local TV weatherman commands as much attention in my living room at 6:30 as my family. I've been know to delay changing a diaper or putting out the trash to catch Jim's three day forecast.

So what's the deal. Why are thousands of other superintendents and I obsessed with the weather on a daily basis? It's because it has such an impact on the way we manage golf courses. Take this past winter, for example. The early rains we experienced in November forced the delay of numerous construction projects. As the rain continued into December and January, many course became unplayable. At times the turf was so saturated it couldn't be mowed, and in the worst cases, temporary greens were utilized. All the while golf course superintendents were clinging to the updated weather report like a new born calf to her mother's . . . Then it stopped. What a welcome relief we all thought, until the weeks of no rain turned into months of no rain. Slowly courses began to dry out, finally to the point where the irrigation systems had to be activated. Irrigating 140 acres is one of a superintendents biggest challenges, on a normal year this begins in mid April, this year it was early March. This is particularly a concern for some superintendents irrigating with poor quality water.

Glancing at my calendar, I realize it's only May and yet I can feel the stress building. I need to relax, just sit back, look out the window and get lost in my thoughts. Wait a minute is that a cloud? Those are clouds, and they're dark. It could be the leading edge of a cold front, or even better, subtropical moisture from the Pacific. I've got to hurry, I need to get home. This a forecast I can't afford to miss.

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Superintendent Woodcreek Golf Club	
Jeff Christensen	Class C
Assistant Almaden CC	
Brian Schafer	Class C
Assistant The Links at Mariners Point	
Bill Hudson	Associate
Tony Lema Golf Course	
Lekh Raj	Associate
Buchanan Fields Golf Course	
Robert Yeo	Associate
Del Monte Golf Course	
Barry Jones	Affiliate
Water Utilities Services	
Conrad Kulik	Affiliate
Ancon Bio Services	
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*The further backward you look,  
the further forward you can see.*

— Winston Churchill —



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