

GCSAA Water Study Reflects Positively On Golf Courses

A GCSAA-funded water quality study confirmed the results of previous research that pesticide runoff and leaching to ground water from golf courses is minimal, and when detected, is at levels that are usually well below health advisory standards.

Researchers Stuart Cohen, Ph.D., Amelia Svrjcek, Tom Durborow and N. LaJan Barnes analyzed data from 36 golf courses, all in the United States with the exception of one on Prince Edward Island, Canada. The group analyzed water quality monitoring data for the pesticides, metabolites, solvents and nitrate/nitrogen used on courses. Summaries of data were also obtained from Guam and Japan, but were treated separately. The results were published in the November issue of GCSAA's monthly magazine *Golf Course Management*.

The study determined that just nine of 12, 101 analyses for pesticides in ground water samples were in excess of drinking water health advisory levels. Only eight of 2,731 analyses for pesticides in surface water samples exceeded their respective drinking water limits, and 25 exceeded guidelines for aquatic organisms. In the surface water samples, there were no readings of nitrate/nitrogen levels above the federal drinking water standard, while just 31 of 849 groundwater samples exceeded the standards.

The results from Guam and Japan were similar.

GCSAA Director of Research Jeff Nus, Ph.D., said the study was the first attempt at a comprehensive examination of water quality on golf courses. Past research, with similar results, was limited to just one geographic region. Still, Nus said this most recent study was not meant to be national estimates for golf course impacts on water quality.

Based upon previous scientific research funded by the United States Golf Association, GCSAA had contended that properly managed golf courses do not pose a discernible health risk, and in many cases improve the quality of water," Nus said. "This latest study is important because the data analyzed from surface and ground water from golf courses support the results of the previous USGA-funded studies under carefully controlled laboratory condition."

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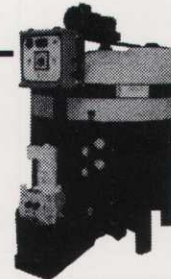
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