USGA®
CASE STUDY

Best Management Practices
Resource Management

Using Moisture Probes to Reduce Water Use

Candler Hills Golf Club **Ocala, Fla.**

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The Problem

Candler Hills recently switched their irrigation water source from groundwater to treated, recycled water. The goal after changing water sources was to reduce the amount of water applied, thereby reducing the cost to purchase recycled water.

The Solution

Two hand-held soil moisture meters were purchased and are regularly used to monitor when and where irrigation is needed. Putting greens are checked daily with the hand-held moisture meters and dry areas are hand watered instead of using overhead irrigation. The moisture meters also are used on other areas of the golf course to determine whether irrigation is needed.

Figure 1 - Moisture meters measure exactly how much water is in the soil at any given time and help the staff determine how much irrigation to apply.

The Results

Last year, we saved the club 1.1 million gallons of water. Since recycled water costs the club nearly $1 per 1,000 gallons, the new moisture meters will pay for themselves in just two years. The other benefit of reduced irrigation and drier conditions is healthier turf and improved playing conditions.

There were few challenges incorporating the use of soil moisture meters other than acclimating staff to their use and employing a little more hand watering. We have been pleased with the change and wish we would have incorporated this technology sooner.

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