

The Benefits Of Pruning Tree Roots

The Peninsula Club
Jared Nemitz, superintendent

Cornelius, N.C. 28031

Issue

Tree roots had become an issue at The Peninsula Club. They were growing into playing surfaces and causing turf decline because tree roots outcompete turf roots for water and nutrients. Additionally, surface roots caused poor playability, created risk of golfer injury and posed a threat to maintenance equipment. Furthermore, tree roots were causing significant damage to the facility's concrete cart paths.

Action

Superintendent Jared Nemitz proposed solving this problem by pruning the tree roots along all tree lines throughout the golf course, including along cart paths. To perform this work, The Peninsula Club purchased a tractor-mounted root pruner. The maintenance staff used this machine to prune tree roots along all tree lines and cart paths. They were careful not to prune roots too close to the trunk, which could damage the integrity and health of a tree. Any



Surface roots create poor playability, can be dangerous to golfers and can cause severe turf decline.

visible surface roots were manually removed following the root pruning process.

Results

Pruning tree roots at The Peninsula Club has been a huge success. Turf conditions have improved, cart path damage has been reduced and the risk of injury to golfers from roots has been reduced. Keeping roots under control in the future will be much easier now that surface roots have been manually removed and a regular root-pruning program is in place.

Nemitz plans to perform future root pruning on an as-needed basis – perhaps every two years – to keep up with new root growth. Skipping too many years can lead to future problems with surface roots. Root pruning will be performed during the winter months to maximize efficiency and avoid interfering with play.