



Fertilize 'Fore' Playability

A quality playing surface and the color green are not always synonymous.

A lush, green fairway may look pretty from the entry road, but soft and spongy conditions on lush fairways do nothing to boost driving distance or golfer enjoyment. Judicious application of fertilizer and water helps create healthy and firm fairways that encourage the ball to bounce and roll after well-placed drives. Fertilizer should not be applied to produce a vibrant green color, but rather to encourage healthy turf that can recover from environmental stresses as well as golfer and maintenance traffic.

Growth rates and density can differ.

Have you ever encountered a thick patch of rough on one hole and a thin one on the next? Why are there differences in turfgrass growth rates and density?

Factors such as genetics, traffic and weather affect turf density, but the growth rate is largely dependent on the soil's ability to supply plant essential nutrients. Unfortunately, soil type and depth can widely vary across a golf course. Fertilizer is used as a supplement to improve turf health and density where the soil alone is not meeting the plant's needs. Areas of the course that have infertile, shallow or sandy soils, or experience heavy golfer traffic, are examples of locations that often require supplemental nutrition to achieve the desired turf quality.

Playability – Which rough do you prefer?

Warm spring weather will naturally jump-start the release of soil-bound nutrients, often resulting in excessive growth that creates dense turf and difficult playing conditions. Adding fertilizer to plants that are already healthy can negatively impact playability and increase maintenance costs because excessive growth requires additional mowing and clippings cleanup.

It is especially important to avoid excess fertilization in the rough immediately adjacent to the fairways to avoid penalizing slightly missed



There is a good opportunity for golfers to make a clean strike on the ball sitting on short, thin turf. Excessive growth likely will come between the club face and the ball, reducing both distance and spin.



golf shots. Applying the right fertilizer source at the proper rate and at the appropriate time is an important balancing act required to prevent overfeeding. A golf course does not need to be wall-to-wall green to offer enjoyable, high-quality playing conditions.

Precision application is the key to environmental protection.

To protect the environment from fertilizer contamination, homeowners and golf course superintendents alike should avoid allowing fertilizer to reach bodies of water or hard surfaces such as sidewalks, driveways and curbs. To ensure precise fertilizer applications, golf course superintendents use sophisticated application equipment to apply fertilizers in exact locations. Precise application and proper timing avoids excessive flushes of growth, reduces the risk of runoff or leaching and ultimately provides an enjoyable player experience.



Much like a stop sign, caution should be taken to prevent fertilizer from reaching the red paint line on the curb.