



## Autumn Shade

By Bob Vavrek, agronomist, Central Region

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Every course has players that, as a result of their love of trees, ignore or discount the fact that dense shade limits turf growth. Putting green turf is affected the most due to the ultra-low height of cut that already limits the amount of leaf area exposed to sunlight. Most courses aerate greens during fall, which provides an excellent opportunity to clearly demonstrate the negative effects of shade in terms every golfer can understand.

Golfers despise aeration holes even when they understand that cultivating putting greens is necessary to maintain healthy turf. The longer it takes for holes to heal...the longer golfers will be annoyed. These images taken last week from different sides of the same green document the rapid recovery of aeration holes in full sun (left) versus the agonizingly slow recovery of turf across the side of the green in dense morning shade (right).

This example makes it difficult to deny the obvious impact of shade on putting greens and should provide encouragement to address tree concerns that are so often put on the back burner. It's never too late to remove a problem tree that affects the playing surface on a green or tee and you won't have to wait long to see better turf.



*Half of this green is shaded during the morning and half receives plenty of sunlight. Note the rapid recovery of aeration holes across the portion of the green in full sun (left) versus the slow recovery of turf across the side of the green in dense shade (right).*

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