



Dry Conditions, Smooth Putting Surfaces And Annual Bluegrass

By Adam Moeller, director, Green Section Education

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Spring in the Northeast Region always is unpredictable. While dry conditions and cool temperatures have been welcomed compared to the wet weather last season, exceptionally dry weather in New England and parts of Canada has some superintendents worrying about rainfall this summer. Although a severe drought has not occurred in the Northeast Region for more than 15 years, a [Drought-Emergency Plan](#) is a document every golf facility should develop in case dry weather progresses into a drought.

Putting surfaces are performing well throughout the Northeast Region and *Poa annua* seedheads will diminish over the next few weeks. Many superintendents will begin to regularly topdress and groom putting greens to keep them smooth and firm through the summer. These programs help smooth imperfections created by seedheads, ball marks and traffic but can be challenging for superintendents to schedule during a busy golf calendar. Golfers should be patient if topdressing or grooming are performed during or just prior to their round.



Topdressing and grooming improve putting surfaces, so golfers should be patient if they encounter minor disruptions from these beneficial practices.

Golf courses with bermudagrass playing surfaces are experiencing a slow transition this spring due to below-average temperatures in May. This has resulted in more weeds and traffic stress because bermudagrass has not been rapidly growing. The situation will improve as temperatures begin to increase.

Perhaps the biggest topic of discussion among superintendents in the Northeast Region is the absence of annual bluegrass weevils. The hope is that annual bluegrass weevil populations are low due to early spring temperature fluctuations, but superintendents should continue to meticulously scout. Annual bluegrass weevil larvae have been observed and damage could quickly develop.

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