



Triplex Mowers: Evaluating Their Benefits And Return On Investment

By Addison Barden, agronomist, Southeast Region | January 19, 2018



Recruiting and retaining qualified employees continues to be one of the greatest challenges facing the golf course maintenance industry. As a result, superintendents and their staff are looking for more efficient strategies to maintain excellent playing conditions without sacrificing turf health.

A growing trend to improve maintenance productivity is the use of triplex mowers instead of walk mowers. Advancements in triplex mowing equipment technology have resulted in the same, if not better, quality of cut that produces healthy turf and good playing conditions. Superintendents that switch from walk mowers to triplex mowers often see an immediate improvement in maintenance productivity. Mowing putting greens with triplex mowers typically requires three to four fewer employees than walk mowing. The freed-up employees can focus on other tasks that further improve playing conditions and turf health.

Despite the immediate benefits, changing to triplex mowers isn't always easy. Some facilities may not understand the potential value of switching to triplex mowers and golfers may prefer the narrowly striped appearance created by walk mowers.

While it may be difficult to convince golfers that resources are better spent on tasks other than striping turf, comparing the costs of triplex versus walk mowers is easy using the Triplex Mowing Model developed by the USGA.

The model uses general information provided by the superintendent, such as equipment and labor costs along with the remaining useful life of equipment to calculate if purchasing and utilizing a triplex mower is more cost effective than using walk mowers. The data is presented in a series of graphs and tables for easy interpretation. The reports can then be shared with the maintenance team and facility stakeholders.

If you are interested in determining whether a triplex mower can help your facility become more productive, contact your regional [USGA Agronomist](#).

The sixth annual USGA Fairway Turf Colorant Workshop will be held on Tuesday, January 30, 2018 at the Pinehurst Resort in Pinehurst, North Carolina. If you are interested in attending the workshop, please contact [Pat O'Brien](#) by January 27, 2018. We hope to see you there.

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[Information on the USGA's Course Consulting Service](#)

[Contact the Green Section Staff](#)