USGA
Green Section Record
REGIONAL UPDATE
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Although this drainage installation appears invasive, the project disrupted golf for less than one day.

RAIN, RAIN, GO AWAY

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Most areas in the Southeast have received above-average to near-record rainfall since the beginning of 2018 and the rainy weather hasn't showed any signs of stopping. Golfers and superintendents are rightfully frustrated with the effects of excessive rainfall. Excessive rain saturates soil to a point that playing conditions may be negatively impacted for several days depending on precipitation amounts, soil type, topography and the effectiveness of the golf course drainage system.

While we still haven't figured out how to control the weather, and altering topography and soil types at a golf course is cost prohibitive for most, drainage can be installed to mitigate the effects of the excessive rainfall. Much like the irrigation system, drainage systems should encompass the entire golf course to help maintain healthy turf and good playing conditions.

Facilities looking to install or enhance drainage systems should consult a drainage engineer with an understanding of how water moves across and within the soil. These experts can develop a master plan

that addresses all surface and subsurface drainage issues. More often than not, their goal is to catch or divert water before it reaches the golf course. Doing this reduces installation costs and keeps the course drier.

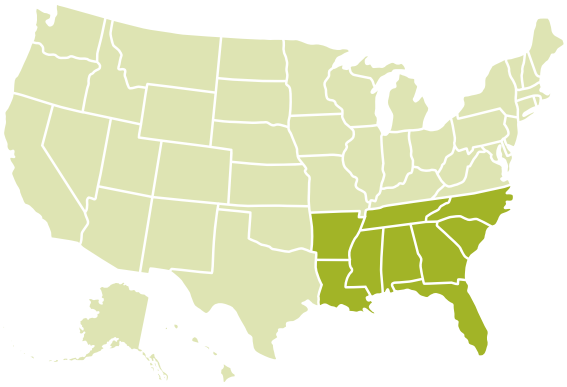
A drainage installation project can be completed while keeping the course open. In some situations, a hole may need to be closed temporarily. However, when planned correctly, drainage installations have very little impact on golf and can even be completed in phases over several years.

For information on the USGA's Course Consulting Service Contact the Green Section Staff.

Learn More

There are tremendous benefits to having a well-drained golf course. Golfers can enjoy firmer playing conditions after rain events and there will be fewer cart restrictions. Superintendents benefit from being able to resume normal maintenance sooner after a rain event and there will be less damage caused by carts or equipment traveling through saturated soils. All of this leads to increased revenue with lower operating costs, which makes drainage installation a priority for all facilities – especially with the current weather pattern.

For more information on drainage master plans, read the USGA articles, "Solving Golf Course Drainage Problems Starts with a Plan" and "Drainage Through the Green." Also, contact one of our expert USGA Agronomists for help with drainage master plans and other common agronomic topics.



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