

## Aerating Fairways Without Hitting Sprinklers

By Pat Gross, regional director, West Region | December 1, 2017



Core aeration is a common practice to control thatch, relieve soil compaction and maintain good water infiltration. When aerating fairways and rough, one of the challenges for equipment operators is to avoid hitting sprinklers with the aerator while getting close enough that the turf close to sprinklers gets aerated.

A simple way to address this issue was recently viewed at a golf course in California. It involved modifying a walk-behind aeration machine by removing the tines and tine holders from the two center arms while keeping the tines in place on the four outer arms. The modified aerator can be operated over top of sprinklers and is able to get within 6 inches of a sprinkler without hitting it. Operating the machine parallel with fairways during spring and perpendicular to fairways during fall ensures nearly all the turf surrounding sprinklers receives aeration. This simple solution can reduce damage to sprinklers and make fairway aeration easier for equipment operators.



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