



# Green Section Record

## REGIONAL UPDATE

February 1, 2019



*Areas previously known as water hazards are now called “penalty areas.” Golfers will be able to ground their club and move loose impediments in these areas. (USGA/Russell Kirk)*

## CHANGES HAVE ARRIVED

BY LARRY GILHULY | AGRONOMIST, WEST REGION

There is no question that golf is difficult. Getting that little round ball into a little round hole in as few shots as possible is both frustrating and challenging. It is also very addictive! However, as difficult as the game is physically, the mental part is even harder. This was especially true prior to the arrival of the modernized Rules that were introduced this year. While the changes will not affect how one feels about hitting a poor shot, trying to understand the Rules has become much easier.

During the early portion of 2019, multiple local golf associations are providing one-day seminars on the changes to the Rules. Every golf course superintendent is highly encouraged to attend one of these workshops. From a golf course maintenance perspective, there are several Rules changes that may impact how you maintain certain portions of the golf course. What were previously known as water hazards or lateral water hazards are now called



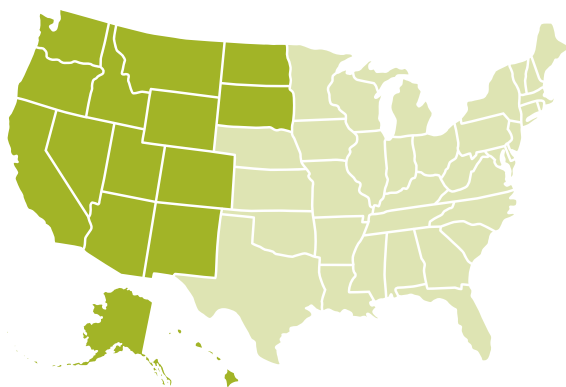
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“penalty areas,” and maintenance within these areas may be altered as grounding a club and moving loose impediments is now allowed. Also, bunker maintenance could be modified now that golfers are able to move loose impediments within a bunker. Finally, sitting in a room filled with golf professionals, handicap committee members and avid golfers offers a very open and interesting opportunity for education and exchanging ideas.

In addition to the benefits of the new Rules, the new Player’s Edition of the Rules of Golf is an excellent resource. The easy-to-understand explanations of each rule and the accompanying illustrations make this book a must-have for every golfer.

While there is often a natural resistance to change, the new Rules are unquestionably a change for the better. Go see for yourself by attending one of these educational seminars – and then, play away please!



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