



# GOLF TURF NEWS

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## Warm Season Grasses in the Fall

Fall weather usually means people put behind them the landscape maintenance tasks of spring and summer. But now is not the time to neglect turf care. When a grass goes dormant, the leaf tissue dies but the crown, root, rhizome, and stolon tissues are alive. The cells in these tissues have a reduced respiration rate and still require water and nutrients.

When a turfgrass is dormant it is easy to neglect it, but some care is needed if the turf is to survive the winter. A few suggestions that may aid turf are:

1) Dormant turf still requires water to prevent desiccation of the tissues. Periodic irrigation during prolonged dry periods will help prevent desiccation

injury.

2) Dormant turf does not withstand as much wear from traffic as does an actively growing grass. Thus, concentrated traffic will cause considerable injury on dormant turf. Of particular concern would be golf course tees, football fields, baseball fields, soccer fields, or any other heavy traffic site. The turf manager should try to spread traffic out—move tee markers, use several practice fields, do not concentrate football practice on one spot, etc.

Fall care can be the difference in mediocre and optimal performance of the turf the following spring. Don't neglect the turf during the fall period. ■

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