

FIELD OBSERVATIONS



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I recently came across an interesting countdown clock on the Internet that caught my attention.

“There are 297 Days, 8 Hours, and 41 minutes left!” This does not reference the end of the Mayan Calendar on December 21, 2012. But if that does mean the end of the world, then I guess this countdown really does not matter!

This countdown is to January 1, 2013, when all public safety and business-industrial land mobile radio systems operating in the 150-512 MHz radio

Breaker! Breaker! Do You Read Me?

bands must cease operating using 25 kHz efficiency technology, and begin operating using at least 12.5 kHz efficiency technology. For those readers who just thought, “So, what does this mean to me?” It could impact the utilization of the hand held radios currently used for communication and control of your irrigation system.

I am aware of facilities across the country that have paid only small licensing fees because they have newer technology already in operation and others that have paid between \$20,000 to \$28,000 to convert older hand-held radios and irrigation control systems. Regardless of the current status of your system you *will* be required to make this transition by January 1, 2013.

I am including some bullet points from an FCC PowerPoint that detail information pertaining to this process:

- Narrow banding ensures more efficient use of the spectrum and greater spectrum access for public safety and non-public safety users

- Will relieve congestion in and result in increased channel availability for public safety VHF/UHF systems
 - Narrow banding has been consistently supported by the public safety community, including APCO, NPSTC, and other organizations
 - After January 1, 2013, FCC interference rules will not protect non-compliant wideband systems from harmful interference
 - Systems that fail to narrowband by the deadline could create interference or inter-operability problems for systems that have narrow banded
 - Wideband equipment will not be available after January 1, 2013
- GCSAA is currently working on a communication piece to provide more details on this issue. I am always available if you need more information. It is critical that you have this information so you are able to discuss this with the managers and owners of your facility and you are not caught off your guard on this matter.

**The link for information regarding FCC Narrow banding is:
<http://transition.fcc.gov/pshs/public-safety-spectrum/narrowbanding.html>**

For more information you may call me at 785-424-4306 or email to rdain@gcsaa.org.



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**SPRING,
SPRANG,
SPRUNG!**



**GREEN SIDE UP
BY JOEL JACKSON**

With a warm winter in general, it's been hard to decipher the beginning of the spring season. In fact, if it weren't for the annual migration of snowbirds, we might not have ever known when the season changed. Temperatures were not the critical factor in turf management so far this year; it was the lack of adequate rainfall that has affected course conditioning the most this year.

The water management districts are getting antsy as the monitoring wells, aquifer levels and rain gauges are getting lower or coming up empty. Now is the time, when water shortages are in the headlines, to remind your club members and course customers that golf water use is only three percent of the total fresh water withdrawals from wells and surface waters. Of the six major water-use categories tracked by the water management districts and the U.S. Geological Survey, golf, as part of recreation, comes in 5th out of the six categories.

What often gets lost when restrictions are placed on golf water use is that every golf facility is a business enterprise, and when you combine all facilities – from the highly visible multi-course resorts to the elegant private clubs to the semi-private and daily fee courses – golf has a \$13.8 billion impact on state and local economies and affects about 167,000 jobs in golf.

Due to the erroneous “rich man’s game” perception, water management districts

often bend to that public misconception when cutting back water use. I give them credit, because they do have a delicate balancing act of conserving resources and providing adequate water for all uses. However, there is a big difference between restricting home lawn watering and providing the water necessary to operate a business like a golf facility. Nobody tells restaurants they can only wash dishes three times per week, but watering greens, tees and fairways for healthy turf to withstand wear and tear during the busy tourist winter golf season, which is our traditional “dry season,” seems to be fair game.

Please make sure your members know how you responsibly monitor and apply water daily to provide excellent fast, firm and healthy turf conditions for their enjoyment and turf survival. Share the advances in irrigation technology and your daily routine for setting up run times for the various zones on your course and how precise your computerized control systems can help

conserve water.

This time of year golf is in the air, literally, as we enjoyed the PGA Tour’s swing through Florida.

Besides making the world aware of several excellent Florida golf venues, charities benefit from the Honda Classic, Doral WGC, Transitions Championship, and the Bay Hill Invitational and in May the Players Championship at TPC as well. These major events coupled with many local charity outings and local superintendent chapter tournaments at your neighborhood courses contribute over \$312 million per year to worthwhile causes.

Won’t you “spring” into action during this active spring season when we have lots of golfers enjoying the weather and our courses to share the positive and pro-active economic and environmental impacts that the Florida golf industry has on your local community and the state. Bullet point fact sheets will be available on our website: www.floridagcsa.com for your use.



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