

# You Can Make a Difference

By Kathy Conard

**B**ecause water use and quality are serious issues facing the game of golf today, Aquatrols, through its Water Impact Alliance, has recently begun to help golf course superintendents and others in the green industry to develop plans of action against negative press and strict water regulations through comprehensive public relations.

As environmental groups, the general public and the regulatory community become increasingly concerned and vocal about water use and quality, superintendents must speak up in order to protect their courses' water rights, ensuring that water regulators give their needs equal representation and consideration before any restrictions or conservation measures are mandated. The question is how do you do this? It is much easier than it sounds. In fact, some of you may already be participating in these water conservation practices, but you simply need to be pointed in the right direction on communicating your efforts.

First, you must prove your commitment to water and environmental stewardship by voluntarily implementing water conservation practices and integrating them into your daily maintenance regime. In addition to displaying your commitment to efficient water use, you are sending a positive message to state regulatory agencies and the general public. When you enhance your reputation as water-use experts and communicate that message, you



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Second, realize that no matter how conscientious you are about conserving water on your course, golf courses are likely targets for criticism, particularly

during periods of drought when neighbors are being cautioned to restrict water use, and they see sprinklers continuing to fling water across your course. If enough of these

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neighbors and concerned environmentalists complain to legislators, the legislators can't help but listen—it's part of their jobs. And if the complainant's voice is louder and clearer than yours, it could kill your chances of negotiating a fair deal as water regulations, or any other political mandates for that matter, are implemented.

Third, do not be afraid to ask for help. Solicit the involvement of your general managers and owners as well as members. Good communication is the best tool you have for diffusing any problems. Keep in mind that the members who enjoy your course may be the best connections you can make to protect it.

No one knows what the future holds, but there is no better time than the pres-

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