



New DNR Water Conservation Rule May Affect You Next Season

By **Dr. Doug Soldat**, Associate Professor, Department of Soil Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison

With its ample groundwater resources and proximity to two of the largest freshwater lakes in the world, Wisconsin has more freshwater than just about any other place on earth. That status has led other less fortunate states to consider the feasibility of siphoning water from the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes Compact, agreed upon by local government units and signed into law by President Bush in 2008, will prevent states, provinces, or private companies from selling and transporting water out of the basin. The Compact also requires state governments to develop water conservation regulations to conserve and protect water resources within the Great Lakes Basin. These regulations are required to be in place by the end of 2010, which means the normally slow rule-making process is being fast-tracked.

The Wisconsin DNR has proposed a water conservation and water use efficiency rule (NR 852) that will be applied to water users within the Great Lakes Basin (Fig. 1) with high capacity wells¹ that have new or increased withdrawals over the current baseline level. Water users within the basin should have received a letter from DNR in late 2008 specifying the baseline level. As I understand, the baseline was based on current pumping capacity, not historical water use. Therefore, unless the pumping capacity is increased (i.e. new well, or new pump), exceeding the baseline should be difficult.

¹ A high capacity well is defined as a well that withdraws averages 100,000 gallons per day in any rolling 30 day period (roughly 3,000,000 gallons per month).



Figure 1. Map of the Great Lakes Basin (shaded in yellow). Full map can be found at: http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/dwg/greatlakes/images/GLB_Map.jpg



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NR 852 is the rule that will specify new regulations related to water use; the rule is in draft form right now, and based on the initial meetings I expect major changes to be made. However, rather than quote exact figures that are likely to change, I will describe some of the general things that you can expect when the final version appears later this year.

For new and increased withdrawals within the Great Lakes Basin, a user would be required to conduct a water audit which establishes the efficiency of the irrigation system and checks for leaks and other inefficiencies. From this information, a water conservation plan would be developed and submitted to DNR. The conservation plan will describe the results of the audit, the current water use level, the water conservation measures already in place, the feasibility of implementation of other water conservation measures, an implementation strategy for feasible water conservation measures, and a monitoring plan to assess the effectiveness of the newly implemented practices. The DNR has developed a tentative list of conservation and efficiency measures. Some examples of the measures may include things like: using irrigation scheduling programs, following turf maintenance practices that conserve water (i.e. mowing higher), decreasing irrigated areas, identifying areas for re-use of water (i.e. stormwater detention), installing rainfall shut-off devices, replacing toilets and fixtures, upgrading the irrigation system or system components, and choosing lower water using grasses or plants. These will not be mandatory, but as mentioned above, the DNR will require a feasibility study for some of the options resulting in a report on the environmental and economic tradeoffs. If they are determined to be economically feasible and environmentally sound, they need to be implemented. Obviously, "economically feasible" is a tricky word. However, a second, much simpler route to compliance is available: reduce water use by 10% over a five-year period. If this route is chosen, the feasibility studies of the CEMs can be skipped.

Like NR-151, this rule is complicated and many unanswered questions remain. However, I am heartened by the process so far. The DNR met with stakeholders twice in March and listened intently to the comments of the WGCSA (represented by Colin Seaberg), irrigation contractors, a representative from the Wisconsin Green Industry Federation, myself, and other university specialists. I have faith that the final rules will be reasonable and UW-Extension will work hard to make the compliance process as transparent and painless as possible for those affected. Until the final rule is in place, there is not much that can be done, in the meantime feel free to contact me with questions or concerns. 🌱

ELIMINATE GUESSWORK WHEN SPRING FEEDING

Spring fertilization varies greatly on a number of factors. Cultural practices performed, soil amendments made, irrigation and drainage upgrades, fertilizers applied, and what happened last fall plays a significant role with this season's success. However, having a sound fertility program will provide you with your best chance of success for the upcoming season.

Typically, spring applications are applied after the early flush of shoot growth has occurred, but predicting spring weather can be a challenge when it comes to soil and air temperature, and precipitation. That's why choosing a fertilizer that performs in cool climates is so vital.



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Although fine-tuning a spring fertilization program varies on many factors, its importance will be felt all summer long and even into the fall. The benefit of using an all-weather, long-lasting performer such as UMAXX provides immediate benefits, as well as a positive long-term impact. UMAXX gives the freedom to apply as a nitrogen component in a blend or part of a soluble fertilizer program. UMAXX offers consistent performance regardless of temperature or application type.

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Would You Like to Noernet?

By **Tom Schwab**, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Twelve years, we've been Noernetting. Where have the years gone! For those unfamiliar with Noernet, it is a free "email discussion group" for Wisconsin and neighboring state turf professionals. Subscribers share information that helps them in their work. Discussion have included landscape construction projects, turfgrass selection, pest alerts, solutions to pest problems, equipment or tool choices, sale of used equipment, educational event announcements, university research results, government regulations, management solutions, and other topics.

The way it works is any subscriber may write a turfgrass management related question, concern, or comment to the Noernet email address. All subscribers will receive that message and may send a reply back if they choose. Everyone will see that reply and again have the

option to respond with additional information. Some subscribers are extremely active and respond to many messages. Others never write messages and only read Noernet to keep an eye on what is happening around the region. You may participate as much or as little as you like. There are also many topics discussed across professions. For instance, a sport field manager or sod producer may ask questions to lawn care providers and golf course superintendents, and vice versa. We all belong to one important industry that is being brought closer together by sharing information.

Noernet presently has 215 subscribers from golf courses, sod farms, sports fields, lawn care companies, and turf businesses. Most are from Wisconsin, while others come from Michigan's Upper Peninsula, eastern Minnesota, and northern Illinois.

Noernet is meant for local use and concerns. There are many national discussion groups but Noernet is intended for turf care professionals in Wisconsin and neighboring states. We are better able to discuss topics unique to our upper Midwest region by keeping it local. Noernet is also a private list. It is not meant for homeowners, media, or any individuals outside of the turf profession.

If you think that sharing of information is an important tool for turf management, then Noernet is one more tool available to you. Let your peers know about this service if you feel they could benefit.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison sponsors this electronic discussion group. They have set an appropriate use policy which includes:

- You may not use Noernet for uses that are forbidden by the University of Wisconsin campus telephone or paper mail system.
- Noernet is not to be used for personal purposes or gain.
- Do not send abusive, vulgar, harassing, or bigoted messages.
- It is the policy of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Board of Regents that Noernet be used primarily for purposes of fulfilling the University's mission of teaching, research, and public service.
- Content of all postings are that of the contributing author and not necessarily of the Noernet list owner, moderator, or of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Information Technology.

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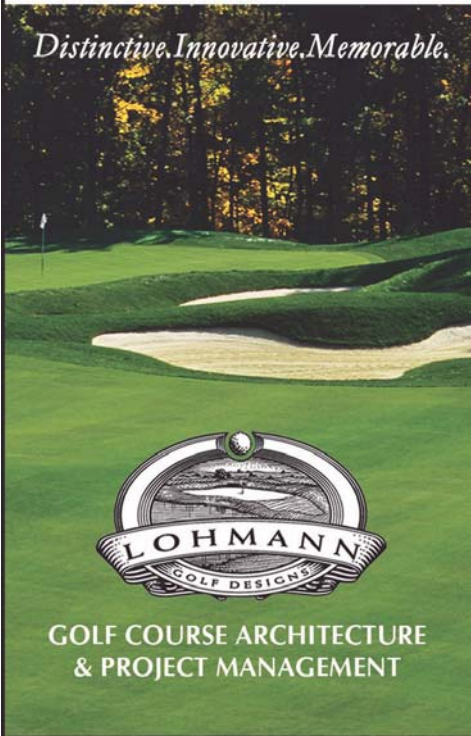


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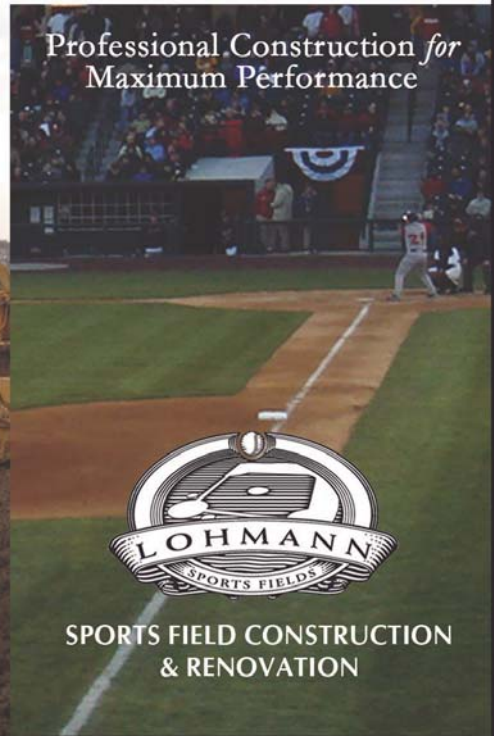
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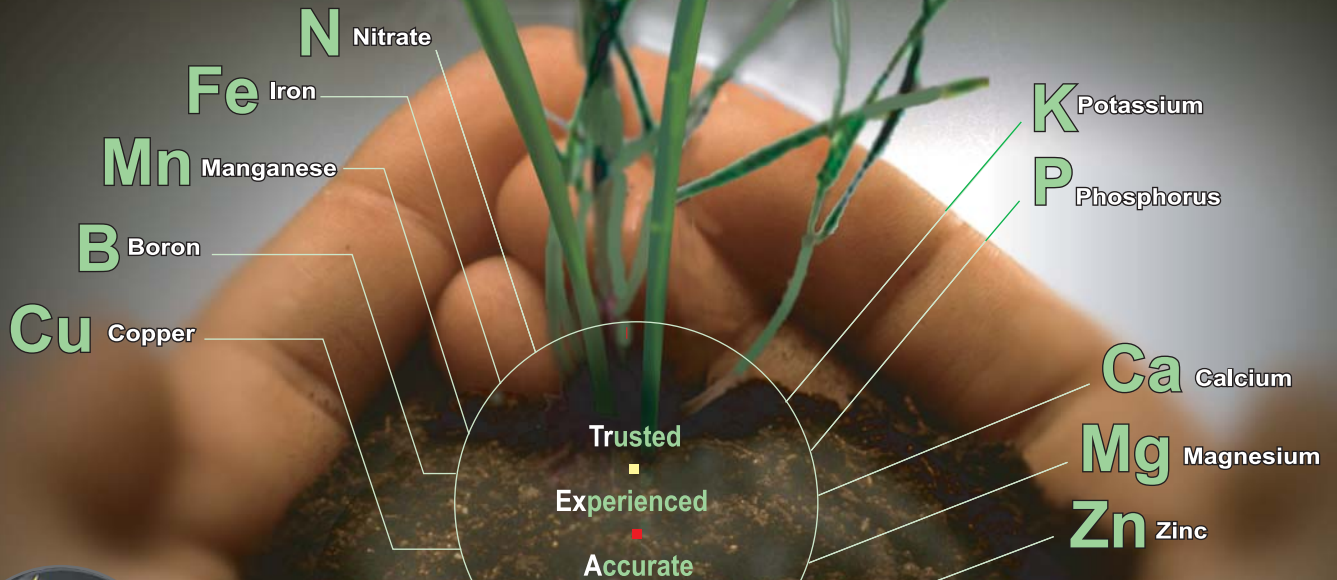
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How to Subscribe to Noernet

1. Log onto the Noernet web address: https://lists.wisc.edu/read/all_forums/subscribe?name=noernet using Netscape, Internet Explorer, or a similar web browser.
2. This takes you to the WiscList page where you type your email address and name in the blanks provided. You may also enter a password but that is optional. You do not need a password, so enter one only if you really want one. If you forget your password, you can find it again through the website.
3. Next hit the subscribe button.
4. It may take a day before I can post your name to the list after you sign up — so be patient.
5. You may email or call me if you have any questions or problems with Noernet at tgschwab@wisc.edu or 608-845-6895.

How to Participate in Noernet

1. The easiest way to participate in Noernet is to send an email to Noernet@lists.wisc.edu, just like you normally send emails. You will receive all Noernet messages at the email address that you used to subscribe.
2. Remember that if you reply back to a message, all subscribers will see your response. If you

want to send a personal reply, just to one person, then cut and paste their email address from the Noernet message into a separate email. But active participation of subscribers is what Noernet is all about as long as messages are thoughtful, productive, and follow the rules outlined above.

3. Another nice feature of Noernet is you are able to look at the past 180 days of messages. Follow the instructions in #4 to open the archive page.
4. The other way to participate in Noernet is from the web address - <https://lists.wisc.edu/read/login/?go=https://lists.wisc.edu/read/?forum%3Dnoernet> Type this address into your browser. This will take you to the WiscList page where it'll ask for your email address. Another box will ask for your password, but most of you don't have passwords, so next click the OK button to open the Noernet page. That page shows 180 days of archived Noernet messages, and also has a 'Create New Message' button for sending messages (although it's easier to send messages as described in #1). Always remember to write a topic in the subject area when you send a new message. 🌱

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Wisconsin Hospitality Room in San Diego

By **Brett Grams**, Chapter Manager, WGCSA

As everyone is busy preparing for another golf season the WGCSA is also preparing for a busy 2010. Membership Renewals are continuing to come in. We moved up the Registration Renewal Deadline to February 1st this year with the majority of members making the deadline. Those that were late received a final notice in early March. We plan on having all renewals in ASAP so we can print our Members Handbook and Directory earlier than in past years. If you have not rejoined please do so today!

Our new website is being used by many members to keep up to date on our Associations events and information. All Job Opportunities are posted along with some impressive resumes of people looking to our membership for employment. If you have not seen our new website please do so before you get too busy with the season.

We have also begun our newest fundraiser project. The PAR4Research Online Auction Committee has been working hard at creating a plan, documents, and securing donations for an online auction that will allow golfers from WI and the Midwest a chance to bid on some fantastic golfing opportunities. Many generous donations have already begun to come in. Please consider taking our donation request to your decision makers at your facility. A foursome of golf with carts (or other donation) will generate the needed revenue that will be donated to the UW Turf Researchers. It is a great way for our industry to fund our great University. Please help us spread the word about our online auction site at www.par4research.com. The more people that can sign up and bid for the donated items the more money we will raise! Thanks for your help and efforts in advance!

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Lastly, I am happy to announce that the Board of Directors has unanimously passed the creation of a Class C – Assistants Committee. The board is working out the details of this new committee initiative and will have more information to announce at the Fall Business Meeting.

The generous sponsors of this year's Hospitality Room in San Diego, CA at the Golf Industry Show and Conference allowed the GCSAA to entertain 170 attendees at Dick's Last Resort on Wednesday Evening February 10th. Milorganite again agreed to be the title sponsor and was able to line up the location and organize the event. The Dick's Last Resort location was a busy place for our highly attended event. It was apparent early on that our annual hospitality gathering would be a large success with attendance somewhat higher than in the recent years.

Food, libations, and live music allowed many friends from WI and around the country to gather in a fun and relaxed atmosphere. I would like to thank Dustin Riley, and Jeff and Nicole Millies for helping me at the registration table. I hope that those of you that attended had fun and those of you that missed this year's event consider joining us next year. 🌱

Dick's was taken over by Wisconsinites for the annual party.

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A crowd shot at the Wisconsin Hospitality Room.



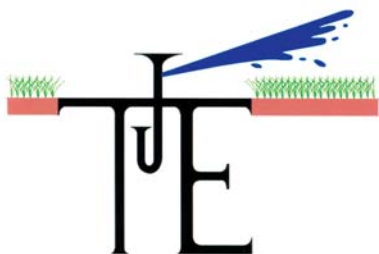
A New Season Dawns

By David Brandenburg, Golf Course Manager Rolling Meadows Golf Course

What an exciting March and early spring. It's hard to sit down and write this with so many options of things to watch, read or follow. "March Madness" is well underway with high school and college basketball so many games and so little time. Plus the health care debate is supposed to come to a head this weekend so CNN and FOX News are calling with updates on who is voting how and how it will effect us for years into the future..

More importantly it should be 50 degrees today after a little snow yesterday so golfing is a possibility! Each year that first 50 degree day gets golfers and golf course personnel excited for the season to come. Many golf courses opened the week of March 15th with a week of nice temperatures and good drying winds. I imagine the year I am no longer excited for spring is the year to retire or find a different career path.

Early reports are most golf courses made it through winter in good condition however being a large geographic state there is variety each winter in snowfall, snowmelt and the dreaded ice. After two years of damage from freeze thaw cycles I am glad to see some healthy turf this spring and so are our customers. As I explained to a couple members that were commenting on the spring conditions, our staff did not kill the grass last winter and we did not save it this winter, Mother Nature takes the credit for both.



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Have you noticed how the spring opening of golf courses has changed? It was just a few years ago the badger state had only a handful of courses that opened early and everyone else just waited for things to green up before thinking about opening. Evergreen Golf Club in Elkhorn, Scenic View in Slinger and Mystery Hills in DePere were regularly the first to open in their areas and golfers got used to seeking them out.

Many golf operators would hold off on opening until all the brush and sticks would be cleaned up, every newly painted bench, ballwasher and divot box would be put out and greens and tees and fairways would be mowed once or even twice before golfers were allowed to hit the links.

Often it required a week of decent weather before we even thought of opening. Lately for our course and many others the first day we can travel the course without doing damage we mow greens, put the pins out and open the doors. All the other work can wait until later. The players do not seem to mind, some soggy areas, a few sticks lying around, un-mowed turf or the lack of benches. They are just happy to be out there and the cash register is happy to have some money in it.

Be sure to get the word out about Par4Research to your customers as the WGCSA looks at new avenues to support research at the OJ Noer Turfgrass Research Center. If you have been sleeping for the past month the Par4Research program will take donated rounds of golf from WGCSA member clubs and auction them off to the general public on an online auction.

This is a easy way for our clubs to support turf research without a dues increase, another trade show or asking our vendors for a donation. The committee did a great job getting this off the ground in a hurry in order to get donations in and the auction ready to go May 2nd.

Include a link to www.par4research.com in your club newsletters and websites to ensure golfers are aware of this great cause.

2010 will be an exciting year for tournament golf in the badger state with the 92 PGA Championship returning to Whistling Straits in Sheboygan after a successful event in 2004 when Vijay Singh won in a 3 hole playoff.

As a reminder GCSAA members receive complemen-