

ON THE ROAD WITH THE USGA

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USGA Director

A great deal has happened over the last several weeks both with golf turf management and, more importantly, world events. While fall is a very important time of the year for golf turf conditioning, the events of September 11, 2001 have underlined what we all know and that is, grass is a renewable resource. Although grass is very important to our jobs and the play of the game we love, people and relationships are by far a higher priority. The Bible mentions grass some fifty-three times and a key message offered is the fleeting nature of grass in comparison to people and relationships. The world as we knew it changed on September 11th and what is most important has been clearly underscored. As such, guard your time prioritization as the fall season progresses and maintenance demands continue to cry for attention.

Hopefully the greens at your course have been aerified with tees and fairways either on deck or also completed. Improving root zone porosity in concert with more aggressive fall feeding will begin establishing the foundation needed to handle next season's stresses. Now is also the time to identify drainage and tree management work to be implemented in late fall and early winter.

Mole activity throughout the region continues to be an issue as we move into the fall. Many courses are battling these pests with an intensity that has not been seen in the past. Traps continue to be the most predictable way of addressing the problem.

Gray leaf spot disease has been identified at a few courses in the region and those with perennial ryegrass turf should be on guard. Depending upon weather conditions over the next several weeks, we could still experience turf damage. There have been a few occurrences of dollar spot disease flaring up, but the intensity has dropped significantly from that seen earlier this season and last year.

Bunker renovation has been a frequent topic on recent visits, with the desire being uniform playability. It continues to amaze me that so many have come to feel that hazards should play consistently. Yet, consistency is the focus at most courses. Design that eliminates erosion, good internal drainage, and clean sand of uniform depth are the basic components needed to offer reasonably economical maintenance and consistent playability. If your course is considering bunker renovation be sure to contract out the work so that the staff can remain focused on routine maintenance. Combining maintenance and renovation typically results in both being compromised. Remember, it's ongoing maintenance that protects the course conditioning/value.

As the fall season progresses, keep the focus - people and relationships first. As always, don't hesitate to contact our office (859/356-3272) should concerns arise that we can assist with. We're here for you.

(Editor's Note: Source: Bob Brame, bobbrame@usga.org or 859-356-3272)

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MGCSA MEMBERS PLANNING TO PLAY GOLF AT GCSAA'S GOLF TOURNAMENT PRIOR TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW SHOULD CONTACT THE MGCSA.

MEMBERS CAN FORM OWN TEAM OR SIGN UP INDIVIDUALLY.

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