

METHODS OF OVERSEEDING GREENS

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As a result of disease, chemical injury, excessive wear and foot traffic, vandalism, flood, winter injury, etc., it may be necessary to overseed greens. Frequently, the damaged turfgrass plants will recover and recouperate on their own if given proper care. Proper care may include appropriate chemical (pesticide and fertilizer) applications, irrigation and cultural practices. However, once it has been determined to overseed, any of the following methods may be used.

1. Spike, overseed, lightly topdress and irrigate. Occasionally, the light top-dressing application is omitted; however, seed and soil contact is important to ensure plant survival. The seeds will often germinate in the thatch-mat layer, but fail to mature.
2. Frequently, especially in the fall, it has been found beneficial to core the green, macerate the plugs (cores) with a vertical mower, overseed, followed by matting the loose soil into the holes and the thatch-mat layer.
3. Another method that has been used is whereby the seed and soil are mixed together off-site and applied as a topdressing.

Regardless what method of overseeding is employed, it is important that seed and soil contact be established, followed by light, frequent irrigation, keeping the seedbed moist - not wet. However, for the newly planted seedlings to ensure a desirable playing surface, it is essential, if possible, to correct the initial reason for turfgrass loss.

Bentgrass varieties that may be used for overseeding include the old traditional standby, Seaside, Penncross, released several years ago, followed by Emerald, recently released. Occasionally, turfgrass managers are reluctant to overseed when the greens have been established with a vegetative bentgrass variety. By overseeding, another variety or specie is introduced into the turfgrass community. Since the color, texture and growth pattern of species vary, it is possible that a mottled green may result. However, with the occasional use of brushes, followed by a very light vertical mowing and topdressing, smooth, true, uniform and desirable putting surface may be achieved, even though more than one variety of bentgrass is present. Therefore, if the need arises, do not hesitate to overseed.