

## Cutting Costs By Using Recycled Mulch Instead Of Pine Straw

**Palmira Golf And Country Club**  
**Bob Volpe, CGCS, superintendent**

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### Issue

Trees and shrubs on golf courses are often surrounded with mulch to reduce maintenance, preserve soil moisture, discourage mechanical damage from trim mowers and improve aesthetics. Finely shredded mulches and pine straw are visually appealing but are quite costly. Palmira Golf and Country Club was spending over \$100,000 annually to place pine straw around trees and shrubs throughout the 27-hole facility.

### Action

In an effort to reduce their mulch costs, the club decided to try using recycled mulch created by using a mechanized grinder to shred tree limbs and other landscape trimmings generated on the property. The maintenance staff then applies this mulch to the desired areas. On-site materials and staff are used for the entire process, rather than hiring an outside company to provide mulching services.

### Results

The club saves nearly \$80,000 annually by using recycled mulch instead of pine straw. Recycled mulch is less uniform than pine straw but it costs considerably less and is more environmentally sustainable. Landscape trimmings and branches from the property are no longer hauled to the local landfill as organic waste, instead they are shredded and used on-site, saving money and landfill space. Superintendent Bob Volpe, CGCS, is very satisfied with the benefits of using recycled mulch at Palmira and plans to continue using it for the foreseeable future.