

# Green Section Record

## REGIONAL UPDATE

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*Widespread turf loss and poor drainage can be remedied with a putting green renovation.*

## FIVE REASONS FOR PUTTING GREEN RENOVATION

BY STEVE KAMMERER | REGIONAL DIRECTOR, SOUTHEAST REGION

One of the most frequently asked questions during USGA Course Consulting Service visits is whether the putting greens need to be renovated, or what the normal lifespan of a putting green is. This is often a difficult question to answer. When deciding to implement a renovation, it is important to have a high degree of certainty that golfers will be happy with the putting greens afterwards. The USGA article, [“Time to Rebuild the Putting Greens – Or Is It?”](#) gives some additional insight into issues that can influence rebuilding decisions.

In general, there are five major reasons behind most putting green renovations:

- Catastrophic turf loss
- Significant loss of putting green area as a result of collar encroachment

- Organic matter accumulation to a degree that is difficult to dilute with core aeration and sand topdressing
- Desire for architectural changes
- High populations of less-desirable turf that negatively affect ball roll and playability

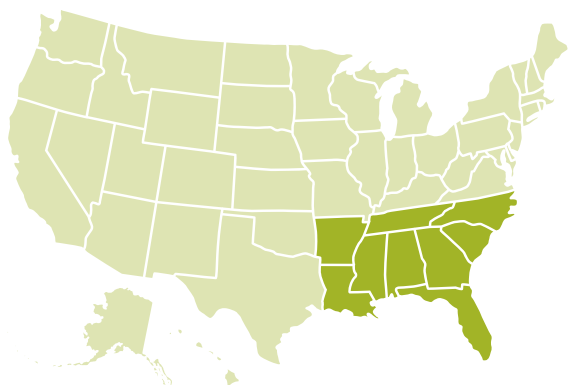
Creeping bentgrass and annual bluegrass putting greens commonly express variable appearances because these grasses are derived from genetically diverse seeds. Ultradwarf bermudagrass putting greens are established from homogenous sprigs, making the development of off-types that can give variable aesthetics and playability a significant concern. If off-types are affecting the texture or smoothness of putting surfaces, the urgency for a renovation may be more significant than if they are just visually noticeable. However, it is important to remember that there are other reasons why putting greens may have a [splotchy appearance](#) that have nothing to do with the presence of off-types or undesirable grasses.



For information on the USGA's Course Consulting Service Contact the Green Section Staff.

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Most golf courses would prefer not to renovate their putting greens because of the cost and disruption to play, but sometimes renovation is necessary. For those facilities that choose to renovate putting greens, the experience is almost like buying a house – the finished product is appealing, but the decision to move forward should be made with the utmost diligence and attention to detail.



## SOUTHEAST REGION AGRONOMISTS:

Chris Hartwiger, Director, USGA Course Consulting Service, [chartwiger@usga.org](mailto:chartwiger@usga.org)

Steve Kammerer, Regional Director, [skammerer@usga.org](mailto:skammerer@usga.org)

Patrick M. O'Brien, Agronomist, [patobrien@usga.org](mailto:patobrien@usga.org)

Addison Barden, Agronomist, [abarden@usga.org](mailto:abarden@usga.org)

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