



Hurricane impacts can strain already undersized maintenance crews and create course conditioning issues for weeks or months to come.

PICKING UP THE PIECES

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Hurricane Dorian impacted the entire southeastern coast of the U.S. Golf course superintendents and their staffs will be working hard to get affected golf courses back to regular condition as soon as possible. Unfortunately, these storms can cause damage that impacts turf health and overall playing conditions for months to come. Keeping these five considerations in mind will hopefully help golf facilities through the recovery process.

Irrigation System: Getting irrigation systems up and running as soon as possible after the storm is imperative. While this may be counterintuitive for facilities that experienced flooding, clean and salt-free irrigation water is needed to remove silt accumulation and flush excess salt left on turf after storm surges and floodwaters subside.

Clean Irrigation Water: If Dorian's storm surge flooded your course, salt concentrations in irrigation water sources should be tested immediately. If salt concentrations are too high in irrigation water – i.e., readings above 450 total dissolved solids (TDS) – heavy irrigation cycles will be needed to leach salts through the

rootzone. The article “[Interpreting Turfgrass Irrigation Water Test Results](#)” offers more information.

Record Keeping: Maintain detailed records of water quality before and after the storm. Take pictures of the golf course and maintenance facility before and after the storm along with detailed notes of tree damage, damage to the course, turf health and any other impacts.

Winter: Courses across the Southeast are beginning to prepare bermudagrass for winter and salt intrusion will damage turf, which negatively impacts winter hardiness. Damaged bermudagrass will not fully recover before winter dormancy, which means that extra care will be required during the winter to ensure winter-related turf injury is minimized.

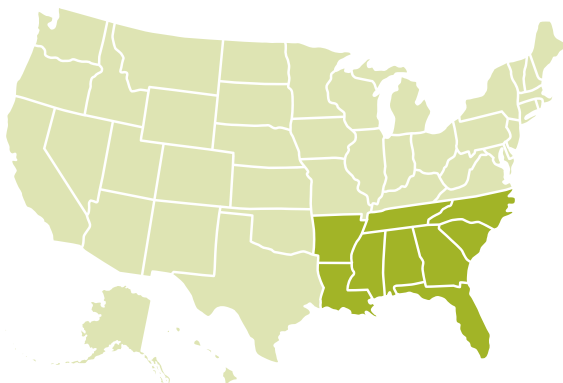
Playing Conditions: While superintendents are excellent at getting golf courses back in playing condition after a major storm, it takes time and employees may not be able to report to work for several days as they have also been impacted by the storm. Turf is still actively growing throughout the Southeast, so maintenance teams will have their hands full trying to clean the course after the storm and complete normal duties, like mowing. Even when the course appears clean, it could take weeks for playing conditions to return to normal.

To learn from the experiences of a golf facility that was severely impacted by Hurricane Harvey in 2017, watch the USGA video, “[One Year After Hurricane Harvey: Lakeside Country Club.](#)”



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