

**USGA®**  
**Green Section**  
**TURF TIP**

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*Using covers anchored by sandbags offers a great way to eliminate sand loss from bunkers during winter while making it easy to freshen the bunkers in the spring.*

## **BLOWN AWAY!**

**BY GREEN SECTION STAFF**

- Golf courses that do not have consistent snow cover during winter run the risk of having expensive bunker sand blown away by strong winds.
- At courses that close for the winter, using precut plastic covers anchored by sandbags filled with bunker sand can keep sand in place.
- The following spring, the sand bags are simply cut open and the sand is spread to replenish the bunkers for the coming year.

There are many golf courses across North America where golf shuts down once winter weather turns cold. At courses where there is not a consistent blanket of snow during the winter, strong winds can blow away expensive bunker sand. Many techniques have been tried in an effort to control this problem, but superintendent Dwayne Dillinger at Bell Nob Golf Club in Gillette, Wyoming, has a method that prevents sand from blowing away during winter and makes it easy to prepare the bunkers in the spring.

When the time comes to shut down the golf course each year, it is also time to cover the bunkers at this

municipal golf course. More than two decades ago, Dillinger struck upon the idea of using the sand he would normally add to bunkers the following spring to fill sandbags that would anchor precut covers for every bunker. The bags are filled at the maintenance facility using the conveyor on their material hauler. Hundreds of bags are filled rapidly and then placed on the perimeters of the “jigsaw puzzle” pieces that make up the covers for each bunker. In two decades, there have been no situations where the covers were moved despite heavy winds at this exposed site.

Once golf is about ready to begin in the spring, the bags are cut and the sand is simply spread across each bunker to replace sand that was lost to wind and bunker shots during the past year. Try this simple process at your course and you too will be blown away by its simplicity and success.