



GOLF COURSE SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES

Ace Your Acres, Pounds, and Gallons



WATER



LOOK FOR LEAKS

Inspect every sprinkler at Spring start-up to ensure proper throw height, length, and rotation speed.

PREVENT WITH PM

Perform preventative maintenance of sprinklers to avoid malfunction and loss of turf when you rely on it most.

A LITTLE STRESS GOES A LONG WAY

Allow turf to experience some stress before applying water, particularly in the Spring and Fall, to create deeper rooting and more resilient plants.



FIND YOUR NUMBER

Use a soil moisture meter to easily develop irrigation management targets.

IMPROVE THE COMPETITION

Seed with the newest turfgrass varieties and manage for turf that requires less water, pesticides, and fertilizer.

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

Record amount of irrigation water applied annually to justify water use if future restrictions are required by municipalities.



HOPE FOR THE BEST, PLAN FOR THE WORST

Develop a drought emergency plan to prepare for a changing climate, and to show responsible use of resources.

LET DATA TELL THE STORY

Use evapotranspiration (ET) data to track water loss from the soil, then supply water accordingly (inches).

PRO TIPS

Convert irrigation run times from minutes to inches. Know how much you use as it relates to rainfall amounts.



BE PRECISE, MEASURE TWICE

Calibrate all fertilizer and pesticide application equipment twice a year, and monitor product use during applications.

KNOW YOUR NUTRIENT NEEDS

Conduct routine soil nutrient sampling of areas you fertilize.

WAIT, DON'T APPLY LATE

Avoid applying fertilizer late in the season when turf growth is slow and fertilizer is likely to leach or runoff into water bodies.



TARGET TRAFFIC

Adjust fertilizer application rates based on wear and tear from traffic by applying more to high traffic areas, and less to low traffic areas.

GO BY GROWTH

Schedule nitrogen fertilizer based on visual turf growth indicators like how often buckets are emptied when mowing greens.



MEASURE, DON'T GUESS

Schedule nitrogen fertilization based on routine measurement of clipping volume.

WRITE IT OUT

Be prepared to justify fertilizer use by documenting your nutrient management plan. What/where/when/why/how.



NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT



Get your growth rate right. Consistent growth leads to consistent turf.

Don't forget to:

- Avoid fertilizing roughs
- Keep written fertilizer records
- Avoid fertilizing when turf is excessively wet or dry

FORE!



PESTS



WELCOME TO: THE BUFFER ZONE

Maintain a 25' chemical-free buffer zone around water bodies to prevent pesticides and fertilizer from moving into aquatic systems.

SPOT TREAT

Strategically apply pesticides to only areas under high pest pressure to reduce pesticide use and save money.

DON'T GO WHEN PRESSURE IS LOW

Avoid preventative pesticide applications when pest pressure is low during the Spring and Fall.



SCOUT IT OUT

Routinely scout playing surfaces and keep notes on when/where pests emerge to help time applications for maximum effectiveness.

LESS POUNDS ON THE GROUND

Select products that require lower application rates and lower amounts of active ingredient.

BUFFER ZONE 2.0

Maintain longer vegetation around water bodies which prevents pesticide and fertilizer residues from reaching the water, and reallocate the labor normally used to trim them.



PREDICT THE RISK

Use pest pressure models as a tool to predict pest outbreaks, which can be found at: turf.eas.cornell.edu/app.

INSTILL A SPILL DRILL

Employees should have easy access to a written spill control procedure in the event of an emergency.

PRO TIPS

Not many trees thrive in prairies nor grass in the forest. Be sure your turf can succeed by ensuring good growing conditions.



BLOW IT OFF

Use a backpack blower or air compressor to blow clippings off equipment before washing to cut water use by 50% and extend equipment life.

LOW FLOW THE WAY TO GO

Use a low-flow hose nozzle for equipment washing to save water.

PLUG FLOOR DRAINS

Prevent oils and chemicals from your shop from getting into the environment by plugging floor drains that don't drain directly into a holding tank.



CLIPPING CONTROL

Collect and re-distribute or compost clippings from the equipment wash area.

KNOW THE FLOW

Use a water meter to track water use for the equipment washing operation.



REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

Recycle water from the equipment washing operation using a closed loop system.



POLLUTION



What will be your approach?

Provided by:



Cornell CALS

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

DOWNLOAD TEMPLATES

INCLUDES: Water Management Plan, Nutrient Management Plan, Spill Control Procedure



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