

# TURF TWISTERS

## CHORES

**Question:** Over the years, our greens have decreased in size due to the "cutting-in" by our operators. How can we best bring them back to their original size? (Mass.)

**Answer:** When a grass is cut regularly at apron height, it is difficult to reduce it to putting green height over one season. Normally it is not advisable to reduce the cut from apron to putting green height in one operation. To subject the turf to such treatment would probably kill or severely injure the turf.

There are several methods of successfully doing this, and a few are listed here.

1) Begin by reducing the height of cut in early fall, about 1/32nd at a time. Mow the turf *daily* at the same height, until observation tells that you may reduce it another 1/32nd of an inch. If fall weather is favorable, the area should be down to about regular putting green height before winter sets in.

When greens are aerated in spring and fall, these areas should receive at least twice as much aeration as the rest of the green for several years.

2) Strip the sod, improve the soil beneath, and turf the areas with putting green sod from the nursery. With present day power sod cutters, this task has become much simplified. The best time to do this is in early to mid spring.

3) If the turf is *Poa annua* and you wish to establish permanent grasses in its place, reduce the height of cut in one fell swoop in early fall, and then completely renovate the newly mown area. Prepare a seedbed by *thorough* but shallow aeration, or by drastic vertical mowing. Then add topsoil as needed, and reseed or stolonize to bentgrass strain desired.

## TO CONSIDER

**Question:** Recently I have heard about new programs of winter feeding for cool season turf. Is this now an accepted practice? (Maryland)

**Answer:** Research has been conducted in this area of concern for the past several years by at least four universities in the North, South, Mid-Continent and Mid Atlantic regions. Virginia Polytechnic Institute, for one, now recommends several different programs of winter fertilization for their area based on the type of fertilizer used: i.e., chemical organic or synthetic. This concept of fertilization is proving successful in certain regions and has much to recommend it from research data compiled thus far.

## THIS FALL

**Question:** When is the best time to apply potassium for general turf hardiness? (Minn.)

**Answer:** It has been our experience that periodic applications of potash throughout the season are more beneficial than a spring or fall application alone. A program of two light applications of 1 to 1-1/2 pounds per 1,000 square feet in the spring followed by an early fall application for a total of 3 to 5 pounds for the season has shown excellent results in improving summer as well as winter hardiness.