

TURF TWISTERS

NOT MUCH ACTION

Question: During the winter our bentgrass greens become excessively fast. What are your ideas of the cause and how best to correct the situation? (Texas)

Answer: It is our experience with these greens that the height of cut has to be raised slightly going into the winter to avoid excessive speed. The greens will also wear better during the winter at the higher cut. Probable causes include slower winter growth rates, lower soil moisture levels, tight or frozen soils, a tendency for the grass blade to lie down and the turf to become grainy. There's really not much action in nature's world during the winter.

WITH SODIC SOILS

Question: What is a sodic soil? (Illinois)

Answer: Sodic soils are those containing sodium, mainly sodium chloride. The term is generally used to distinguish a soil having sodium problems from one having problems from other soluble salts.

BUT LOTS OF COMPANY

Question: How much does water quality affect the pH of a soil? I'm going to be using a lower-quality water for irrigation in the future. (Missouri)

Answer: So are a lot of other turfgrass managers! Poorer water quality is on its way, and it is a factor whether you are using it for tank mixing pesticides, irrigating turf, or washing your car. Remember, when water is applied to the soil, it evaporates in the pure state, leaving behind its salts and minerals. Even when leaching through the soil, water tends to be purified, leaving behind residues that may be beneficial or detrimental to plant life. For this reason, testing irrigation water will be as important in the future as testing your soils — especially if it is of poor quality. The type of water used in irrigation has a very definite effect on turfgrass management plans.