

The Big Blow

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AS LARRY Gilhuly has pointed out in the preceding article, one of the most enduring problems superintendents must face is the constant maintenance associated with sand bunkers. Edging is difficult enough, but of ongoing concern is the continual buildup of sand on the greenside edge of bunkers caused by explosion shots. These massive amounts of sand can kill the turf by mere suffocation or by accumulating to such depths that severe drought conditions develop. It's a vicious cycle.

Many have tried various methods of removing sand from the grass faces of bunkers. Larry Gilhuly has shown you one technique using water to wash away the accumulated sand on a steep sand bank. It's a good one and it works. Mike Rewinski, superintendent at Westhampton Country Club on eastern Long Island, has found another innovative approach worthy of our attention.

While blowing out his irrigation system to prepare for winter, Mike found a large rented air compressor ideal for blowing sand from grass bunker banks back into the bunkers. He outfitted the compressor with a hose attached to four feet of ½-inch pipe. One person can easily blow the sand back into a bunker usually in 15 to 20 minutes. Some dried grass clippings will settle in the sand but are easily cleaned up with leaf rakes.

The net result of this action is a neat, clean turf that can thrive very well and extend the life of the reconstructed grass banks indefinitely. Banks of little-used bunkers should be cleaned once a year. More heavily used bunkers should be subjected to the Big Blow as often as twice a year.

*For grass banks . . .
the Big Blow . . .
works.*