

TURF TWISTERS

MORE POROUS SOILS

Question: We plan to *cap* the fairways on our new course with a material that is much more porous than the underlying soil. Do you foresee any major problems? (Wisconsin)

Answer: You may create seepage areas near the base of slopes because of the different permeability rates of the soils. Water can easily enter the surface layer but not the lower layer, so it will flow downhill, underground, until it is forced to the surface by some obstruction or because of soil saturation. Interceptor drains placed across the slopes should minimize the problem. Ditches must be cut into the dense soil and drainage tubing should be imbedded into gravel to be effective.

MAKE FOR SUCCESSFUL

Question: We've had a difficult time developing appropriate fairway contours. We have information on proper widths and advice from an architect; however, every time we try to mow the new contours, it looks terrible! Do you have any advice? (Connecticut)

Answer: Get several hundred yards of yellow or white rope, and use the rope to outline the proposed contours. You can then stand on the tee or landing area and hit golf shots to actually experience the new contours. If you don't like them, move the rope! After you have agreed upon the new contours, simply use marking paint to outline the contours to guide the fairway mower operator.

LEACHING OF SALT ACCUMULATIONS

Question: Salt accumulation on my native soil greens is a big problem, especially during the summer. I know I need to leach the soil, but my soil percolation rates are so low I can't apply enough water to do any good. Is there anything else I can do? (California)

Answer: For optimum results, try to schedule leaching operations in conjunction with putting green aeration. Deep-tine aeration in the spring, and additional aeration during the summer using ¼" to ⅜" hollow tines may be necessary if the problem is severe. Another option may be to schedule several short irrigation cycles during the night at repeated intervals. Be sure to allow time between the cycles to allow the water to percolate into the soil profile. If your irrigation system cannot apply water at a slow enough rate, try placing a low-precipitation-rate sprinkler on the green for a period of four to six hours. A lawn-type stream rotor sprinkler placed on a stand and connected to a quick-coupler valve works well for this purpose.