

TURF TWISTERS

RECOMMENDED

Question: Occasionally, I see advertisements for USGA-approved topdressing sand that meets USGA specifications. We are about to undertake an extensive renovation project and my Green Committee wants to use USGA-approved materials. Is there USGA-approved topdressing, and where can I find it? (Wisconsin)

Answer: The USGA neither tests nor approves products and materials for use in bunkers, tees, or green construction. A blend of sand, peat, or soil must pass a number of standardized tests that include sand particle size distribution, moisture-holding capacity, percolation rate, organic matter content, and other criteria before it meets USGA-recommended guidelines. The straight sand in these advertisements is simply passed through a set of screens to determine whether it meets one of the many criteria necessary to meet USGA recommendations. Keep in mind that sand is only one component of the construction mix, which must be thoroughly blended and tested before it meets USGA guidelines. The USGA does not *approve* products or materials, and we try our best to ensure that advertisements don't appear with this label. If you see such an ad, please send it to our attention.

REGULAR SERVICE

Question: We've recently installed a new pump station at our golf course. It was a major investment and we would like to maximize its potential. Is there a standard service schedule for pump stations? Please advise. (West Virginia)

Answer: Frequency of inspection has a great deal to do with water quality. Naturally, regular maintenance such as lubrication should be performed throughout the year. With regard to pulling the pumps and motors and sending them out for service, a three- to five-year interval is suggested. The servicing interval will be more frequent if there are high levels of particulates in the irrigation water. Wear can occur rapidly, and the efficiency and effectiveness of your pump station will be adversely affected. Many times, minor adjustments can be performed to maintain and enhance pump performance. Establish a maintenance schedule now to achieve the pump's full potential.

EMPHASIZES THE POSITIVE

Question: Will effluent water have any negative effects on my winter overseeding practices? (Nevada)

Answer: There are some positives and negatives associated with using effluent water in overseeding. Since effluent water typically contains higher salt levels (TDS), you can expect a slightly lower germination percentage. You may want to increase your seeding rate by 10% to 20% to compensate for the reduced germination. Overseeded grasses (e.g. perennial ryegrass and *Poa annua*) have a lower salinity tolerance than bermudagrass, so it is important to have a good aeration and leaching program in place to avoid poor growth due to salinity buildup in the soil. On the plus side, most effluent waters contain nitrogen and phosphorus that will aid in the growth of the seedlings during establishment.