

# Turf Twisters

**Q:** One of our golf course ponds has been completely overrun with cattails. Can the cattails be controlled with other means besides herbicides? (Connecticut)

**A:** Cattails quickly spread vegetatively with large rhizomes in shallow ponds and wetland areas. The plants can be controlled culturally



through cutting and manipulating water levels. Selectively cutting the cattails in late

spring when carbohydrate reserves are at their lowest will weaken the plants. Cutting the plants below the waterline or raising water levels at that time will also disrupt oxygen transport via the stems to the roots and rhizomes to eventually kill the plants. Always contact

your state and local conservation departments before proceeding with any work in ponds or wetland areas! Additional information regarding wetland management can be obtained through the EPA Wetlands Web site: [www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/).

**Q:** Does the USGA Green Section have a recommendation on the type of spray nozzle to use on a golf course? Help settle an argument between two assistant superintendents. (Delaware)

**A:** Different spray nozzles should be used for different purposes. Thus, the nozzle you use to spray fungicides on your greens may not necessarily be the best nozzle to use for weed control.

Check the label recommendations for every product you apply. We do have two recommendations. First, be sure to calibrate all of your sprayers at least annually, or if you switch nozzles, calibrate

the sprayer for that usage. Second, replace all of your nozzles each year. It is money well spent to ensure the products you use are applied properly.

**Q:** Developing maintenance standards, time studies, and a set of long-range plans requires a fair amount of time and energy to produce. Are they really worth the trouble? (Washington, D.C.)

**A:** Golf course superintendents are business managers and should have a set of formal maintenance standards as to how the golf course will be maintained on a daily basis. When adhered to properly, maintenance standards provide protection from spur-of-the-moment changes to the maintenance program, and this provides

continuity in golf course conditioning from year to year. Time studies help justify labor and machinery needs to provide the level of conditioning specified in the maintenance standards. Long-range plans provide a time frame as to when certain items should be replaced or when important projects should take place. This allows

the membership time to plan for renovations and raise the funds necessary to complete those tasks. Obviously, it is important to have membership involvement with and adherence to the maintenance standards from year to year, and involving members should be one of the first tasks of each newly elected Green Committee.

