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IS YOUR GOLF FACILITY EQUIPPED FOR THE PAST OR PRESENT? GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT 101



A diverse collection of specialized equipment, vehicles, and tools is paramount to providing desired golf course playing conditions. Unless you've worked on a grounds crew at a golf facility, many of you might be saying, "Well, I know they have a bunch of lawn mowers." There is much more to it than that.

As expectations for golf course conditioning have changed over time, so too have the sizes of equipment fleets. Never before have so many specialized pieces of equipment and tools been necessary for golf course maintenance and conditioning. In this article, we will review what a typical 18-hole golf facility has (or should have) in its equipment inventory. Obviously, the size of the equipment fleet and the individual items in it will vary considerably by geographic region, site conditions, golf facility type, budget, and expectations for course conditioning. Regardless, I think you will be surprised at what goes into the care of a golf course.

Photo Caption (Left): Modern, well-designed maintenance facilities provide sufficient area for equipment servicing and storage as well as administrative duties and safe working conditions for employees.

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DON'T BITE OFF MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW TO SAVE A BUCK OR TWO IN-HOUSE PROJECTS



Projects like building new tees should only be undertaken by the staff if they have the resources to do a quality job and if it won't compromise the care and conditioning of the rest of the golf course.

Golf courses change with time and, to improve turf health and playing conditions or simply to modernize or change the look of certain features, renovation is necessary. Infrastructure items such as buildings, irrigation systems, cart paths and bridges do not last forever either and must also be upgraded or replaced eventually. Much like a house requires new carpet, a fresh coat of paint or a new roof, so too does a golf course require periodic renovations.

Do-it-yourself home improvement projects can certainly save money. The same is true for golf facilities, as it is oftentimes less expensive to have the grounds crew perform improvement projects as compared to hiring outside contractors.

Golf facilities operate with limited funds and superintendents will often try to assist their facilities by performing projects in-house. This would include minor remodeling projects, some irrigation upgrades and drainage improvements. Not only does this save the golf facility money, it also provides the crew with a temporary break from routine maintenance operations. However, there can be downsides to in-house projects and it is important to be aware of potential pitfalls.

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Should golfers expect consistency in bunkers? This short video targets what is perhaps the most frequent complaint when it comes to playability and course conditioning. (If video does not load on first attempt, please return to the mailing and launch again.) [Also available for viewing in Spanish.](#)



Probably since the first golf course opened for play those working in golf course maintenance have discussed equipment needs and this issue of the Green Section Record includes an article on the subject. However, this is by no means the first time equipment has been the focus of USGA agronomists. Take a few minutes to read an article published in July of 1923 that details the proper inventory of equipment for an 18-hole course.



Sometimes the adoption of a new golf course management practice occurs because it simply works, and quickly, news spreads among superintendents. For example, many golf course superintendents use low spray application rates of nitrogen fertilizer on putting greens. However, how much of the nitrogen does the turf foliage actually absorb? (Originally published in the 10/4/13 issue of the USGA Green Section Record)

REGIONAL UPDATES



REGIONAL UPDATES
The USGA Green Section is broken into eight regions with each staffed by Green Section agronomists who work with golf facilities on care of the golf course. Every two weeks USGA agronomists provide updates outlining current issues of what they are observing in the field. Be sure to view updates from other regions and not just your own because featured ideas, techniques and solutions to problems often apply to other parts of the country.



NORTHEAST REGION
With fall comes great golfing conditions but it also brings frost delays and, for golf facilities with trees, significant efforts in leaf debris management. A poll has been created as we look to determine how much time is spent in the Northeast on leaf cleanup. [Read More](#)



MID-ATLANTIC REGION
It is easy to forget struggles during the summer and just as easy to forget to evaluate what caused the problems now that they are behind you. Trees should be high on your list of possible suspects. [Read More](#)



SOUTHEAST REGION
A peek into a USGA Green Section agronomist's trunk at the end of a golf season can yield some interesting discoveries. There is always a variety of golf equipment, agronomic tools, a Stimpmeter or two, and recently, a device for testing putting green firmness called the USGA TruFirm. [Read More](#)



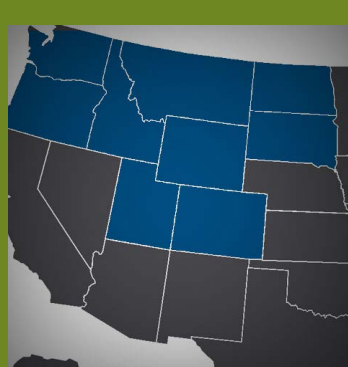
FLORIDA REGION
Get the latest from turfgrass specialists at the University of Florida on controlling diseases and nematodes. [Read More](#)



NORTH-CENTRAL REGION
Annual mowing of native roughs can become a vegetative harvest of sorts for golf facilities. For those in rural areas, farm equipment can make cleanup a breeze. [Read More](#)



MID-CONTINENT REGION
Another hot summer leads to continued drought conditions for many. Is your golf facility prepared for water restrictions? Encroachment of bermudagrass and zoysiagrass into greens is at an all-time high. Your best solution? Mechanical edging. [Read More](#)



NORTHWEST REGION
It is understandable that a future U.S. Open site might receive heavy play in the years prior to the championship. At Chambers Bay, temporarily expanding greens to create additional hole locations helps spread the extra traffic over large areas. [Read More](#)



SOUTHWEST REGION
When it comes to aerating, weed control and overseeding, timing is everything. It may not make golfers happy in the fall, but turf growth is temperature dependent and autumn is the perfect time in the Southwest to focus efforts on these agronomic practices. [Read More](#)

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