Golf carts first became commercially available in the late 1940s and have since become invaluable for players that find it too difficult to carry their own bag, down 14 percent, or using pull carts, down 10 percent, has steadily declined while cart use, up 24 percent, has increased significantly since 1994. Golf in the U.S. has expanded dramatically, with an estimated 50 million people playing, but has also caused negative effects on course conditions, maintenance inputs, and pace of play. The net revenue from cart usage may not outweigh the negative effects on course conditions and maintenance. The recent economic recession has led some to believe that the USGA no longer supports turfgrass and environmental research. Not only does the USGA continue to support research, it provides more than a million dollars annually for 50 to 70 projects at land grant universities across the U.S. Since 1920, the USGA has provided resources for environmental research. It is possible that golfers may need to adapt to changing conditions and expect some negative effects, such as slower play and higher costs. The USGA Green Section Record (ISSN 2156-5813) is published biweekly via electronic mail by the United States Golf Association®.

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How you can help your golf course reach its peak condition.

When the weather begins to warm up, superintendents are becoming increasingly anxious about turf health. The recent spring drought event occurred in early April, which is the critical period for bermudagrass to emerge from melting ice and get off to a strong start. Warmer-than-normal spring temperatures in the desert Southwest have expedited the transition from winter conditions to summer-like conditions. Much has been made of the economic downturn and the impact it has had on golf. In response, maintenance budgets have remained frozen or have been reduced at most golf facilities. However, few golf facilities compute “the cost of not investing” in infrastructure items. In some cases, the cost of not investing in infrastructure items is impossible or unwise to invest in infrastructure items. Before doing so, it is important to carefully consider the cost of not investing. Quite simply, there is a cost to doing nothing. Most golf facilities have understood that capital improvements in the past were necessary to keep pace with changing customer expectations and to attract and retain customers. In this economic climate, golf facility managers must be careful not to allow maintenance costs to become a liability that interferes with course care.

IS YOUR MAINTENANCE FACILITY A LIABILITY THAT INTERFERES WITH COURSE CARE?

CAN WE AFFORD NOT TO INVEST IN A NEW MAINTENANCE FACILITY?

WHAT IS THE COST OF NOT INVESTING?

MID-CONTINENT REGION

Due to the recent winter weather, maintenance crews in the Mid-Atlantic region have expedited the transition from winter conditions to summer-like conditions. Few spring rain showers, and the relentless winter weather that extended into April, have prevented the maintenance crews from getting a leg up on the routine spring maintenance activities. Warmer days have arrived, along with a threat of more snow. After last week’s snowfall, few superintendents are thinking about the turf as it emerges from melting ice and gets off to a strong start. When the weather begins to warm up, superintendents are increasingly anxious about turf health. The recent spring drought event occurred in early April, which is the critical period for bermudagrass to emerge from melting ice and get off to a strong start.