Volume 29 Issue 4

Founded ~ April 11, 1939

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

July/August 2022

Governor Wolf Signs Turfgrass Fertilizer Bill into Law

Pete Landschoot, Ph.D. July 25, 2022

Following 12 years of debate and failed attempts to pass state-wide legislation, Pennsylvania now has a law governing turfgrass fertilizer application dates, practices, rates, and type of fertilizer used. On July 11, Governor Wolf signed SB 251, a bipartisan bill sponsored by Senator Gene Yaw (R) and Senator Carolyn Comitta (D), into law. Currently known as "Act 83 of 2022", the new law omits a controversial applicator licensing and certification program included in previous versions of the bill, but retains the following provisions for turfgrass fertilizer applicators:

- Applications near water: The law states that no person may apply nonaquatic fertilizer within 15 feet of the top of a bank of a lake, pond, wetland, or flowing body of water (stream, river, or creek). However, fertilizer may be applied to the top of a waterway bank if using a drop spreader, rotary spreader with deflector, targeted spray liquid or other targeted application technology when establishing and maintaining a stream buffer zone. The setbacks for fertilizer applications near waterways do not preclude environmental standards established under other federal or state laws.
- **Nitrogen:** Nitrogen application rates shall not exceed 0.7 pounds of readily available nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft per application, and shall not exceed 0.9 pounds of total nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft per application, except when labeled as an enhanced-efficiency nitrogen fertilizer, where the amount of nitrogen released at any given time shall not exceed 0.7 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft.
- **Phosphorus:** Turfgrass fertilizer shall contain no phosphorus except when specifically labeled for establishing vegetation (turfgrass) for the first time; reestablishing or repairing a turf area; or as an enhanced-efficiency phosphorus fertilizer, natural organic fertilizer, or organic-based fertilizer, if the application rate does not exceed 0.25 pounds of phosphorus per 1,000 sq ft per application, with a maximum total annual application of 0.5 pounds of phosphorus per 1,000 sq ft.
- Exceptions to nitrogen and phosphorus rate restrictions: Turfgrass fertilizer applicators are not required to follow the above nitrogen and phosphorus application rate restrictions if a site-specific plan is used and is based on all the following criteria:
 - A soil test is conducted within the previous three years according to procedures recommended by Penn State.
 - * Soil, plant species, climate, turf use, topography, or other appropriate management factors are accounted for in the plan.
 - * Rates recommended by Penn State or another institution of higher education in the Commonwealth are approved by the PA Dept. of Agriculture.
 - Impervious surfaces: The law states that no person may apply turf fertilizer to an impervious surface (sidewalk, driveway, street, etc.). Turf fertilizer that is inadvertently applied to an impervious surface must be removed from the impervious surface immediately following the application.
- Conditions and date restrictions: No person may apply fertilizer containing nitrogen or phosphorus to turf at any time when the ground is frozen to a depth of at least two inches or snow covered. No person may apply fertilizer containing nitrogen or phosphorus to turf after December 15 and before March 1.
- Equipment: Another provision of the law is that no person may apply fertilizer with a device that is not intended for the application of fertilizer or that has not been properly calibrated; operate fertilizer application equipment or devices in a faulty, careless or negligent manner; dispose of, discard or store a fertilizer product in a manner that is inconsistent with its label, would cause over-application of fertilizer, or would result in direct discharge to a storm drain or waters of the Commonwealth.

Presidents Message

I hope the message finds everyone well. The summer of 2022 was fairly benign in my opinion. Only two major heat waves this summer but it sounded like most survived. The southern part of the Mid Atlantic was a different story with all the rain. Update on the fertilizer bill. By now everyone has heard after years of debate it finally passed. What does this mean for Pa golf courses? Nothing. The bill that passed was a much more muted version from the original proposal. There are some best management practices suggested which superintendents already do but the bill will mostly impact manufacturers and distributors. We made the suggestion to add fertilizer as a category to our pesticide licenses rather than a separate license but some inter agency conflicts at the state level couldn't agree on how to do it. So now those in favor of this can take a victory lap over a bill that is worthless. Thank you to my York County Representative Dawn Keefer who made sure we had a seat at the table for this debate.

Thanks to Aaron Schroder, Drew Swigert and the staff at Royal Manchester Golf Course for a great meeting in June. Looking forward to our September meeting at Dauphin Highlands. We are going to restart our association golf championship. Please indicate on your reservation if you wish to participate in the tournament. The top four finishers who are available to attend will be entered in the Met Tournament in October at Lehigh Country Club on behalf of Central Penn. For those not wishing to compete in the championship we will have prizes available that day.

May you all have a blessed and stress free aerification!

Pete Ramsey Central Penn President

Membership News

We would like to welcome the following individuals into our association.

Stefan Caporaletti Class C Assistant Superintendent, Royal Oaks Golf Course Craig CochranClass A Superintendent, Susquehanna Valley Country Club Cameron Foreman Class C Assistant Superintendent, Lancaster Country Club Business Development Executive, Quarry View Building Group

If you know of anyone who is interested in membership into the association, please have them contact Wanda at 717-279-0368 or epgcsa@hotmail.com.

> Please see a list of our Association Sponsors on Page 13. Please Support Them as they Support Us!

> > Membership information is also available on the Central Penn website at:

> > > www.cpgcsa.org

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Kevin Mark Carlisle Country Club 717-243-7569

kem5031@gmail.com

Don Dodson ddodson392@aol.com

Andrew Harrison

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Executive Director/Newsletter Editor

Wanda S. Fry 717- 279-0368 cpgcsa@hotmail.com

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USGA NORTHEAST REGIONAL UPDATE

Making Ball Marks Disappear

August 19, 2022

Adam Moeller, agronomist and director, Green Section Education

Ball marks are a part of golf, but there is an easy solution to ensure they don't cause bumpy conditions, scalping and an unsightly appearance – fixing them properly. Unfortunately, unrepaired or improperly repaired ball marks have been a part of golf for centuries and it's likely to always be an issue to some extent. Maintenance teams often fix unrepaired ball marks prior to mowing the green, but they can't get all of them. When ball mark issues arise, there is a simple trick that can be used to help mask the issues.



A 12-ounce condiment bottle containing a multicolored sand can help mask ball mark issues.

During the U.S. Senior Open at Saucon Valley Country Club, the maintenance staff used multicolored sand to help mask the ball mark scars, smooth the surface and promote turf recovery. In the past, they used green sand to fill and smooth ball marks, but that seemed to make them stand out even more. To make the repaired ball marks blend in better with the turf surface, the maintenance team switched from a green sand to a mixture of different-colored sands. The mixture includes six different colors of sand: black, yellow, teak, chocolate, green and blue. The sands are purchased separately and mixed at different proportions to match the color of the putting greens, which changes throughout the year. The sand mixture also includes creeping bentgrass seed to help promote turf recovery. Smoothing each ball mark is made easy by using 12-ounce condiment bottles that are filled with the multicolored sand mixture.

Ball mark issues don't seem to be going away unfortunately, so this turf tip is something worth considering if you're looking for ways to mask their issues. Let's not forget that golfers still need to do their part by remembering to repair their ball mark.

Northeast Region Agronomists:

Adam Moeller, – <u>amoeller@usga.org</u> Darin Bevard– <u>dbevard@usga.org</u> Elliott L. Dowling—<u>edowling@usga.org</u> John Daniels—<u>jdaniels@usga.org</u>

don@genesisgreensupply.com





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Page 4 The Green Sheet

What is LedgeRock Golf Club Up To Now?

By<u>Alan</u> August 18, 2022

I'm sure everyone is wondering why the big pile of rocks at the Learning Center has been sitting there for a few months and why there is equipment and missing bunkers dotted over a few holes.



The edge of the irrigation pond had been eroding over the last couple of years to the point where it needed reinforcing. While researching the best option, we were able to source some huge boulders locally, which will provide the best aesthetic solution to reinforce the banks. The plan was to excavate the old edge, build a shelf to place the boulders on, and then backfill behind them. Once the shelf was built (and the weather cooperated) we contacted the pond liner contractor to install the liner, only to find out it had been backordered. We had anticipated a delay so ordered it last fall to make sure it was here, however, as with it seems everything this year, we are at the mercy of the shipping companies. It is now supposed to be installed by mid-April, so hopefully this is the last delay. The rest of the project should only take a couple of weeks to complete once the liner is in place.



The old pond liner and erosion on 14 pond



Unloading the boulders LedgeRock Golf Club

As you know, the board approved the greenside bunkers to be replaced this spring. The recommended life of bunker and is approximately seven years, so the 17-year-old sand at LedgeRock is well past its sell by date. The rebuilt bunkers will be constructed using the best method/materials available; this will ensure that the money spent now will pay off in the long term as it virtually reduces all contamination of the sand, ensuring that the new bunkers will greatly exceed the current recommended life span. We have sourced an excellent bunker sand to complement the project.





Bunker washouts from 6+" of rain from Hurricane Ida Sept 2021

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Page 6 The Green Sheet



Slight bunker washout on new bunker on 17 from Hurricane Ida showing how well the liners work preventing washouts while keeping the sand clean even after more than 6" of rain

New fairway bunker on 12 showing the liner (Blinder) and edge structure (EcoBunker)

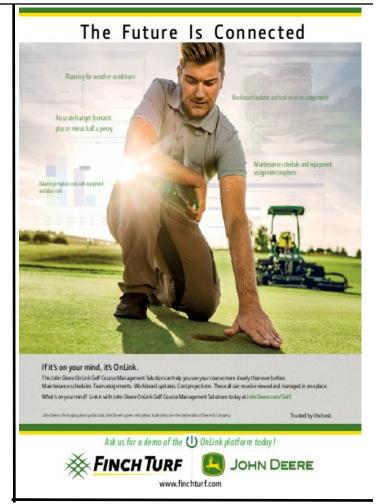


Now that the course is approaching its third decade, the club contacted Rees Jones so, as part of the reconstruction, they can make any changes needed to ensure the design continues to challenge into the future. The added benefit of this is that we can reduce the sand area, which will save money on maintenance in the future. It is amazing how architects can reduce sand area but without affecting the visuals and playability, so I cannot wait to see the finished product.



Alan, Asst Super Cody, Bryce Swanson (Rees Jones Inc) & Brian Ley (contractor) checking out 16 LedgeRock Golf Club





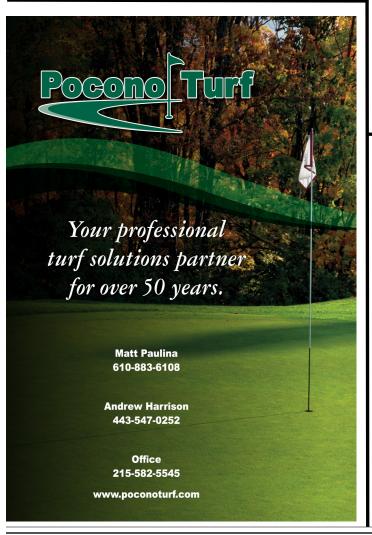
A perfect example of what we are doing, is on 18. The left bunker is getting tweaked to fit into the land better but also the front edge is getting lowered so there will be more sand visible from the fairway – one of the architect tricks to make it look bigger, when it will actually be smaller. The front bunker gets broken into two, with the smaller part nearer the approach being raised so you can now see the greens surface from it, while





the other part remains similar to the old version. They are also lowering the front edge so there will be more sand visible from the fairway, making it aesthetically better and more visually intimidating, while also making it a little easier!

The plan was to start in early April and have the project completed by June 1st. The contractor was able to get a head





start on the project with a couple of staff and hence why it currently looks to be moving slowly. He is still on schedule to have a full crew here as planned in April and the progress will move quickly from then on.

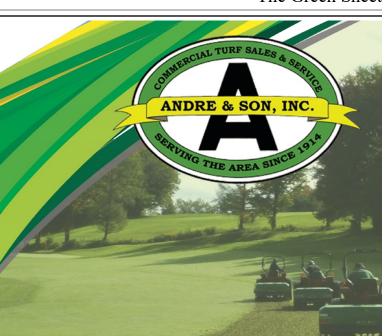
Over the next week the bunker sand will start to be delivered and stockpiled in the parking lot. Once the contractor gets fully started in April, we plan to send out regular updates on the progress. It has been a frustrating start due to the delays with materials – however I am glad we got a head start so did not run into these issues later which would have greatly delayed the original schedule. So sorry about the mess but bear with us for the next couple of months as it will not be long until it is all put back together and LedgeRock will look and play better than it ever has!

As always, please email me with any questions: alan@ledgerockgolf.com

What is LedgeRock Golf Club up to now? | Golf Course Trades

Page 8 The Green Sheet





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Golf Courses Reduce Water Usage by 29% According to National Survey

by Jul 26, 2022 | Angela Hartmann

Lawrence, Kan. (July 26, 2022) – Golf courses in the U.S. used 29 percent less water in 2020, compared with usage in 2005, according to recently released survey data. The 2021 survey was conducted by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and funded by the GCSAA Foundation as part of its Golf Course Environmental Profile program, which began in 2005.

The report found that U.S. golf facilities applied approximately 1.68 million acre-feet of water in 2020, a 29% reduction since 2005. Two-thirds of the reduction was likely a result of operational golf facilities applying water more efficiently.

The survey results from nearly 1,600 golf course superintendents were collected and independently analyzed by scientists Travis Shaddox, Ph.D., Bluegrass Art and Science LLC., and J. Bryan Unruh, Ph.D. University of Florida, and the National Golf Foundation (NGF), which published the findings for peer review before making the information public.

"Data from the 2021 water use benchmarking survey show that golf course superintendents continue to reduce water use at their facilities. The survey results indicate a 9% reduction in applied water since 2013, totaling a 29% reduction since the inaugural survey was conducted," Unruh said. "Similarly, the median acre-feet per acre, a measure of water use efficiency, has improved by 23% since 2005."

The most common sources of water, according to the report, were wells (32%) and lakes and ponds (23%). Less water was applied in 2020 from each water source than in 2005 except for recycled water, which accounted for 21% of water applied.

Golf course superintendents have also increased the use of best management practices (BMPs) that can lead to reductions in water usage. BMPs such as keeping turf drier, pruning tree roots, changing to a more drought-tolerant turfgrass, mulching landscape beds and increasing no-mow acres were significantly associated with reductions in applied water.

The study also provides data on average water use in the seven different agronomic regions of the country. Decreased water use was

Page 10 The Green Sheet

seen in every region. The greatest water use applied per acre happened in the Southwest and Upper West/Mountain – two regions that have high average temperatures and low average rainfall.

"Golf course superintendents are responsible stewards of water resources, and the latest national survey results demonstrate that," said Rhett Evans, CEO of GCSAA. "Superintendents are committed to efficient water management and have implemented evidence-based best management practices that result in reduced water use. All golf facilities should maintain a BMP manual and strive for continuous improvement as water management plans are an important aspect of BMPs and overall environmental sustainability."

As part of the third series of its Golf Course Environmental Profile program, GCSAA will publish two additional national surveys related to golf course management over the next two years.

To learn more and to see the complete survey report:

Water management study finds water use down by 29% at U.S. golf facilities - GCMOnline.com





TURF PEST DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

Prime Disease Season is Here

by John Kaminski | Jul 1, 2022

Much of Pennsylvania has hot (and some wet) weather forecasted. While temperatures look to be in the low 80s in areas like Erie and Scranton, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia temperatures will be in the upper 80s and low 90s for the next week or two. Re-



gardless of the daily highs, it's the nightly highs that look to stay consistently above 60F that should have you on high alert. Disease season is upon us. Happy Fourth of July!

Diseases

We have received a few samples of bacterial wilt in the past two weeks as well as some suspected white leaf. Neither of these diseases are all that common in any given year, but it seems to be showing up on several golf courses in the Northeast. The hardest part of both of these is that there's not really much that can be done do control the disease from a chemical perspective. You can't spray your way out of this one. Instead, cultural practices need to be adjusted that don't always make the golfers happy. For bacterial wilt, raising mowing heights, reducing mowing frequency, only mowing when the turf is dry and avoiding any abrasive practices are important. If you're seeing any small spots on your Poa or etiolation of individual plants on your greens, it's a good idea to send a sample for diagnosis. For white leaf, we are throwing in the towel as management options are not known. There is the potential of this phytoplasma being spread by insects so perhaps an insecticide application may help.

On top of the bacterial wilt and white leave issues, we are now seeing dollar spot throughout the region and anticipating an upsurge of brown patch and Pythium blight. We are still a little early for gray leaf spot in our region, but we are approaching the period where preventive fungicide applications should be started in case we get some early outbreaks.

Weeds & Insects

We're not hearing much buzz about any weeds and insects out there. Probably more of the same in dealing with summer annual weeds and annual bluegrass weevils, but in somewhat of a lull before white grubs. Keep us posted if you're seeing or hearing anything that you feel needs to be reported on.



Hello GCSAA Members.

Please find a survey description and link below from GCSAA Government Affairs. This will be a great help to guidance and help get your voices heard.

Complete the survey by Aug. 31 to voice your opinion on government issues impacting your facility. The committee is now developing the 2022-2023 Priority Issues Agenda, which outlines the legislative and regulatory priorities for GCSAA.

https://www.research.net/r/R3VFTXX

Thanks, Katrin Wolfe

Katrin A. Wolfe I Field Staff - Mid-Atlantic Representative

Golf Course Superintendents Association of America 1421 Research Park Drive | Lawrence, KS 66049 800.472.7878, ext. 3609 | **785.312.3609 Direct** www.gcsaa.org | GCSAA Foundation | GCM | Facebook | Twitter







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2022 Meeting Schedule

September 20

Dauphin Highlands Golf Course CPGCSA Golf Championship

Participation in the CPGCSA Association Championship is optional - - Please indicate your preference on the registration form.

The top 4 winners of the Championship Flight will be eligible to represent Central Penn at the MET Area Team Championship Golf tournament at Lehigh Country Club on October 17, 2022.

October 4 LedgeRock Golf Club DSL Presentation

Page 12 The Green Sheet



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Page 14 The Green Sheet

Upcoming Events in Turf

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TUESDAY - THURSDAY NOVEMBER 15-17, 2022

NORTHEASTERN PA GOLF, LAWN, LANDSCAPE AND SPORTS TURF CONFERENCE

THE WOODLANDS INN AND RESORT; WILKES-BARRE, PA THURSDAY JANUARY 26, 2023

EASTERN PA GOLF, LAWN, LANDSCAPE AND SPORTS TURF CONFERENCE

SHADY MAPLE CONFERENCE CENTER; EAST EARL, PA THURSDAY FEBRUARY 2, 2023

LCAP WINTER LAWN CARE CONFERENCE

DELTA HOTEL/CONFERENCE CENTER - ALLENTOWN TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2023

WESTERN PA GOLF, LAWN, LANDSCAPE AND SPORTS TURF CONFERENCE

HOLLYWOOD CASINOS AT THE MEADOW, WASHINGTON, PA TUESDAY FEBRUARY 21 - WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2023



The Green Sheet

1314 Porter Avenue Scranton, PA 18504 cpgcsa@hotmail.com www.cpgcsa.org