

# The USGA Green Section Record



November 19, 2010 -- Volume 48, Number 24

## Irrigation Performance Guarantee

### **The irrigation brain trust broke the mold with a performance guarantee at Paradise Valley Country Club, AZ**

*by Rob Collins, Brent Harvey, Jim Wright, Dr. Paul Brown*

Several years ago, we exceeded our state water allocation and were facing possible fines. We set a goal to reduce water use by a robust 76 acre-feet (AF), a target that we felt was achievable if irrigation performance was substantially improved. However, green committee members at Paradise Valley Country Club (PVCC) wanted a guaranteed performance level, but such a guarantee had never been considered before among industry professionals. Irrigation designers, manufacturers, and researchers were challenged to forgo industry standards and guarantee an elevated level of efficiency.



***Achieving DU values greater than 80% is rare on tee boxes where sprinklers are irregularly spaced and located on slopes.***

The solution seemed simple enough; reduce irrigated turf, improve efficiency, and meet the water allotment. In 2006, the facility used 620 AF of water on 122 acres of turf, or 5.1 acre-feet/acre (AF/A). This total exceeded the water allotment by about 40 AF. As we began to evaluate potential solutions, more questions were raised. For example, how does irrigation efficiency affect water use? If we improve the efficiency by 10, 15 or even 20%, how much water is saved? How much turf can we remove without negatively impacting the design and character of the course? These were questions we were unable to answer ourselves, so we sought professional advice from Brent Harvey, Harvey Mills Irrigation Design; Jim Wright, Toro Irrigation; and Dr. Paul Brown, University of Arizona. [See how this project turned out.](#)

## All Things Considered - A Green Section Staff Opinion

### **An Insurance Policy and Much More**

by [Bob Brame](#), director, North-Central Region

I've been part of the golf turf management industry all my life - more than 17 years of experience as a superintendent and 20 years on the Green Section staff. As you might imagine, I've experienced some interesting things along the way. One such item is the increasingly erratic use of our Turf Advisory Service (TAS). Clearly, life is a journey of never-ending change, and the last few years have ushered in a tough economy. Nonetheless, how is it that folks will say they can't afford a visit, and then when problems develop there comes a call wanting to schedule immediately with no thought given to cost? Isn't that a bit like trying to take out an insurance policy after a loss has occurred?



***A Turf Advisory Service visit conducted by your local USGA Green Section agronomist is an invaluable tool and insurance policy, particularly when there is continuity from year to year. Everyone directly involved in golf course maintenance will benefit from the candid and open exchange.***

My insurance agent is a good friend. He has to answer to his boss, or align with the company's policies, but I know he's interested in my affairs. Because of our relationship, I talk with him regularly. The few times I've had to call about a problem or file a claim, he has always responded immediately. Would that be the case if we didn't have a good relationship? Would that be the case if I wasn't a tenured client? Not likely. [Read the rest of this article.](#)

## Short Memory



### A North-Central Regional Update

by [Bob Vavrek](#), senior agronomist



***Before and after pictures are useful for documenting dramatic changes made to a golf course, such as aggressive tree removal. Try to maintain the same perspective in both images to provide the most impact.***

Losses of turf that ranged in severity from annoying to devastating have been the topic of numerous updates from every Green Section region this summer. The aftermath of intense disease activity, long periods of severe heat stress, flooding for some and drought for others is still visible and definitely *front and center* in the minds of many golfers and superintendents...well, at least for now. However, for those of us in the northern states, it won't be all that long before a serene, snugly blanket of pure white snow covers all the ugly scars of this summer's turf carnage.

It would be great to put this difficult season completely behind us and look forward to a less stressful time. However, those who hold the purse strings need to be constantly reminded about turf maintenance issues while you prepare and submit the 2011 operating budget. Granted, money cannot magically transform a cool season grass into a warm season grass, and there are times when you can cover the greens with \$100 bills and still lose turf due to extreme stress from heat or disease activity. On the other hand, deep budget cuts will definitely limit management options and make it difficult to address small turf issues before they become more serious problems. [Read the rest of this update.](#)

## The End Is Near, But Other Issues Are Around The Corner



### A Mid-Atlantic Regional Update

by [Darin Bevard](#), senior agronomist

Temperatures have fallen rapidly in the last week, and frost has occurred throughout much of the region. Leaves are off most of the trees, although leaf cleanup continues on an almost daily basis when the weather permits. The 2010 growing season is coming to a close, and for many, not a minute too soon. Although turfgrass growth has slowed dramatically, there are still many things to think about before winter fully arrives. As I write this update, it is a cold, rainy day outside. Pink snow mold development will not be far behind, and control options need to be considered in the near future.



***On a recent visit, the casting of earthworms was a major source of damage in some fairways. Conversations with golf course superintendents have indicated that the problem is fairly widespread.***

As most superintendents are aware, the sale of technical-grade PCNB was stopped by the EPA in late summer. Essentially, this means that PCNB is not available to most superintendents going forward. PCNB was the most popular product used in the Mid-Atlantic Region for snow mold control. Really, there is no other single product that offered the efficacy of PCNB at such a reasonable cost. Future applications for snow mold diseases *will* be more expensive. Application timing also is more important. Many of the alternative control options are systemic fungicides, which need to be taken up by the plant. Thus, applications may need to be earlier than previous years. [Read the rest of this update.](#)

## Time To Catch A Few Rays!

### **The Green Section Record will not be published next week.**

by the USGA Green Section Staff

The **Green Section Record** is taking Thanksgiving week off so don't be concerned when your inbox is missing something next Friday. Like our gecko friends below, we are going to

find a warm place to relax, spend time with family, and enjoy a good meal or two. The Green Section hopes all of our readers do the same and enjoy a wonderful Thanksgiving.



*"Ok, who stole the clicker?"*

Green Section Record Archive (digital)

### **Looking for a previous issue of the *Green Section Record*?**

The **Green Section Record** has been published under various names since 1921 and is composed of an amazing collection of full-text articles and photos. This collection is stored and maintained by the wonderful library staff at Michigan State University in what is called the **Turfgrass Information File (TGIF)**. All past issues of the **Record**, right up to and including this one, can be accessed free of charge simply by following this link.

[Search the Green Section Record](#)



*Looking for something?*

The USGA Green Section Portal

### **A Valuable Resource For All, And It's Free**

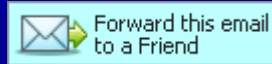
Take a minute to visit the Green Section's portal at <http://gsportal.usga.org> to find information regarding upcoming live webcasts and links to recordings of more than 30 previously-delivered webcasts, and announcements of upcoming USGA Green Section activities, education conferences, and meetings.

[\*\*\*Visit the USGA Green Section Portal\*\*\*](#)

### **Important Links**

[\*\*USGA Privacy Policy\*\*](#)  
[\*\*USGA Green Section Home Page\*\*](#)  
[\*\*USGA Staff Contact Information\*\*](#)  
[\*\*Turf Advisory Service Information\*\*](#)  
[\*\*USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Online \(TERO\)\*\*](#)

**USGA Green Section**  
**P.O. Box 708**  
**Far Hills, NJ 07931-0708**  
908.234.2300



◆2010 by United States Golf Association◆

Permission to reproduce articles or material in the USGA Green Section Record is granted to newspapers, periodicals, and educational institutions (unless specifically noted otherwise). Credit must be given to the author, the article's title, USGA Green Section Record, and the issue's date. Copyright protection must be afforded. To reprint material in other media, written permission must be obtained from the USGA. In any case, neither articles nor other material may be copied or used for any advertising promotion, or commercial purposes.

Green Section Record (ISSN 2156-5813) is published weekly via electronic mail by the United States Golf Association◆, Golf House, Far Hills, NJ 07931.