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By the Light of the Sun

Cripple Creek Golf and Country Club takes advantage of incentives to make solar power a reality.

by Glen MacDonald, golf course superintendent, Cripple Creek Golf and Country Club, Dagsboro, Del.

Sustainability is a term used frequently by many professions and industries in recent years. Lessening our environmental footprint and perhaps saving money in the process are important to all of us, or at least they should be. Cripple Creek Golf and Country Club is located on a tidal marsh just off the Indian River in Delaware, and we have always been conscious of our environmental impact. While the concept of sustainability is something that everyone embraces, implementation of sustainable practices must also make financial sense, especially given the current challenging economics of the golf industry. With this in mind, in 2010 club officials at Cripple Creek began to evaluate the potential benefits of using alternative energy sources to supply at least a portion of the energy needs of our golf facility.



Solar panels were mounted atop roofs of the maintenance facility, pool house, and cart barn to limit their aesthetic impact. The savings in electricity costs combined with the sale of SRECs (Solar Renewable Energy Credits) back to the power grid will recover the cost of the investment in less than five years.

An energy committee was formed to evaluate alternative energy options, including wind, geothermal, and solar power. We investigated the grants and subsidies for alternative energy projects that were available from different levels of government that might make our project more affordable. When all the facts were evaluated, it was determined that solar power was a viable option to produce a portion of the energy needed to power different areas of the golf facility. Fortunately, there are now many golf facilities around the U.S. that derive some or all of their energy from solar sources. Cripple Creek was the first golf facility in Delaware to embrace this technology on a large scale.

[Read the rest of this article](#)

All Things Considered - A Green Section staff opinion

Opinions and facts related to golf course maintenance - appreciate the difference.

by Larry Gilhuly, director, Northwest Region

Opinion - A belief stronger than impression and less strong than positive knowledge. A personal view, attitude, or appraisal. A belief or judgment that rests on grounds insufficient to produce complete certainty.

In my opinion...



Fact - Something that actually exists; reality; truth. A truth known by actual experience or observation; something known to be true.

Golf course superintendents face a tough task on a daily basis, and it has absolutely nothing to do with growing grass. Rather, the task is dealing with the opinions of golfers who play the course that day, which could be upward of several hundred opinions on any given day, depending on the amount of play. Some opinions are positive, some negative, some vocalized in person, and many vocalized at the "19th hole." While opinions are varied, let's look at some of the most common ones vocalized by golfers. Let's also compare them to the facts.

[Read the rest of this article](#)

Going Viral

Opinions and gossip regarding course conditions have a long history of quickly spreading through a golf facility. Good or bad, new technology provide the opportunity for information and misinformation to spread faster than ever.

by [Robert Vavrek](#), senior agronomist, North Central Region



Some pictures speak for themselves. Want to make a point about motorized carts damaging soft, wet fairways? The image of muddy tire tracks says it all. In contrast, you may want to highlight more technical images with arrows or circles to make sure you and the audience are on the same page. Want to brag about how well the new brushes on walking greens mowers are standing up the turf for a cleaner cut? Be sure to highlight the brushes in the image to focus the reader's attention.

The good ol' days . . . when a golfer had a bad day, the high score was blamed on the slow, bumpy greens or soft, wet fairways or inconsistent bunkers. Complaints were then tendered first to the golf shop staff and then to anyone in the grill or locker room who would listen. Spreading personal discontent throughout the facility was a slow process, but with persistence it was possible to influence the more impressionable golfers, while constantly annoying the more reasonable players.

Fast forward to the present . . . the golfer with the first tee time can send a text message about soft, inconsistent bunkers or slow, bumpy greens while his partner drives a cart from the first green to the second tee. Assume at least 10 other golfers on the same day's tee sheet receive the message and anticipate a bad experience before ever setting foot on the practice putting green.

A few holes later, the same smartphone might be used to take pictures of mud on the golf ball or a plugged lie in a fairway. These images can be immediately posted on Facebook, where countless other golfers can provide soothing salve of consolation for having to endure such indignities. With any luck, support and encouragement from Facebook friends will arrive before the back nine.

[Read the rest of this article](#)



November 6-7, 2012. Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center, Dallas, Texas.

Golf's Use of Water: Solutions for a More Sustainable Game will bring together experts from science, government, business, academia and golf to identify and discuss the most challenging issues regarding golf's use of water. With communities continually working to provide sufficient quantities of safe drinking water, it is understandable that water use for recreational purposes is heavily scrutinized. While golf courses contribute to communities by providing green space, positive economic impact and recreation for those who play the game, it is also true that golf course irrigation is a necessary component of their management. It is the responsibility of golf's leadership to ensure that our most valuable natural resource is used in the most forward-thinking, responsible manner. [View the Water Summit agenda.](#)

For more information on the Water Summit, contact jmoore@usga.org.

Regional Updates

The USGA Green Section agronomists see a broad variety of issues and challenges as they visit golf courses across the country. Be sure to read the highlights of each region since many of the topics covered apply to courses everywhere.



Mid-Atlantic Region

This update includes:

Close To The End, But Far From Over - While many see the fall as the finish line for a tough growing season, it is really the starting line for preparing the grass for the environmental stresses that will inevitably return in

2013.

[View the rest of this update.](#)



Southeast Region

This update includes:

Is Your Golf Course Ryder Cup Ready? - What can golf course superintendents learn from the Ryder Cup to make their course more enjoyable to the everyday golfer?

[View the rest of this update.](#)



North-Central Region

This update includes:

Training For Next Year's Fight - Fall aeration should be near completion, but don't forget important preparations for next season.

[View the rest of this update.](#)



Florida Region

This update includes:

Challenges Of Continued Soggy, Cloudy Conditions - Above average rainfall calls for changes in management.

[View the rest of this update.](#)



Northeast Region

This update includes:

The Long Season Comes At A Price - This season's early start in the Northeast is causing golf course superintendents and their crews to scramble this fall.

[View the rest of this update.](#)



Northwest Region

This update includes:

And Now For Something Completely Different - Waverly CC has added a llama to the crew and solved a 4th of July turf mystery.

[View the rest of this update.](#)



Southwest Region

This update includes:

Overseeding Preparations - Scalping is out and the result is a significant savings in resources.

[View the rest of this update.](#)

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