USGA GREEN SECTION RECORD

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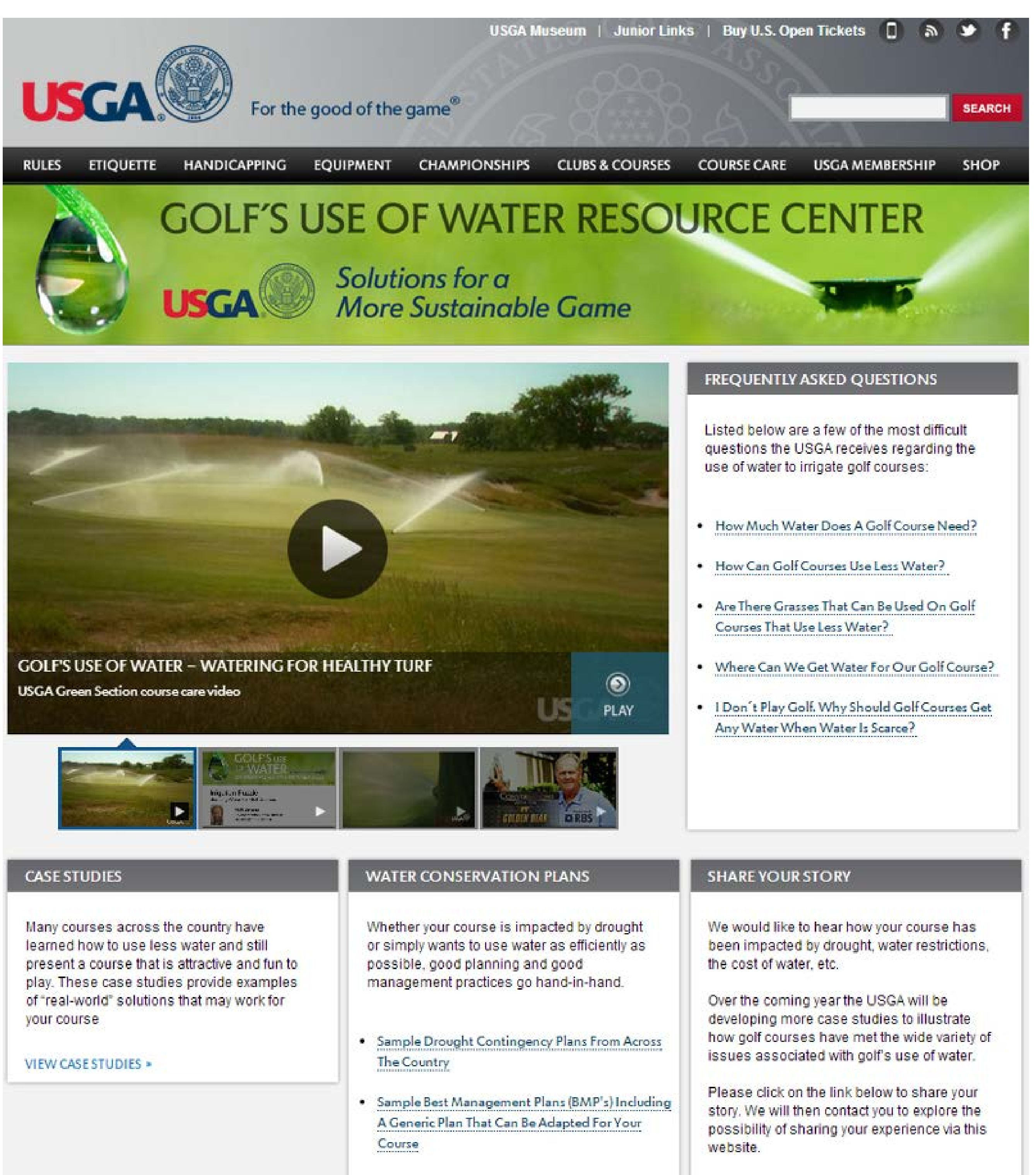
NEW USGA RESOURCE

GOLF'S USE OF WATER RESOURCE CENTER

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.

Information is the key to meeting the challenge of golf's use of water. With this in mind, the USGA has created a new web site focused entirely on the issue. Highlights of the site include case studies that offer "real-world" solutions, water conservation plans and the opportunity to share how your course has been impacted by drought restrictions, the cost of water, etc.

We urge everyone to take the time to visit the site and contribute to the efforts to meet the challenge of golf's use of water.



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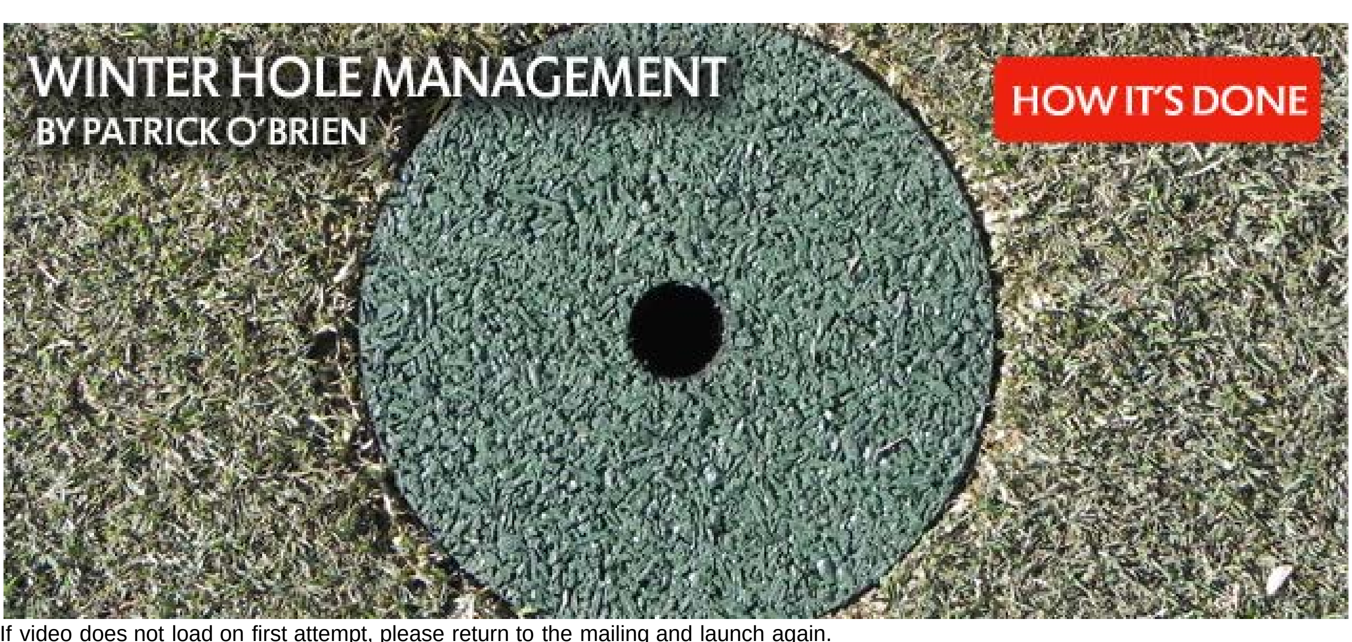
GOLF'S USE OF WATER RESOURCE CENTER
Solutions for a More Sustainable Game
GOLF'S USE OF WATER – WATERING FOR HEALTHY TURF
USGA Green Section course care video
PLAY
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Listed below are a few of the most difficult questions the USGA receives regarding the use of water to irrigate golf courses:
How Much Water Does A Golf Course Need?
How Can Golf Courses Use Less Water?
Are There Grasses That Can Be Used On Golf Courses That Use Less Water?
Where Can We Get Water For Our Golf Course?
I Don't Play Golf. Why Should Golf Courses Get Any Water When Water Is Scarce?
CASE STUDIES
Many courses across the country have learned how to use less water and still present a course that is attractive and fun to play. These case studies provide examples of "real-world" solutions that may work for your course
VIEW CASE STUDIES »
WATER CONSERVATION PLANS
Whether your course is impacted by drought or simply wants to use water as efficiently as possible, good planning and good management practices go hand-in-hand.
Sample Drought Contingency Plans From Across The Country
Sample Best Management Plans (BMP's) Including A Generic Plan That Can Be Adapted For Your Course
SHARE YOUR STORY
We would like to hear how your course has been impacted by drought, water restrictions, the cost of water, etc.
Over the coming year the USGA will be developing more case studies to illustrate how golf courses have met the wide variety of issues associated with golf's use of water.
Please click on the link below to share your story. We will then contact you to explore the possibility of sharing your experience via this website.

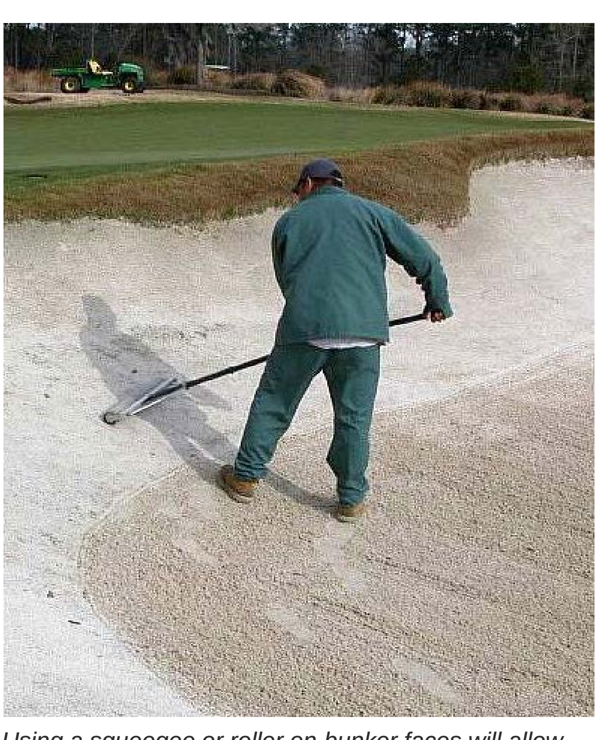
Read More



If video does not load on first attempt, please return to the mailing and launch again.

CAREFUL EXAMINATION OF LOCAL BUNKER SANDS MAY REAP BIG SAVINGS

MAKING LOW-COST BUNKER SANDS WORK



Using a squeegee or roller on bunker faces will allow softer sands to remain firmer and slightly crust over, which serves to reduce the potential for fried-egg lies and the severity of washouts..

Maintaining quality at a lower cost has been the mantra of many golf facilities over the last five years as they have wrestled with difficult economic conditions. However, putting into practice what sounds good in theory can be a difficult task. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the short-term and long-term management of bunkers. Golfers are quick to express their opinion about what they do or do not like about bunkers and there may not be anything more divisive on the golf course than the topic of bunker sand. It seems that often the "best" sand is at a sand plant hundreds of miles away with a nearly cost-prohibitive price tag. Some courses literally have shipped bunker sand halfway across the country in pursuit of perfect, consistent bunkers while others have avoided sand replacement completely due to cost.

Are the best bunker sands really halfway across the U.S. or are there local sands that can be used successfully in bunkers at a fraction of the cost? The purpose of this article is to review this question and equip decision makers with the tools to select bunker sands that will work successfully at their golf course.

Read More

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED - A USGA STAFF OPINION

IS IT TIME TO GET OVER THE WINTER COLOR OF BERMUDAGRASS FAIRWAYS?

Would you be surprised to learn that this is not creeping bentgrass, but 'Latitude 36' bermudagrass? New, winter-hardy bermudagrasses rival creeping bentgrass in appearance, fine texture and playing quality, and do so with fewer resources

The past several years have provided an array of weather extremes during summers in the Mid-Atlantic region. Hot, wet weather...check. Hot, dry weather...check. You name it, we've had it. What is even more challenging is that these "summer" conditions have extended well beyond June, July and August and into spring and fall as well. The result of these uncontrollable weather extremes has been struggling cool-season grass on fairways at many golf facilities in spite of frequent fungicide inputs to control disease activity and long days of carefully managing water trying to keep the grass from declining.

Not surprising, more and more golf facilities are struggling to manage cool-season fairways in the transition zone. Maintenance budgets are still at reduced levels for many golf facilities, but golfer expectations are not. What if I told you that there is a grass that requires very limited fungicide inputs and less water compared to cool-season fairways, and it provides superb playing conditions throughout the prime golf season? More importantly, this grass thrives when summer is at its worst. Why does this matter? Because during mid-summer heat stress, the fairways will be in excellent condition which allows the staff to focus its resources and efforts to managing the most important turf area of every golf course: putting greens. Hot weather? The grass that I speak of does great. How about the dreaded combination of hot and wet conditions? Still not a problem for this grass. "Sign me up" is what most course officials and superintendents would say. In my opinion, no longer must we resort to wishing for such a grass that would cost less to maintain and perform admirably through the heat of the summer, because this grass already exists.

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USGA GREEN SECTION LIVE WEBCAST

SOIL MOISTURE METERS - CHANGING THE WAY GOLF USES WATER

Sign up today to attend the live webcast on **Tuesday, 11/19/2013 at 11:00 AM EDT.** The webinar will last approximately 30 minutes with additional time available for questions from the audience.

In this presentation, Bob Vavrek, senior agronomist in the USGA Green Section's North-Central Region, and Bernd Leinauer, Ph.D., extension turfgrass specialist and professor at New Mexico State University, will provide an overview of soil moisture meters and how this technology is changing the way the golf industry uses water. The goal of this webcast is for attendees to clearly understand how soil moisture meters work, how to use them correctly, their practical applications on golf course playing areas, and the potential benefits in playability, turf health and water savings that could be achieved at your golf facility.

Register Now

How often are holes changed on putting greens? How often should they be changed? Read on to learn about factors that determine hole changing frequency and what's right for your golf facility.

The National Turfgrass Evaluation Program and the USGA will begin a five-year evaluation of warm-season grasses for putting greens at 11 golf course and university test sites around the United States. Included in the trials are 15 bermudagrass, 11 zoysiagrass and two seashore paspalum cultivars. Goals are to reduce inputs, as compared to ultradwarf bermudagrasses, while achieve Stimpmeter readings between 9 and 10 feet.

It is likely that opinions on bunkers are shared daily on courses everywhere with the most heated discussions taking place in the 19th hole. The link below proves that opinions on bunkers are not a new concept. The author of the piece obviously approves of the style and construction of bunkers on a "new" course in California but fails to identify the course. If anyone can identify the course we will make sure the article is forwarded to the facility so that they can compare their 1926 bunkers to those on their course today.

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
As golf facilities prepare for winter, be mindful that it has been a dry fall so the turf may need extra water now before irrigation systems are shut down. This will help prevent winter desiccation injury. Also, pay close attention to frost patterns as they likely indicate shade problems and the need to improve growing environments for healthier turf.
Read More

MID-ATLANTIC REGION
A year in review shows temperatures to be cooler than normal overall, dramatic rainfall differences from one locale to another (which corresponded to noticeable differences in course conditions and playability), and the push for more bermudagrass use in the transition zone.
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SOUTHEAST REGION
You know that warm-season grasses turn brown in the winter, but do you know why? A quick trip to the turfgrass library reveals the specifics in this regional update that may help you explain winter dormancy (and the fact that the turf is not dead) to golfers.
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FLORIDA REGION
The winter golf season has arrived in Florida. Golfer complaints about "mud" on golf balls during the rainy season and the fall transition can be minimized with more topdressing sand and aeration to dilute organic matter accumulation.
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NORTH-CENTRAL REGION
It's time to winterize golf course turf in many of the northern states. A substantial application of topdressing sand to the greens now will not only help make up for any missed topdressing applications throughout the year but also provide a little extra protection against winter wind desiccation.
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MID-CONTINENT REGION
Drought-stricken areas receive much needed rain, concerns over golfer spike damage on greens are on the rise, and check out the list of upcoming turf conferences in the region.
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NORTHWEST REGION
What is good on cake but not for turgrass? Learn more about how to make sure golf course turf is healthy and playable next spring. At that point, everyone can "have their cake and it too."
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SOUTHWEST REGION
Do you know the unintended consequences of cart traffic on overseeded and non-overseeded turf? Cart traffic in November is critical to winter playability in the Southwest for either scenario.
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