



February 2008

Water Use Management Policy

Introduction

Water is essential for the health and growth of plants and therefore an essential input in golf course management.

Increasingly water and the management of this renewable resource have gained public attention due to issues related to quality, cost and access and, in some cases as noted above, availability. Due to their visibility, golf courses are often perceived by the public as significant water users. Golf courses use water in a manner so as to sustain and enhance the natural plant communities found in a golf course environment. More often than not water is re-used on a golf course and the water quality is enhanced through its relationship with the golf course environment. Surrounding environments to a golf course often benefit by using a golf course loop to buffer and enhance water qualities within the local environment. As such, water management and water conservation have become and will increasingly be important golf course management issues.

CGSA supports the wise use of water both from an environmental and a financial perspective. Through continuing education, ongoing research and discussion with all levels of government and various government agencies, the CGSA is working to promote awareness and wise water practices within the golf industry. These efforts are focused on water quality and efficient use practices and the development of best practices in water management and conservation.

Policy

From a policy perspective CGSA supports and promotes the following:

- that golf course superintendents are professionals and environmental stewards that take a responsible approach to water management as an integral component of overall plant health and environmental management;
- given that water is essential to plant health and that the golf industry is a multi-billion dollar industry in Canada, that water be considered an essential input for golf;
- that the CGSA welcomes every opportunity to consult and work with governments and their agencies to develop sound, collaborative policy statements with respect to water use, cost, quality and conservation;
- that innovation and research with respect to alternative water sources (effluent, storm, re-claimed), technology (irrigation system design and equipment), plant species, best management practices and continuing education is encouraged and supported so as to encourage continuous improvement in the area of water quality, conservation and use;
- that golf course superintendents, builders, designers and owners take into consideration which plant/turf species are best suited for the soil and climate conditions that are relevant to a particular golf course in order to maximize water use efficiency;

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- that superintendents utilize best management practices with respect to nutrient management, mowing heights, soil cultivation, drainage, irrigation schedules, tree maintenance and golf course traffic to encourage adequate turf quality and water conservation;
- that governments consider tax breaks or rebate programs for golf courses that utilize irrigation design and technology and other methodologies related to species use, cultivation and mowing height and that can demonstrate a reduction in water use as a result of these practices;
- that tertiary treated water (effluent water) and other sources of “reclaimed” water be used in circumstances where water quality can be verified, where supply is dependable and where the golf course could act as a further filtration process without endangering the health of golfers, the turf, or the environment and;
- that golf course superintendents use the best available irrigation techniques to promote healthy turf.

CGSA is committed to monitoring and being an active participant, along with other national golf organizations, in government processes that relate to the availability and use of water by the golf industry. Our Board of Directors, volunteers and staff are available to participate in advisory committees and to take part in the development of viable, environmentally-based policy decisions that protect and enhance water management initiatives across Canada. CGSA will maintain its Environmental Best Management Practices Manual so as to provide a valuable reference source for its members relative to water management issues and the association will continue to build the reference material available through its website and other resources so as to provide its members with ready access to this information.

Canadian Golf Superintendents Association is a society committed to excellence in golf course management and environmental responsibility through the continuing professional development of its members.

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