



The Mountain State Greenletter

Volume 15, Issue 7
July 2023

West Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association

Board of Director's Message

My superintendent thoughts for July are mostly centered around heat, humidity, and unpredictable storms. We all know the stresses that conditions like these bring to our courses and our crews, and I compliment you all for the hard work that you have been doing to keep your tracks in shape.

One of the highlights of my month was participating in our state's premier tournament, the West Virginia Open hosted at Berry Hills Country Club. The celebrated week was well planned and well run by the WVGA team led by interim Executive Director Chris Slack and the Berry Hills team led by Barry Evans and Chris Breed. The extra care provided by Russ Stewart, his staff and volunteers kept the course in top shape despite the worst heatwave of the summer. I, along with the other participants, appreciated all the efforts and congratulate all on a job well done.

Best wishes for continued success as we keep our heads down and ride out the rest of the summer.

Mitch Roush, President, Riverside Golf Course

Upcoming Important Dates

WVGCSA Annual Meeting | October 10, 2023

Bridgeport Country Club, Bridgeport

More Details to Come

WVGCSA Turf Conference | Tuesday, November 7, 2023

Stonewall Resort, Roanoke

More Details to Come

Fundraiser Team Results

Harrell's - First Place

Berry Hills - Second Place

West Virginia Golf Association - Third Place

Apex - Fourth Place

Bridge Haven - Fifth Place

Oglebay Resort - Sixth Place

Advanced Turf Solutions - Seventh Place

Thank you to everyone who participated, sponsored and helped make this tournament a success. We have awarded two scholarships for the 2023-2024 school year!

Mary Grace Roush (WVU) - David Quinn Memorial Scholarship

***Philip Webb (Walla Walla Community College) -
William C. Campbell Memorial Scholarship***

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Keeping Up With the Clippings

By Elliott L. Dowling, regional director, East Region

After a summer of nearly no rain last year and a dry start in many areas this year, the Northeast has seen several inches of rain recently, with more in the forecast. The one commonality on my recent USGA Course Consulting Service visits has been wet, soggy conditions and excessive grass clippings.

Wet conditions are in the hands of Mother Nature and your course's drainage infrastructure. When it rains as much as it has recently, there is no way around it – playing surfaces are going to be wet and soft. But concerns about soft playing conditions haven't come up as much as the issue of excessive grass clippings in the rough and fairways. Many courses were forced to take multiple days off from mowing due to the rain, which means when they were finally able to mow again, the grass was a lot taller than normal.

The consequence of that is too much grass being cut and too many clippings left behind. If excessive clippings are affecting maintenance or play, there are things that can be done if your course has the time, equipment and labor available. For example, a turbine blower is what is most often used to disperse clippings in the rough and fairways. Many courses have a tow-behind turbine blower that attaches to the back of a utility cart and a staff member can be assigned to follow mowing operations and blow away any excess clippings. A step up from that is a larger PTO-driven turbine or conventional blower behind a tractor. Mowing later in the day once turf is dry can help reduce clumps of clippings but this isn't always practical given the amount of play courses are getting. Exploring different mower blades is an option in the rough and dragging the dew off fairways before mowing can also help minimize the accumulation of clippings.

While many courses have one or more of these options available, they don't always have the labor to use them every day or they don't have enough clipping control measures to keep up and clean the course before play. With as much rain as the region has received, patience is important. The maintenance team is working on the clippings as fast as they can but from what I've seen, there are a lot of them to clean up. If it keeps raining, the clippings will keep coming.

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All the recent rain has made it hard to keep up with mowing. Clippings are piling up and golfers are grumbling, but there's only so much that can be done.



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