



# The Mountain State Greenletter

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West Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association

## Board of Director's Message

As we move into fall, I hope that your aerification is wrapped up and that everyone is enjoying a little easier maintenance pace. We are getting excited for the fall opportunities that our association provides and are busy planning for the future of the WVGCSA. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for our Annual Meeting on October 10th at Bridgeport County Club and the 2023 Turf Conference at Stonewall on November 7th. Both are great events to network, share ideas, learn best practices, and promote the great industry that we are a part of.

On the agenda for the Annual Meeting is the election of Board members and officers. Your input and vote are an important part of our member responsibility and a great way to impact the direction of the association in the future. I would personally like to thank you for your confidence in me to serve as this year's president and I look forward to representing you as the WV delegate at the National GCSAA meeting next month. I would also like to thank our past Treasurer, Jason Hart, for his service. Jason accepted another position that moved him outside of our chapter and Tony Coppa graciously stepped up to fill the remainder of his term. Best wishes, Jason, and thank you, Tony.

See you soon and thank you for all you do! #THANKASUPER  
Mitch Roush  
President, Riverside Golf Course

*Annual Fall Meeting  
October 10th - Bridgeport Country Club  
11am Meeting/Lunch and Golf to Follow  
\$70 per person (meeting/lunch and golf)*

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2023 Annual Turf Conference  
Tuesday, November 7th  
Stonewall Resort  
More Details will be released  
soon!

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# Collar Dams: An Aeration Side Effect

By Brian Gietka, agronomist, East Region

It's the time of year when days are getting shorter, temperatures moderate and we shift from playing defense to improving turf health. Late summer and fall are traditional aeration times for many golf courses in the Northeast. The benefits of this practice are well known, but a common negative side effect of aeration and topdressing is collar dams. During the process of sweeping and blowing sand topdressing into aeration holes, it tends to accumulate along the putting green edges and collars. As sand builds up over time, the collars elevate.

When the sand buildup in collars exceeds the elevation of the putting surface, problems arise. Golf balls can settle along the collar like a pool table rail, which affects playability. Another issue is the raised collar acts like a dam, slowing or impeding surface drainage from the putting green. If you are seeing weak turf and/or many ball marks along the front or edges of a putting green, inspect the collar elevations. Collar dams will make adjacent areas softer, which leads to more ball marks and spike marks. In severe cases, collar dams can create chronically wet areas that are prone to poor turf health, pest problems, mechanical damage or winter injury.

To remedy collar dams, core aerate, remove the plugs and repeat. Then water lightly and use a vibratory plate tamper to lower the dam. If the turf is weak, lay a sheet of thin plywood down and vibratory tamp on top of it to protect the turf. Allow the turf to recover and repeat as necessary until water freely runs off the putting surface. Additional aerator passes and tamping may be needed into the approach or rough to ensure effective drainage. In severe cases, you may need to strip elevated areas, remove enough soil to eliminate the dam, and then replace the sod. If you have bermudagrass, a fraise mower works well to lower collar elevations with the added benefit of removing weed seeds in the soil.

Pay attention to removing and dispersing sand buildup along putting green edges during aeration before it becomes a problem. Taking the time to eliminate existing collar dams will improve playability and gives a firmer, healthier putting surface.

Northeast Region Agronomists

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Collar dams are a common sight on putting greens and cause a number of turf health and playability issues.



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