

BEST PRACTICES



NEW YORK STATE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR GOLF COURSES

Drips



Easy Soil Survey

Few would argue that knowledge of the soils you are managing is a critical aspect of successful golf turf management. The same is true for preserving water quality and maximizing the storm water benefit of your property. Soil management begins with knowing the type and characteristics of the soil at your property. Fortunately, most of the data we need is easy to access and interpret. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (WSS) provides soil data and access to the largest natural resource information system in the world. You can access this website at: <http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>



Legacy

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Water quality protection and conservation of water resources are as fundamental to the golf industry as air quality is to the energy industry, and as soil quality is to the forest industry. We have a responsibility to steward the natural resources we utilize and potentially impact, not simply for economic and regulatory reasons, but because this is part of our legacy to the next generation of golf turf managers.

Previous generations of golf turf managers did not have the tools to provide many of the high quality affordable playing conditions enjoyed today. As technology became available it was experimented with and where applicable actively integrated into daily routines. The same is now true for our potential impact on and consumption of water and BMP's is the language of this aspect of your golf landscape management program.

The goal of the **BEST PRACTICES** e-newsletter is to encourage awareness of simple tips (**Drips**), promote important environmental concerns, and highlight colleagues who are implementing BMP's (**Case Study**). It is a current information source for golf courses to promote awareness and adoption of BMP's to protect water quality. In addition to the Best Practices e-newsletter, the Best Management Practices for New York State Golf Courses Project has a website (2014), an introductory quiz to anonymously self-assess your knowledge, an anonymous property and management assessment tool, and is now collecting Case Study examples from every GCSAA-affiliated Chapter in NY. There are 9 Supt. Associations and 800 courses in NY. Take the quiz, do the assessment and do a Case Study, your legacy starts now! Access the Quiz @ <http://tinyurl.com/hj6y7ul> and the Assessment @ <http://tinyurl.com/h9nncgy>



Case Study

No one questions the importance of golf course water quality protection and conservation. Many of the misconceptions regarding adoption or aligning your practices with BMP's stem from the concern that it will require more money. Others have said it will take more time. Both are valid concerns, but overall the majority of BMP's are simple operating and capital activities required for facility management, we are just characterizing them for the value to water quality protection.

The BMPs for NYS Golf Courses has launched a year-long effort to collect and highlight progressive approaches taken on existing courses for water quality protection. Adding quick couplers to more precisely water areas, wash pad installation, soil testing and use MLSN, etc. All you do is collect some pictures jot down a few notes and send them on to our BMP Project Manager Stacey Kingsbury, (s.kingsbury1@gmail.com). If you'd like more information and access to examples contact your GCSAA-affiliated Chapter President or the Chair of the BMP Project, Ken Benoit at kbenoit@glenarborclub.com.

Stewarding Insecticide Chemistry

University of Massachusetts Professor (and Central NY Native!) Pat Vittum is among the preeminent Applied Entomologists in the world. Pat's textbooks, research and extension education programs have had significant influence on our day to day insect issues in turf management. I had the pleasure of sitting in the audience at the recent MetGCSA Winter Seminar where Pat discussed insecticides. Pat is always a joy to listen to as she has a flow to her presentation, decades of experience, and an eye to the future. This presentation was no different.

Pat spent 45 of her 50 minutes on BASIC insecticide chemistry from solubility and persistence to volatility and efficacy. How we regularly have to overcome limitations to many insecticides (some more volatile than others, some ineffective at higher temps., some insoluble and therefore stay localized in thatch, etc.) and how resistance remains a significant challenge. Of course there was some talk about pollinators and our role in stewarding products we have available. In simple terms it means avoiding overuse that leads to resistance, be aware and mitigate non-target effects, and keep the chemicals from impairing human health and water quality.

The recent concern picked up by the media regarding pollinators is not going away anytime soon. Major agrochemical companies that derive significant revenue from the sale of insecticides, mostly to Big Ag, are very concerned. This concern has led to widespread promotion of pollinator-friendly plantings, hive monitoring systems on golf courses, and BMP's for ensuring pollinator safety when making an insecticide application.

It is imperative that we steward our pesticide chemistries responsibly just as we educate on responsible drinking. "Part and parcel" of this stewardship is understanding insecticide chemistry and priority areas that are identified in a proper site assessment for water quality protection and pollinator habitat.