

The Idaho Golf Course Superintendents Association

Grass Clippings

July 2026

A Meeting to Make a Difference

Make it a priority to be in Idaho Falls for the Idaho GCSA Fall Meeting, October 5 & 6, 2026 (board meeting is October 4). This is a can't-miss opportunity to benefit from experience. Our featured

speakers have been in the industry for a minute, and they have valuable insight to share. We consider ourselves incredibly fortunate to have Chris Carson and Thom Nikolai, PhD., participating at our Fall Meeting.

Carson (left) and Nikolai (below) are not the only reason to attend — included in the quality education you expect will be our



The Ten Things I Wish They'd Taught me in Turf School.

Getting to Yes: Budgeting principles that can help you ask for and get the resources your course needs.



Turfgrass Potpourri: Research Updates

The Mathematical Argument for the Discriminate Need of Fertilizer and Pesticides in the 21st Century.

peer-sharing portion, "Stories from the Course: Making it through another season!" Participating will be Josh Benson, Idaho Falls Country Club; Matt Gourlay, CGCS, MG, Hillcrest Country Club; Benton Hodges, Grand Teton Club; and Mark Spraktes, Pinecrest Golf Club.

Regardless of your budget size, the education will be beneficial.
continued page 11

Update:

Act by November 6

Location, location, location! Numerous considerations are made when selecting our chapter room block for the 2027 GCSAA CTS in New Orleans — besides price.

We want to make walking a possibility from the hotel, whether you are walking to the convention center, walking to dinner, or to the Northwest Chapter Hospitality Room. Just as last year, there will be no bus service provided with the conference.

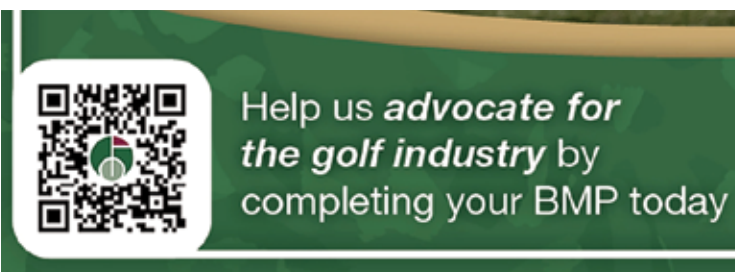
Our selected property, Le Meridien New Orleans (Marriott), is about a 15-minute walk from the convention center and a five-minute walk from our Chapters of the Northwest Hospitality Room at the Red Fish Grill in the French Quarter. So, whether you want to visit the iconic Old Absinthe House (15 min walk), enjoy a beignet from Café Du Monde (15-min walk), shop at the Riverwalk Outlets (six-min walk), or even visit Ruth's Steak House (10-min walk), we are centrally located to enjoy the sights. Plus, there are even more restaurants in the area than depicted on the map on page 11.

Important! With the CTS mid-January, our room block deadline is early – November 6. While it may seem too early to even consider, it is important you reserve your room without delay if you want to participate in our chapter room block. To reserve a room in our hotel block, click on the link provided in our email blasts, or ask Lori for the link.

Also important! If you want to add additional nights to a Monday arrival and Friday departure, please make your reservation in the block and contact GCSAA travel immediately to ask for assistance to include shoulder nights.

Chapters of the Northwest Hospitality Room

While we are talking about our chapter room block at the 2027 GCSAA CTS in New Orleans, this is a great time to mention our hospitality room has been reserved and we already are looking forward to gathering! Once again, six chapters will come together, thanks to the generosity of our allied partners. Their support makes this evening possible for all, and we appreciate every company able to support the evening. We have a space reserved ready to support a large crowd! Important to note, the January 20 event time has changed to 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Of course, more information will be shared later for the Red Fish Grill in New Orleans!



idahogcsa.org

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Did you know the events shown on our website homepage
are only a portion of events listed?
Click on the events tab to see a larger list.

Welcome NEW Idaho GCSA Members!

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Save the date for the Spring Meeting & Trade Show!

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Info about Idaho GCSA website!

- * Do you have an address change? Changing the information on Your Profile in the Member's Area will automatically update the association's database. Use of proper capitalization and spelling is appreciated.
- * Do you have any classified items? Please be sure to complete the classified section in the Member's Area.
- * **Your username is always your email address. To set your password click on forgot password and follow the prompts.**
- * Be sure to check the job announcements on a regular basis found in the members' only section of the website, idahogcsa.org.

*"Serve members, elevate their professional experience and
strengthen communities through the enjoyment of golf."*



President's Message

Defining The Assistant Superintendent

To start, I would like to say that I hope everyone is having a good season so far. Now that we are into summer, for many of us our focus shifts from projects and aerations to irrigation and keeping the course beautiful, healthy, and playable. Our days are filled with hand watering, checking moisture meter readings, and addressing irrigation issues. With all this going on, as I have mentioned in previous articles, it is important to have employees and coworkers around us that we can depend on. This has made me think about assistant superintendents and the many roles they have that help us deliver the best possible product.

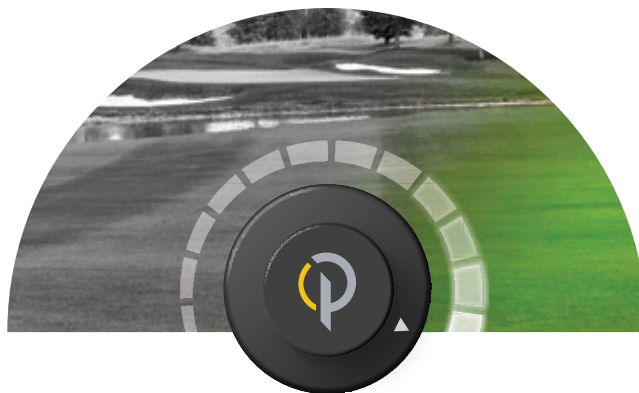
Generally, the assistant is thought of as the “right hand” of the super. They are usually the ones creating the daily schedules, managing a lot of the day-to-day goings on across the course, and training new employees. While these and a variety of other tasks are how we typically think of or define the assistant superintendent, it is not always the case for everyone.

Through knowing and talking to several assistants, as well as

my own experience, the role of the assistant can vary quite a bit from course to course. For me, the job aligned closely to the general definition. I was thought of as the crew “foreman.” But along with that, I also did a lot of the sprayer applications. I also got involved in a lot of project planning and was something of a sounding board for my superintendent. However, I also know some assistants whose roles seem to be more narrowly defined. In some cases, the assistant is the spray tech. For others, they are the primary irrigation tech. Sometimes they can be a combination of all of these.

No matter how we define their jobs or how their roles vary, I believe that good assistants are one of the most valuable assets we can have as superintendents. Also, many of them may eventually move up to become superintendents or beyond themselves and will be part of the future of golf. So, for those of us who are lucky enough to have a good assistant, we should be sure to show our appreciation for all that they do and the value that they add to our operations.

Thank you to all the assistant superintendents out there. I hope everyone has a great rest of their season and I hope to see you all at the fall meeting in Idaho Falls.



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Bunker Maintenance Costs a Lot

Rob Archbold, Hillcrest Country Club, Boise, Idaho



The bunkers at Hillcrest are the defining feature of the golf course. I have heard many times that Korn Ferry Tour players consider Hillcrest's bunkers' consistency and playability the best on the entire tour. Hearing compliments like that creates tons of pride in what we do, but it comes at a cost... a big one... Today, I will give some information about how we effort to make pristine and consistent bunkers on a

day-to-day basis, then I will break down the expenses that go into maintaining our bunkers.

- There are 61 bunkers in play and four practice bunkers.
- Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, we typically will do a full course rake/preparation, cleaning and raking every inch of sand on the property. While the other four days we do a thorough "Spot-pro" or "Spot-rake", hitting areas with lots of play and/or spinning the bottoms of bunkers. We are constantly pulling out unwanted grass, roots and weeds by hand.

- On Mondays, we trim bunker edges with a string trimmer, both vertical and horizontal cut.
- Also on Mondays, we wash out bunker edges to remove sand buildup.
- Once per month we use a shaker to hand spread wetting agent and 9-9-9 with an iron along the outer 18 inches of the edges.
- Intermittently, we will use a wetting agent tablet for bunker edges.
- In the spring, we do a full course, bunker sand depth audit, and move/add sand accordingly.
- In the winter, we excavate poor edges and rebuild with "bunker boards."
- In 2022, we installed a full supplemental irrigation system for bunkers on the front nine, which includes 6-12 "pop ups" per bunker for isolated watering. We will be adding that system to the back nine soon.
- We track labor hours on bunkers specifically with taskTracker.

Referring to the graph on the next page, clearly, labor is a massive line item for bunker maintenance. Unfortunately, there are very few ways around it, and I would imagine automated

continued page 6

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59912

Bunkers continued from page 4

	ANNUAL COST:
5200hrs Labor @ \$20per hour	\$104,000
Fertilizer- 9-9-9 w/ Iron	\$ 636
Wetting Agent Granular	\$ 2,144
Wetting Agent Tablet	\$ 603
45 Tons of Bunker Sand	\$ 5,052
ANNUAL TOTAL:	\$112,435

bunker raking will be one of the last advances to come. Without adding many more line items such as fuel/maintenance for the Sand-Pro, fuel and cord for string trimmers, materials for bunker boards, herbicide from wall-to-wall applications, cost of water, etc., the annual cost of maintaining bunkers is larger than any other category at Hillcrest. Simple math gets us to about \$1700 per bunker annually.

We recently got rid of two driving range bunkers, greenside on the range —their purpose was purely aesthetic. Even though it was just two bunkers out of play, it allows us to reallocate resources to bunkers that need more attention. Every bunker serves a purpose, and it is up to us to determine if the cost associated is worth the squeeze. Here at Hillcrest, maybe 65 is the right number for now, but it sure does cost a lot.

**Save the date for the
Idaho GCSA
Spring Meeting & Trade Show!
February 22 & 23, 2027**



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June 9, 2026

**Sophie Bull, 2026 Legacy
Scholarship recipient.
Daughter of Jacob Olsen.**

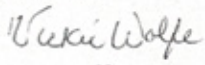
Dear Scholarship Sponsor,

Another school year has come to an end and our students from the Class of 2026 are now out on their own, pursuing various endeavors. Because of generous contributions from community members such as you, many of the graduates who are going on with their education will find their transition into college life made easier.

As a school, we want to thank you for your continued support of our students and for allowing us to work with you in their behalf. I can definitively say that your financial award will definitely make a difference in the affordability of that education, as costs of higher education continue to rise.

Thanks again for your support.

Sincerely,


Vickie Wolfe
 Scholarship Coordinator


Emmie Wright
 Counselor


Rob Spriggs
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Dear GSAA,
Thank you so much
for giving me a scholarship!
It's going to help me with my
future and I'm eternally grateful!
-Sophie Bull

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Representing Idaho at National Golf Day in Washington, D.C.

Brandon Crim, Centennial Golf Course, Nampa, Idaho

This year, I had the privilege of representing the Idaho Golf Course Superintendents Association as the chapter delegate at National Golf Day in Washington, D.C.

National Golf Day brings together leaders from across the golf industry—superintendents, PGA professionals, course owners, architects, and industry partners—to advocate for the game and communicate its impact directly to lawmakers. The focus is clear: highlight golf's economic strength, environmental stewardship, and value to communities nationwide.

As Idaho's representative, I was proud to share the story of golf in our state and highlight the essential work golf course superintendents perform every day to maintain and enhance our facilities. I also had the opportunity to meet with staff from all of Idaho's congressional representatives while on Capitol Hill, helping ensure our state's voice

was part of the national conversation around golf and its impact.

Throughout our meetings on Capitol Hill, we discussed several key issues currently shaping the future of the industry.

A major topic of discussion was Waters of the United States (WOTUS) regulations and the need for clear, consistent, and practical federal guidance regarding waterways, wetlands, and permitting requirements. Industry leaders emphasized golf's long-standing commitment to environmental stewardship and science-based management practices, while advocating for regulations that are both protective of natural resources and workable for facility operations.

We also discussed proposed legislation supporting tax credits for the purchase and retrofit of zero-emission landscape equipment. As states and municipalities increasingly pursue emissions reductions, this proposal would help golf facilities transition their equipment fleets in a financially responsible way while

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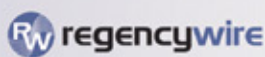
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continuing to maintain high-quality playing conditions.

Another important conversation centered on daylight saving time and how daylight availability impacts golf course operations, staffing, revenue, tournament scheduling, and participation. The discussion highlighted the importance of regional flexibility when evaluating future time-related policy changes.

We also addressed the importance of maintaining and expanding public golf facilities in Washington, D.C., and nationwide. Accessible and affordable public golf plays a critical role in introducing new players to the game and strengthening community engagement.

Health and wellness were also central themes. Continued support for the PHIT Act (Personal Health Investment Today Act) was emphasized, which would allow Americans to use HSA and FSA funds for qualified physical activity expenses, including golf instruction, greens fees, youth programs, and fitness-related activities. The conversations reinforced growing recognition of golf as a lifelong health and wellness activity that supports both

physical fitness and mental well-being.

Modernization of the tax code through the PAR Act was another key topic. This legislation aims to create more equi-

table and updated tax treatment for golf and recreational businesses, supporting long-term investment, facility improvements, workforce stability, and continued industry growth.

Workforce challenges were also front and center, particularly the need for a permanent fix to the H-2B visa cap. Many golf facilities rely on seasonal employees during peak playing months, and uncertainty surrounding the current cap continues to create staffing challenges. Industry leaders stressed the importance of a reliable and predictable H-2B program to support operations, local economies, and consistent course conditioning nationwide.

Another important initiative discussed was funding for a national turfgrass statistics study. This effort would provide comprehensive data on turfgrass acreage and management practices across the country, helping quantify the environmental, economic, and recreational contributions of managed turfgrass. Reliable national data is essential for guiding future research, informing policy decisions, and advancing sustainability initiatives across the industry.

I was also there to represent Centennial Golf Course in



Nampa, Idaho, and share our story with legislative staff. Centennial Golf Course is more than just a place to play golf, it is a lasting symbol of community pride, collaboration, and shared vision.

What makes Centennial especially unique is how it came to life. The course was built with the help of community volunteers who donated their time, energy, and passion to create something lasting for the city of Nampa. From the earliest stages of development, it was a true grassroots effort, reflecting what can be accomplished when a community comes together around a common goal.

Today, Centennial stands as a reflection of Nampa itself - hardworking, welcoming, and deeply rooted in community values. It serves as a place where golfers of all ages and skill levels can enjoy the game, connect with others, and appreciate the natural landscape that makes golf in Idaho so special.

Beyond the golf experience, the course continues to represent community investment at its best. It supports local recreation, encourages outdoor activity, and provides a gathering place that brings people together throughout the season.

Centennial Golf Course is a reminder that when a community builds something together, it becomes part of its identity. For

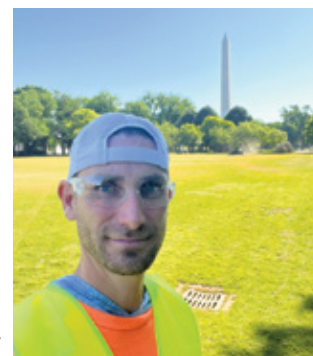
Nampa, Centennial is exactly that, a course built by the people, for the people, and still representing the spirit of the community every day.

As part of the week, participants also took time to give back through community service projects at both the National Mall and the Old Soldiers' Home

Golf Course. These projects were a meaningful reminder of golf's connection to community spaces and the importance of stewardship beyond our home facilities.

Projects at the National Mall included painting the names of the signers of the Declaration of Independence on Signers' Island, painting posts and chains along the reflecting pool, spreading mulch around trees near the DC War Memorial in Ash Woods, and

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Fall Meeting

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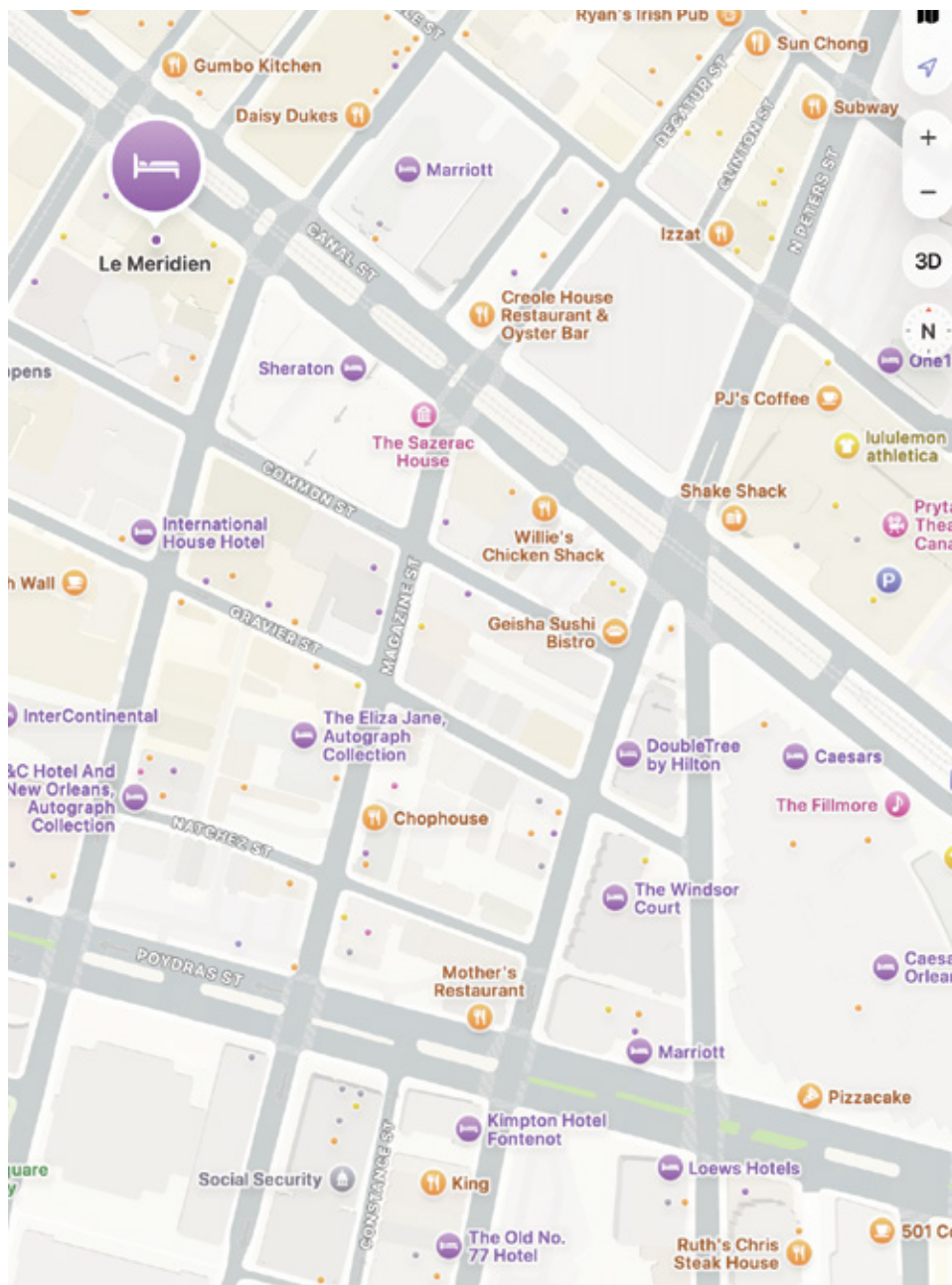
Chris Carson is the superintendent emeritus at Echo Lake Country Club in Westfield, NJ, where he recently concluded a successful 36-year career. During his tenure, a complete master plan rebuild of the course was completed, two USGA Championships were held, and 11 assistants have moved on to become superintendents. He has also spent the last 25 years teaching Professional Development and Budgeting/Planning in the Rutgers Professional Golf Turf Management Program. Carson has presented over 100 talks and seminars throughout the country and is an accomplished writer for Golf Course Management magazine with over 25 published articles, twice winning GCSAA's Leo Feser Award.

Thomas A. Nikolai, Ph.D. has been performing turfgrass research and teaching at Michigan State University since 1992. Areas of research interest include cultural and mechanical practices and their relevance to decreasing inputs. University courses Nikolai has taught include Turfgrass and the Environment, Pesticide and Fertilizer Technology, World of Soils, Turfgrass Irrigation, Turfgrass Management and Turf and Landscape Analytical Practices. Nikolai has given presentations in 31 countries, 8 Canadian provinces, and 40 States.

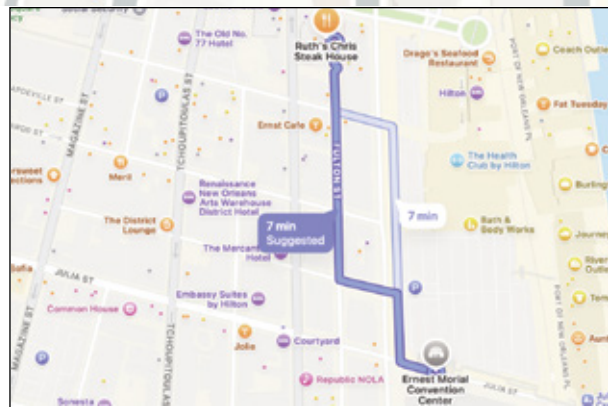
In addition to the very popular silent auction held in conjunction with this meeting (it is easy to donate with the online link available when pre-registration opens), and the opportunity for the great conversations always found when golfing with your peers at Pinecrest Golf Course, hosted by Mark Spraktes.



Map overview of our New Orleans chapter room block at the Le Meridien, New Orleans!



An informational overview of the 15-minute walk from the hotel to the convention center— not to scale!



National Golf Day continued from page 10

aerating and mowing between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument.

A second group worked at Old Soldiers' Home Golf Course, assisting with cutting cups, mowing, aeration, and topdressing, and addressing several maintenance needs on the course. One of the biggest takeaways from the experience was the unity of the golf industry when advocating for the future of the game. Golf is more than recreation; it supports jobs, drives local economies, promotes environmental stewardship, and provides meaningful spaces for community connection.

It was an honor to represent Idaho and the Idaho GCSA on a national stage and help ensure the voice of golf course superintendents is heard in Washington, D.C.



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Growing Forward: Why Professional Development Matters at Every Level

David Phipps, GCSAA, NW Representative



In this industry, it's easy to get comfortable. The days are full, the work is demanding, and the routine can feel familiar. But real, meaningful growth rarely happens in comfort. It happens when we challenge ourselves to learn more, to do more, and to become more than we were yesterday.

Professional development isn't just about adding letters after your name. Whether you're an assistant superintendent pursuing the Assistant Superintendent Certificate Series (ASCS), an equipment technician working through the Equipment Manager Certificate Program (EMCP) and Certified Turf Equipment Manager (CTEM), or a superintendent aiming for the Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS), these programs represent something deeper: a commitment to growth, discipline, and pride in your craft. And that commitment doesn't stay confined to the workplace.

At first glance, professional certifications can seem like a career move, and they are. They can open doors, build credibility, and set you apart in a competitive field. But the real value goes beyond promotions or resumes.

When you commit to a program like ASCS, EMCP, CTEM, or CGCS, you're building three important habits. The first habit is discipline. Discipline allows you to accomplish your goals by balancing your work, studies, and life. The second habit is resilience. You are learning how to push yourself through to completion, even when it is easier to stop. The third and final habit is confidence. This is obtained by simply knowing that you've earned your expertise.

Those same habits carry into your personal life. You become more organized, more intentional with your time, and more confident in tackling challenges outside of work. Growth in one area has a way of spilling into everything else.

Not everyone begins with a major certification, and they shouldn't have to. Encouraging staff members to pursue the GCSAA Greenkeeper Certificate can be a powerful first step.

For many, it may be the first time they see a clear pathway for advancement. They will receive recognition for their effort and will gain a deeper understanding of their role in your organization.

That sense of progress matters. Job satisfaction often starts with feeling like you're moving forward. When someone earns that first certificate, it can shift their mindset from "this is just a job" to "this is a career I can build."

None of this happens in a vacuum. Behind every professional who takes that step forward, there's often someone who encourages them to try. As mentors, leaders, and peers, we have more influence than we realize.

Encouraging professional development doesn't require big speeches. It can be as simple as recognizing someone's potential before they see it themselves. Or, sharing your own journey, including the struggles as well as your successes. Either way, when you create a space for learning and support, you will be on your way to celebrating their milestones, no matter how small. Sometimes people hesitate not because they lack ability, but because they lack belief. A few words of encouragement at the right time can be the push that changes a career.

When a team embraces development, something bigger happens. Growth becomes contagious. When an assistant works toward their ASCS, it'll inspire another to start as well. When an equipment tech begins pursuing their CTEM, it raises the standard in the shop and inspires others to do the same. Equally, when a superintendent earns their CGCS, it sets the tone for the entire operation. Quoting a previous GCSAA CEO, Steve Mona always said, "A rising tide floats all boats."

Over time, you don't just have a staff, you have a team of professionals who take pride in what they do and where they're going.

At the end of the day, these programs aren't just about achievement; they're about transformation.

They challenge you to think differently, to lead better, and to take ownership of your future. And in doing so, they shape not

only your career, but your confidence, your mindset, and your life outside of work.

Growth is a choice. It's not always easy, and it's rarely convenient. But it's always worth it.

So, whether you're considering your next step or encouraging someone else to take theirs, remember this: the journey matters just as much as the destination, and it starts with a single decision to move forward.

Today, the value of a GCSAA membership could not be higher. There are opportunities for professional growth across every aspect of our membership. Whether you're a student, a crew member, an EM, an assistant, or a superintendent, there's a program to help you elevate your career.

Doug Roberts
CEO

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Applying and Keeping Pesticides Where You Want Them

Kenneth Benoit, CGCS
Director, Signature Sanctuary Program, Audubon International
Boise, Idaho



Pesticides that move away from their intended target can contaminate water resources, injure nontarget plants and wildlife, and reduce the effectiveness of the application. Preventing this movement requires understanding the environmental, mechanical, and operational factors that influence how pesticides behave during and after they are sprayed. This bulletin outlines the primary pathways by which pesticides move off target, including sprayer drift, mechanical movement, and runoff, and provides guidance to help applicators minimize these risks.

Sprayer Drift During Application

Sprayer drift comes in two basic forms: airborne spray drift and vapor drift. Airborne spray drift can be influenced mainly by wind speed, nozzle selection, and sprayer pressure, while vapor drift is driven primarily by temperature, wind, relative humidity, chemical characteristics, and nozzle design.

Temperature significantly influences spray drift because higher temperatures increase droplet evaporation, which raises the likelihood of vapor drift. As droplets shrink, they become lighter and more prone to being carried off target by even minimal air movement. Most pesticides perform best and remain more stable when applied in moderate temperatures, typically between 65–80°F, when evaporation rates are lower and spray droplet size is maintained.

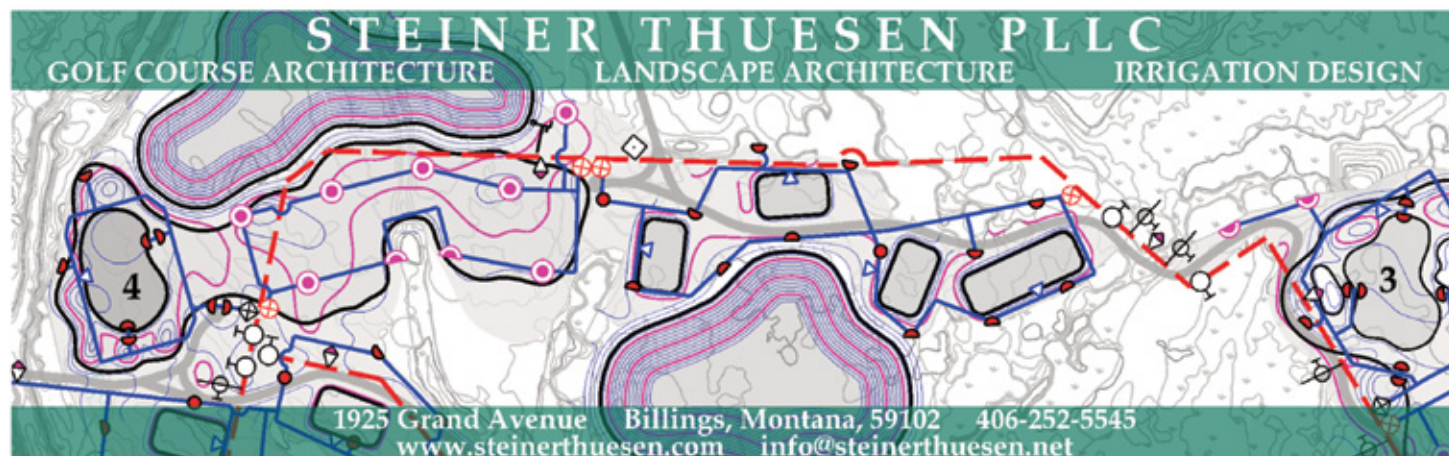
Relative humidity also plays a critical role in drift potential. Humidity levels at or above 50% help slow droplet evaporation, helping maintain droplet size and reducing the chance of volatilization. In contrast, low humidity combined with high temperatures accelerates evaporation, creating smaller droplets or vapor that can potentially travel long distances. Applicators should be especially cautious during hot, dry conditions, as this combination greatly increases both airborne and vapor drift. Wind speed also plays a major role in spray drift. Excessive wind can carry droplets away from the application area, but very low

wind speeds can create drift risks as well. When winds are too light (0–2 mph), conditions are often stable enough for spray droplets or vapors to rise and become trapped in a temperature inversion. During an inversion, cool air becomes trapped near the ground under a layer of warmer air, allowing fine droplets or volatilized pesticides to remain suspended and travel long distances before settling.

Understanding when inversions typically occur is critical to managing spray drift. Inversions most commonly form during the early morning hours, often the same time that golf courses prefer to spray before play begins. Applying pesticides during these calm, low humidity, early morning conditions increases the likelihood that drift will occur. Applicators must be properly trained to recognize early morning weather patterns and temporarily suspend spraying activities, often only 15–20 minutes, when conditions warrant.

Correct nozzle selection is one of the most important tools for managing drift, because a nozzle's droplet size spectrum determines how well the spray deposits on the target. Conventional flat fan nozzles used on turfgrass sprayers typically produce droplets ranging from 10 to 450 microns. Droplets smaller than 100 microns are especially prone to drift, while very large droplets may bounce off foliage. Cone style nozzles, used in some turf and landscape applications, generally produce finer droplets than flat fan designs, which can increase drift potential if weather conditions or pressure settings are not well controlled. Increasing the Volume Median Diameter (VMD) helps reduce drift risk, but the goal is to choose a nozzle that produces droplets large enough to stay on target yet small enough to ensure uniform coverage. Nozzle selection guides make selecting the appropriate droplet size range much easier.

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Pesticides continued from page 14

Mechanical Movement After Application

Mechanical movement refers to the ways pesticides can be displaced after they have already reached the target site. This type of off target movement is often caused by equipment issues or by physical activity on the treated surface.

Sprayer malfunction is a common cause of unintended pesticide movement. A boom sprayer with a faulty nozzle, leaky hose, or damaged seal can release product during transportation or operation, allowing pesticides to contaminate areas not meant to be treated. Regular inspection and maintenance of sprayers are essential to identifying and correcting leaks before application begins.

Foot traffic can also move pesticides off site when re-entry intervals are not long enough. If people or equipment enter a treated area before the pesticide has fully dried and adhered to the target surface, the chemical can be picked up and transferred to adjacent turf, walkways, or other sensitive areas. Because the time required for a pesticide to fully bind varies by product, applicators must understand the specific adherence characteristics of the material they are using.

Runoff After Application

Rainfall following a foliar pesticide application can cause significant off target movement. When rain occurs too soon after spraying, water can wash the pesticide off the leaf surface, reducing its effectiveness and allowing the product to move beyond the intended treatment area. This displaced pesticide may enter the soil, move downslope with surface water, or reach bodies of water where it can pose environmental risks.

In addition to reducing product performance, runoff can harm sensitive plants and contaminate nearby waterways. Pesticides carried by surface water can injure nontarget vegetation, especially when they accumulate in low-lying or poorly drained areas. In severe cases, runoff can transport chemicals into streams, ponds, or other water resources, causing unintended ecological impacts. To minimize runoff risk, applicators should carefully monitor weather forecasts and avoid spraying when rain is expected. The amount of time a pesticide needs to dry and bind to the leaf

varies by product, so applicators should rely on label instructions to ensure sufficient rain free intervals before and after application.

Conclusions

Effective management of pesticide movement relies on understanding how environmental conditions, equipment choices, and application practices influence where a product ultimately ends up. By recognizing the factors that contribute to drift, mechanical movement, and runoff, applicators can take proactive steps to ensure pesticides remain on their intended target. These practices not only protect water resources, nontarget plants, and wildlife, but also help maintain product performance and reduce the likelihood of costly re-treatments.

Key Takeaways for Minimizing Off Target Movement:

- Understand each chemical's volatility potential. Some products are more prone to vapor drift and require additional care.

- Follow all label directions. Labels provide critical guidance on weather restrictions, nozzle requirements, and re entry intervals.

- Monitor the weather before and during application. Wind speed, temperature, humidity, and the potential for temperature inversions all affect drift risk.

- Select the correct nozzle for the job. Droplet size directly influences how well the spray stays on target.

- Recognize that higher pressure increases drift potential. Adjust pressure settings to produce larger, more drift-resistant droplets when needed.

- Keep equipment in good working condition. Properly maintained sprayers help prevent leaks, malfunctions, and accidental contamination.

- Use drift retardants when appropriate. These products help maintain proper droplet size, reducing droplet shearing and the formation of fine particles that are prone to drift. Always read and follow all product labels before use.

When these principles are consistently applied, they form the foundation of responsible pesticide stewardship, supporting effective applications while protecting both the environment and the people who manage it.



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From Data Collection to Automated Irrigation: Our Experience with Toro Spatial Adjust at Hillcrest Country Club

Matt Gourlay, CGCS, MG
Hillcrest Country Club, Boise, Idaho

Like many golf course superintendents, I've spent years chasing consistency. We all know the challenge: one area is too dry, another is too wet, and by the time adjustments are made, weather conditions have already changed.

Two years ago, Hillcrest Country Club began using the turfRad system from TerraRad. The technology gave us something we had never had before: a complete picture of soil moisture variability across our fairways. Instead of relying solely on handheld moisture meters and visual observations, we could collect thousands of moisture readings during routine mowing operations.

The data was eye-opening.

We quickly identified chronic dry spots, areas receiving excess irrigation, and portions of the golf course where our assumptions about moisture conditions didn't match reality. turfRad helped us become more informed managers and improved our decision-making process. However, there was still a significant amount of work required to turn that data into action.

After reviewing moisture maps, we still had to manually determine irrigation adjustments and make changes within our irrigation software. While the information was valuable, the process between collecting data and implementing changes remained time-consuming.

This year, we took the next step by implementing Toro Spatial Adjust.

The biggest difference is that Spatial Adjust closes the loop between moisture data and irrigation control. Instead of simply showing us where moisture levels differ across the golf course, the software analyzes the turfRad data and generates irrigation adjustment recommendations directly to the Toro Lynx system. What previously required a tedious amount of work, modifying each of our 400+ fairway heads, was accomplished in a fraction of the time.

During the growing season, every hour matters. Spatial Adjust has reduced the amount of time spent evaluating moisture maps, calculating irrigation changes, and manually adjusting individual sprinkler runtimes. The software allows us to establish moisture targets and make course-wide adjustments with a level of precision that would have been difficult to achieve manually.

One of the most noticeable benefits has been improved consistency across fairways. Rather than managing irrigation based on averages, we are managing irrigation based on actual field

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conditions. Areas that historically received too much water can be reduced, while areas that consistently run dry receive the moisture they need.

The result is a more uniform playing surface and a more efficient use of water.

As water costs continue to rise and environmental stewardship becomes increasingly important, technologies that improve irrigation precision will play a larger role in golf course management. We are expected to provide exceptional playing conditions while being responsible with our resources, and data-driven irrigation management helps us accomplish both goals.

Looking back, turfRad provided the foundation by helping us understand what was happening beneath the surface. Spatial Adjust has built on that foundation by helping us act on the information more efficiently and effectively.

The technology does not replace the superintendent's judgment. Instead, it enhances our ability to make informed decisions and execute them quickly. We still determine our moisture targets, evaluate turf performance, and decide how aggressively we want to manage conditions. The difference is that we now have a tool that helps convert data into action.

As superintendents, we are always searching for ways to improve consistency, efficiency, and resource management. For Hillcrest Country Club, the combination of turfRad and Toro Spatial Adjust has become an important part of that effort.

The future of irrigation management is moving toward automation guided by real-time field data. After two years of collecting moisture information and now integrating that data directly into irrigation control, we're seeing firsthand how powerful that combination can be.

SHEDDING SOME LIGHT ON SKIN CANCER

Sean Sullivan, CGCS Briarwood Golf Club, Billings, Mont.

This article is worth a repeat! Article first appeared in the November 2016 issue of The Perfect Lie.

What I'm presenting are my observations and experiences after going to dermatologists for over 40 years. I'm not a doctor, but information contained in this article can be confirmed with info from medical sites on the internet.

I'll be discussing four types of skin lesions, common to golf course maintenance employees, related to longterm sun exposure and UV radiation. For the sake of this article, you can think of the four types of skin lesions using the three signal words for pesticides – caution, warning and danger. First is Actinic Keratosis (Caution), second and third is Basal Cell Carcinoma and Squamous Cell Carcinoma (Warning), and fourth is Melanoma (Danger). Those of us in the golf course maintenance industry are at risk of all four types of skin lesions, as two of the causes are long-term sun exposure and UV radiation. These two contributing factors could be written into our job descriptions: have fun in the sun all day long!

Two other factors involved are skin color and genetics, of which we don't have control. Being a fair-skinned man of Irish descent, I have had three of the four types of skin lesions: Actinic Keratosis (AK), Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC), and Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC). Thankfully, I have not had any Melanomas. I'm not bragging about it and not happy with the fact that I'm susceptible to them. Also, I have undergone three of the most com-mon treatments for skin lesions/cancer.

CAUTION

Actinic Keratosis (AK) is a pre-cancerous patch of thick, scaly, or crusty skin. These growths are more common on fair-skinned people and those frequently in the sun. They usually form when the skin is damaged by UV radiation from the sun or tanning beds. AKs are considered to be pre-cancerous, but left untreated, they may turn into Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC). With the possibility of AKs turning into SCC, a dermatologist will usually recommend treatment for them. AKs are often felt before being seen, as their texture is rough. So, take a moment and run your fingertips over the tips of your ears, your ear lobes, temples, creases of your nose, tip of your nose, gap between your eyes, around your lips, around your neck, that "v" on your chest, forearms, back of your hands, and that bald spot on your head illuminated by the hole in your ball cap. If you wear shorts to work, check your legs as well. If you feel any rough patches, run your fingernail over those spots to see if they are scaly or flaky. Chances are those patches are AK and because they are related to sun damage; most people who have AK have more than one.

WARNING

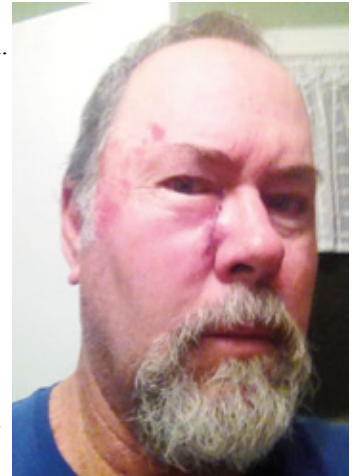
Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC) is the most common skin cancer and one of the most common cancers in the US. BCC has a very low metastatic risk. Metastatic cancer is a cancer that has spread from the part of the body where it started to other parts of

the body, either through the bloodstream or the lymph system.

In other words, BCC is not considered to be life threatening, but can cause disfigurement by invading the surrounding tissue. BCC will typically show up as a shiny, pearly skin nodule. Also, BCC can look like a red patch similar to eczema, and other forms can look like scar tissue. This is why it is important to have regular dermatological exams. Go to the mirror, look for small red patches or bumps around your eyes, eyelids, creases of your nose, and around your lips. About two thirds of BCC occur on sun- exposed areas of the body. Don't forget about that bald spot on your head that the ball cap doesn't cover! One third of BCC occurs on areas of the body that are not exposed to sunlight (typically), which suggests genetic disposition to BCC. If you see something that you don't think you had last year, be sure to point it out to a dermatologist. To determine if a suspected area is BCC, the dermatologist will do a biopsy. (A nearly painless procedure of slicing off a portion of the bump/node, which gets sent the lab for testing.) Generally, you get a nice colored bandaid and a nice bill to go with it. I had one of these under my eye next to my nose. Never thought much of the spot until the doctor started cutting! Take my word for it, it is not one of those things you want to get bigger with age!

Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC) is a cancer of the squamous cell. These cells are the main part of the epidermis. SCC is one of the major forms of skin cancer, however, because it occurs in the squamous cells, you can get SCC in other parts of the body, both inside and out. But for this article, I'll be describing the SCC related to sun exposure and UV radiation. As you might have guessed, frequent exposure to direct strong sunlight and long-term exposure without adequate topical protection (sun-screen 30 SPF or higher), increases your risk. Those with fair skin, light hair, blue/green/grey eyes are at the highest risk of getting SCC. SCC starts to show up in people in their 50s and is common in people in their 70s. This observation adds to the point of long-term exposure and corroborates how mine started showing up. Take a moment to run your fingers over your face, head, and ears, back of neck, chest, lips, nose, and that bald spot under your hat. If you see or feel a skin lesion that is bleeding (a little) for no apparent reason or oozing something, you will want to get that checked. My SCC happened to be on the back of my neck, above the collar line.

As with BCC, the dermatologist will cut out or do a punch biopsy, send it out to the lab for verification, put a bandaid on you, and give you a big bill. Maybe a lollipop if you ask! Plug



biopsy is where the doctor takes a core sample, to use the green-keeper vernacular.

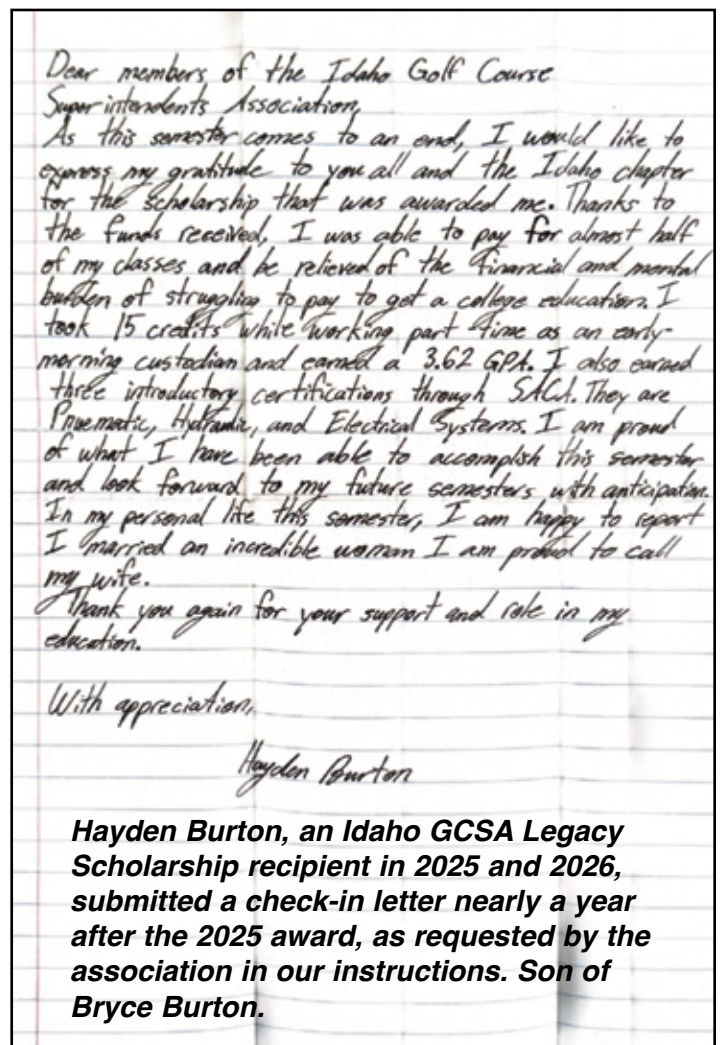
DANGER

Melanoma is a type of cancer that develops from the pigment-containing cells known as melanocytes. In women, they most commonly occur on the legs while in men they occur on the back. As with the other forms of skin lesions/cancers, long-term sun exposure and UV radiation is the primary cause of melanoma. Also, fair-skinned people are at a greater risk than others. Make note that 25% of melanomas develop from moles. An early sign of melanoma is change to the shape and color of existing moles. Another sign of melanoma is a new lump that just shows up. If you are between dermatologist visits and suspect a problem, you definitely want to have the spot checked quickly. Visual inspection is the most common diagnostic technique. If the doctor suspects a problem, he/she will biopsy the suspicious lump or mole immediately. If the results are positive, you won't be leaving the doctor's office or hospital. You'll be subjected to further tests, in order to check whether the melanoma/cancer has spread to other areas of your body. That's why melanoma is so dangerous, it has the ability to metastasize quickly. As with the other forms of skin cancer, the use of sunscreen, protective clothing, broad brim hats, and anything else that reduces UV radiation damage and sun exposure is recommended. It is also recommended to avoid the sun between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., which doesn't work out for the majority of golf course maintenance employees. So... sunscreen, protective clothing, and shade are the best options for the employees.

Over the last 40+ years, I have undergone three of the most common treatments for AKs, BCC, and SCC. The three types of treatment are cryogenic treatment (liquid nitrogen), topical chemotherapy (Fluorouracil), and Mohs surgery. The liquid nitrogen works well on the AKs, BCCs, and SCCs, as long as they are not too close to the eyes or eyelids. It produces a slight sting and kills the surface cells, good and bad. Using a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being very easy to see and one being difficult to see with a magnifying glass: lesions rated 1, 2, and 3 are hard to see and often overlooked, and left to get worse. The topical chemotherapy is a fancy way of saying ointment. In my experiences, the main ingredient was/is Fluorouracil and it goes by several brand names, Carac being one of them. The short of it is that the chemical affects DNA replication, so rapidly dividing cancerous cells undergo cell death. Application of the ointment twice a day for four-six weeks will kill all of the pre-cancerous and cancerous cells. Depending on the extent of the sun damage, treatment can leave you pretty raw for a short time. The last form of treatment is surgery. Using the Mohs procedure the BCCs, SCCs, and melanomas are cut out a little at a time. With each cut the slices are biopsied in the lab while you wait. If there are any cancerous cells in the sample, the doctor will go back and take another slice. This procedure is repeated until no cancer cells are found in the samples. In my case, stitches were required to close the wounds. The idea behind this procedure is to take a minimal amount of tissue, while still removing the cancer. In my case, it took two cuts to remove the squamous cell cancer on my neck and one cut to remove the basal cell cancer under my eye. It's a painless procedure and done as outpatient surgery. For me, the

pain part was the \$1500 per slice bill! It is my understanding that for melanomas, you will be spending time in the hospital while all the lab work is being done, just in case the cancer has spread into other parts of the body. Considering all the forms of treatment, I believe the best time for exams and any of the three forms of treatment is during the winter months. UV radiation indexes are lower in the winter months, so healing is better for the new cells. Also, during the winter months, we as green-keepers have fewer interaction with other people/golfers/members, just in case you care about how you look to other people.

Some of the problems associated with skin cancer start when you get sunburned as a kid and accumulate throughout your lifetime. Sometimes the problems are genetic or are related to your environment. Regardless, long-time sun exposure and UV radiation are the common factors in the damage to your skin, both of which are normal in the golf course maintenance industry. If you are the boss, it's your duty to protect your employees by supplying the proper PPE. Any local dermatologist will tell you what you should provide. Ultimately, it is up to the individual to protect themselves from an occupational hazard and for the employer to provide the necessary protection. Listen to me, your mother, and the dermatologist: Make sure you use sunscreen 30 SPF or higher (often), wear a broad brim hat, and protective clothing (usually long sleeve shirt and pants).



Reaching Platinum Level 2025



*Thank
you!*

