

WINTER PLAY



To avoid root shear and year-long damage to turf, frost levels must be 3-4" below the surface throughout the green complex before golfers are allowed onto the course.

PLAY ON THAWING GREENS

The Problem: It is common that for two to four weeks during spring the weather at many northern golf courses will generate increased play while the putting greens are thawing. However, while the top layer of thawing putting greens becomes soft and wet, the soil below remains frozen. Foot traffic under thawing conditions can cause root shearing at the interface between the thawed and frozen soil, causing damage to the root system. Additionally, minor-to-severe foot rutting can occur, causing short term and possibly long-term surface-smoothness issues.

Risk Assessment: The chance for immediate turf injury is high under this scenario. Playing on thawing greens will damage the root system. The resulting damage will be expressed as the turf begins to grow in the spring. On creeping bent grass putting greens, this type of damage can open the door for *Poa annua* invasion.

Information from: Winter Play - When to Go and When to Say No written by Chris Hartwiger and Adam Moeller, article published in the January 9, 2015 issue of the USGA magazine.

WHAT DOES THE GROUNDS CREW DO DURING THE WINTER?

The Grounds Crew stays busy all year long. This winter, the Crew is staying busy by sharpening mower blades for other courses across the state. They are also continually researching and conducting studies on grasses and new course management techniques to enhance the golfing experience. PROJECT EMERALD planning is also keeping the guys busy this season.

