

WATER-USE PERMITS REQUIRED FOR GEORGIA GOLF COURSES

Many golf superintendents in Georgia who have failed to apply for agricultural water-use permits are putting their courses in jeopardy. Under the provisions of a new state law, a permit is required for all groundwater and surface water withdrawals of three million gallons per month or more for agricultural uses.

According to Tony Tyson, a University of Georgia Extension Service engineer, the use of the word "agricultural" in the water-use law has led to confusion and problems among golf course superintendents. "People involved with golf courses normally don't think of themselves as agricultural," he said.

"If they're watering fairways, even nine-hole golf courses would probably use that much water," Tyson explained. "If they water just the greens and tees, they probably wouldn't use enough water to require a permit, although some 18-hole courses might need a permit even then."

Permit applications are automatically approved for any golf course or other recreational turf area with a withdrawal system that was in place before July 1, 1988, as long as the applications are sent in by July

1, 1991 to the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The county extension office has applications and instructions on the permit law.

The only exceptions to the new law are in the Chattahoochee River watershed, upstream from Peachtree Creek in north Georgia, and groundwater withdrawals in Chatam, Effingham, Bryan, and Glynn counties on the Georgia coast. Recreational turf facilities in those areas are considered industrial users and require industrial water use permits.

In other areas, if a golf course pumps an average of 100,000 gallons of water per day in any month from any single source, the approximate amount required to water 14 acres at two inches per week, it must have an agricultural use permit, according to Tyson.

Certain very large athletic complexes may also need a permit. "There will be a few athletic complexes that require permits," Tyson said. "But it's primarily golf courses that will need a permit under this law."

EPD officials pointed out that applica-

tions should be sent in before the 1991 deadline. "It's to their advantage to get permits now," explained David Ashley, manager of the EPD Water Resources Program. "During this first phase we'll issue a permit for the full capacity of the system. But there's a chance the permit will be reduced after that. In some areas you may not get a permit for the maximum capacity of the system."

"The way the law is written, we're bound to do a more stringent review of the applications after the initial sign-up period," Ashley added.

WATER CONSERVATION GROUP HOPES TO UNITE GOLF COURSE FACTIONS

Recent discussions between the Golf Course Water Conservation Group in San Diego, CA, and developers, governmental agencies, and environmental organizations are expected to result in increased cooperation between the groups. According to John Moore, vice president of the conserva-



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tion group, the future looks bright for new and existing golf courses in San Diego County.

"We have been able to bring builders and developers together with the Municipal Water District people to share information about how golf courses are operated and the methods used for water conservation," said Moore, who works in golf sales for Hydro-Scape Products. "As a result of our joint cooperation, we were able to exclude greens from the Stage Four rationing laws that are now on the books."

Water audits have been performed for more than 70 golf courses by Marguerite Engles, program director for Large Turf Water Audit Programs in San Diego. "Generally, we've found them to be over 80-percent efficient in their water usage," she said.

Moore added that golf courses achieve this high rating in part is because they are one of the few businesses that employ full-time irrigation managers. Although many golf courses still use potable water for irrigation, the majority use runoff, recycled, or well water.

The water conservation group also arranged discussions among developers and environmental groups, such as the Sierra Club. The talks revealed that the groups were essentially trying to accomplish the same thing for the land.

"Golf courses are very pure environments," Moore explained. "They provide a wildlife habitat, a sanctuary for migratory waterfowl, clean and cool air, abundant plant life, and water sources. Golf courses use very few pesticides, and what is used are fungicides and fertilizers. Tests have shown that these chemicals do not find their way into the groundwater."

"We all want the same things for the environment," said Moore. "We just weren't aware of it."

TURF AND GROUNDS EXPOSITION

The New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), in cooperation with Cornell University, will hold its 1990 Turf and Grounds Exposition on November 13-16 at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center, Rochester, NY.

The conference program begins on Tuesday, November 13 with three special seminars. The first seminar, a human resources management program, teams agri-

cultural economists and business management specialists from Cornell University. The second seminar, entitled "Right to Know and Hazardous Materials Communication," covers information that affects members of the green industry. The third seminar is a back-to-basics, turfgrass management review presented by Cornell and SUNY agricultural and technical college faculty.

In his opening address entitled, "The Tenth Player," grounds manager and American League umpire Ken Kaiser will discuss

how grounds managers can affect play in major league baseball. The golf course session will focus on the biocontrol and forecasting of diseases.

A trade show will be held in conjunction with the educational program. More than 300 exhibits will feature the latest in turfgrass and landscape maintenance equipment. The show opens Wednesday, November 14, at 10:30 a.m.

For additional information contact NYSTA, P.O. Box 612, Latham, NY 12110. Telephone (518) 783-1229.

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6. Total number of maintenance staff for field.
7. Does baseball field have lighting for night games?
8. Number of events on baseball diamond per year.
9. Types and number of events on diamond other than baseball?
10. How many months during the year is the field used?
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