



# The Mountain State Greenletter

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December 2017

WEST VIRGINIA GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WVGCSA Members,

On behalf of the Board Members, I'd like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We appreciate the support of all of our vendors and members. We couldn't be a successful organization without each one of you.

We hope you all enjoy the holidays with your family and friends! Here's to a great 2018 for each one of us!

Tony Coppa, President  
Superintendent- Oglebay Resort



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**WVGCSA 2018 Turf Conference**  
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# The Value Of Education

By Elliott Dowling, agronomist, Northeast Region

As winter draws near, many will say goodbye to another busy golf season and embrace the upcoming conference season. With so much time spent outdoors managing a golf course it is easy to forget that a significant amount of foundational knowledge is learned indoors at schools, conferences or seminars.

Educational sessions provide opportunities to connect with peers from around the region—and perhaps around the country—and share ideas, thoughts and lessons learned from the past year. The golf industry is dynamic and continually changing. New methods and materials are being developed to help superintendents perform tasks more effectively and with greater efficiency. Sustainability and environmentally friendly maintenance are two topics that are sure to be discussed at a local or national conference.

Staying on top of new technology is one of the best ways to ensure that the value of your maintenance dollars is maximized. Conferences are well worth the registration fees because the knowledge gained from industry leaders can help you save money and produce a better product.

Winter conferences also provide opportunities to earn state pesticide credits needed to maintain applicator licenses. Lastly, attending winter conferences is a good way to reconnect with industry friends that you might have lost contact with during a busy season. Conferences are packed with education, but they are also a good way to unwind and share a few stories.

Keep the following dates in mind as you plan your winter conference schedule:

December 4-5, 2017 – Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association Conference; Charlottesville, Virginia

December 5, 2017 – New Hampshire Golf Course Superintendents Association Annual Turf Education Conference; Concord, New Hampshire

December 5-7, 2017 – New Jersey Turfgrass Association Green Expo; Atlantic City, NJ

January 10, 2018 – Eastern Pennsylvania Turf Conference; East Earl, Pennsylvania

January 25, 2018 – Northeast Pennsylvania Turf Conference; Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

January 29 – February 1, 2018 – Mid-Atlantic Turfgrass Expo (MATE); Fredericksburg, Virginia

Northeast Region Agronomists:

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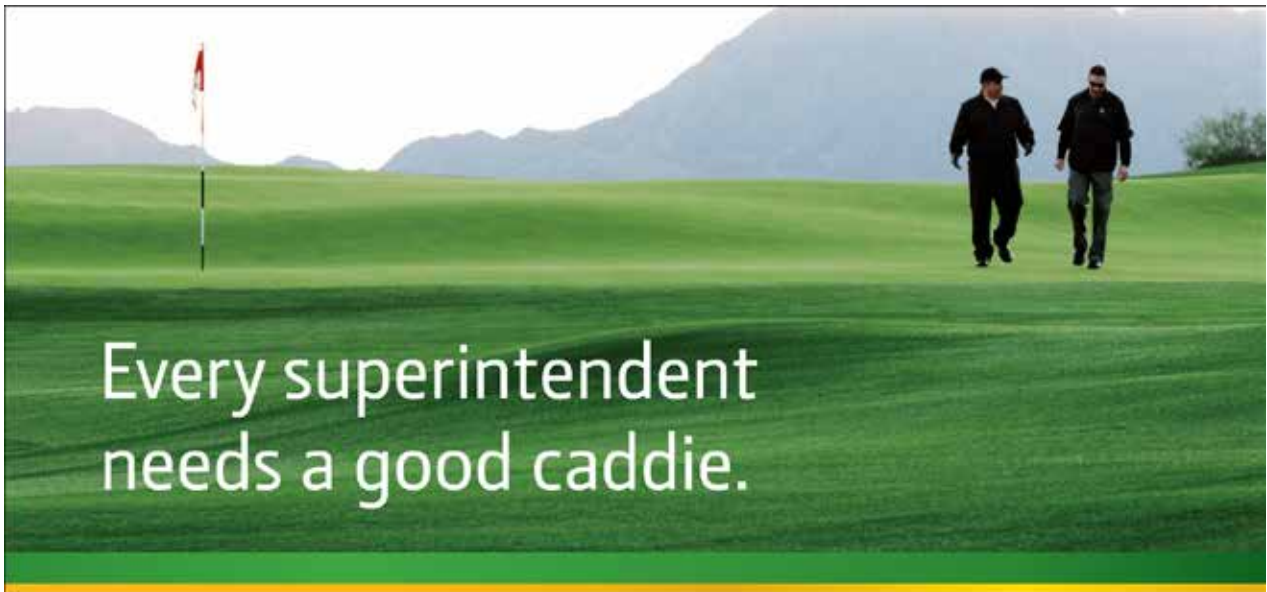
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*Taking part in seminars is a good way to stay up-to-date with the latest research and technological advancements.*





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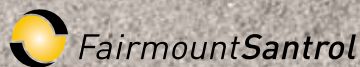
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# Turf Colorants In The Northeast — Who Would Have Thought?

By Paul Jacobs, agronomist, Northeast Region

When compared to cool-season grasses, bermudagrass is more tolerant of drought, heat and disease. In the transition zone, this typically results in better midsummer playing conditions. However, poor tolerance to cold temperatures and a lack of color retention during winter have prevented some facilities from using bermudagrasses in the Northeast Region.

Fortunately, bermudagrasses with increased cold tolerance have been developed that are better able to withstand conditions in the northern transition zone. One such bermudagrass, Latitude 36, was developed at Oklahoma State University with USGA funding and has become increasingly popular since first becoming available in early 2012. Latitude 36 and other bermudagrasses with improved cold tolerance are becoming popular alternatives to cool-season turfgrasses for golf course fairways and tees because of their improved playability and reliability during summer. Unfortunately, the dormant appearance of bermudagrass during winter is often considered undesirable.

Turf colorants are a cost-effective alternative to overseeding dormant bermudagrass. In addition to providing green color, turf colorants absorb heat which helps bermudagrass emerge from dormancy earlier in the spring. Due to the increased use of bermudagrasses in the transition zone and Northeast Region, the USGA hosted a turf colorant workshop in Charlottesville, Virginia. The workshop featured a discussion of turf colorant benefits and explored successful application techniques.

Successful turf colorant applications often require slight sprayer setup modifications. There is no one-size-fits-all setup, but some points to consider if you plan to use turf colorants are outlined below:

- Turf colorants are specifically formulated for outdoor application to turfgrass. Most of the colorants applied to turfgrass are either pigments or paints.
  - A turf paint is a combination of a pigment, a binder, a surfactant and other additives.
- Fastness rating is critical for long-term green color retention.
  - The color green is achieved by combining blue and yellow pigments. If these pigments fade at different rates turf color typically fades to a blue appearance.
- Sprayers must be properly calibrated and equipped with clean nozzles to achieve even droplet distribution.
- Boom and nozzle configurations often must be adjusted for successful use of turf colorants. Here are a couple of setup recommendations:
  - Add nozzles to convert spray booms from a standard, 20-inch nozzle spacing to a 10-inch spacing.
  - Many superintendents that apply turf colorants also modify their sprayers by reducing the nozzle height to 14 inches.
- Apply turf colorants to dense, clean and freshly mowed grass.
- Applications made during heavy frost are best because moisture helps distribute colorants across leaf surfaces.
- Make applications in a direction that is perpendicular to play to minimize the visibility of spray pattern imperfections.
- Practice turf colorant applications in an out-of-play area before wide-scale application to playing surfaces.

We would like to thank those who attended and assisted in coordinating the first USGA turf colorant workshop in the Northeast Region. If you would like to learn more about turf colorants and their use, contact your regional USGA Agronomist.



*Applying turf colorants to bermudagrass improves winter color and results in accelerated spring greenup.*



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