THE GREEN:

Golf Course Conservation

Golf course owners and superintendents know the difficulties of keeping up with the damage from flooding, stormwater runoff, and erosion.

Fortunately, there are conservation practices that can reduce this maintenance while improving the health of the streams that provide our drinking water, wildlife habitat, and the scenery that makes Pennsylvania a golfer's destination.

With over 800 golf courses in Pennsylvania, and many miles of stream flowing through them, there are numerous opportunities to protect and conserve water resources.

PACD
Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc.

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Best Management Practices

The simple techniques below are a great starting point to improve the impact of your golf course on local waterways, while reducing maintenance costs.

- **Establish No-Mow/Low-Mow Areas**

  Mowing less in rough or out-of-play areas and increasing mower height where possible reduces turf maintenance, prevents soil erosion, improves stormwater management, reduces irrigation, provides wildlife habitat, and improves local water quality.

- **Plant Native Species**

  Native plants are adapted to our environment, so they require less help to thrive. They also provide food and habitat for pollinators, birds, and other wildlife. Vegetation along streams and ponds is crucial for stabilizing banks. Planting in these areas helps to filter pollutants, shade and cool the water for aquatic life, reduce algae, deter geese, and enhance appearance.

- **Use Fertilizer and Chemicals Wisely**

  Soil testing should always be performed prior to applying fertilizer to ensure proper application rates and nutrient balance. Setbacks from waterways should always be observed. Safe storage of fertilizer, pesticides, and other chemicals, as well as appropriate timing for their use, maximizes effectiveness, prevents nutrient and chemical runoff to waterways, and reduces costs.

- **Conserve Water**

  Irrigating at opportune times, hand watering, using cisterns, increasing naturalized areas, and reducing mowing all help to conserve water while improving the health of turf areas.

Need Assistance?

Your local Conservation District can provide golf courses with technical assistance, potential grant funding, and other resources.

Visit http://pacd.org/district for more information.

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