



# The Green Sheet

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

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USGA NORTHEAST REGIONAL UPDATE

## Finish the Summer Strong

August 04, 2023

Brian Gietka, Agronomist, East Region



Adjusting maintenance practices to reduce turf stress during hot, humid weather will help get your course through the rest of summer.

It's that time of summer when the staff is tired, the turf is tired and the weather is relentless. On recent USGA Course Consulting Service visits, I've observed many courses letting the turf grow a bit by skipping or stretching plant growth regulator (PGR) applications, reducing mowing frequency, or applying a little extra water and/or fertilizer to give the turf a break. While this might be beneficial, careful management is still necessary. High temperatures coupled with high humidity and plenty of moisture creates an environment where the turf is photosynthesizing and taking up water yet unable to transpire, which swells the leaf blades. Pop-up rainstorms can trigger a flush of growth when you're using defensive maintenance strategies and voilà – soft, puffy, overgrown turf that is vulnerable to scalping and mechanical damage. Other times, multiple rain events do not allow for PGR applications or regular mowing, or thick thatch layers hold water and increase the risk of mechanical damage.

Managing damaged or weak turf can be like walking a tightrope, especially while trying to deliver the playing conditions golfers expect. Here are some tips to regain turf health, maintain good playability and finish the summer strong:

**Raise mowing heights:** Slightly increasing the height of cut or simply replacing grooved rollers with solid rollers can give just a little more leaf surface for plants to produce more energy.

**Lightly topdress:** A light dusting of sand topdressing provides enough cushion to allow mowers to ride on top of stems and crowns. The sand will also coat voids in the turf to reduce sunlight to algae and moss.

**Reduce PGR rates:** When you want to encourage growth, cut PGR rates by 50%-75%. This will allow the turf to come out of regulation but not with excessive rebound growth.

**Minimize nitrogen:** Growth is good but excessive growth will contribute to soft, puffy turf. Spoon-feed fertilizers more frequently at a reduced rate for more-precise growth management.

**Manage water carefully:** With turf having the shortest roots of the year, manage water by evaluating root depths, utilizing portable moisture meters and accounting for evapotranspiration rates.

**Apply plant protectants:** When turf is soft, driving sprayers on it might be concerning but the potential damage from pests will be worse. Consider applying plant protectants in the evening or whenever turf surfaces will be firmest.

**Vent surfaces:** Improving gas exchange and water infiltration improves turf health and the process can make the difference between continued deterioration or recovery. If the turf has weak roots and a thin canopy, a light spiking might be better than using needle tines, which could cause damage. Exercise caution, less could be more.

**Communicate:** Let your course's patrons know what the turf is experiencing and what to expect during their round. Taking it easy on the turf will have a short-term impact on playing conditions but long-term benefits for turf health.

If you would like more information on keeping turf healthy throughout summer or any other topics, please reach out to your [regional USGA agronomist](#) for support. In the meantime, take good care of your staff and remember, those chilly mornings are just around the corner!

### Northeast Region Agronomists

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[Information on the USGA's Course Consulting Service](#)

## Presidents Message

You can't say 2023 has been boring so far. This spring was the best one I have ever experienced in my career. Cool dry conditions made it seem easy. Ever since the Range End/DEP meeting it has been a different story. Sorry. I used to think we were home free after Mid August. Now that appears to be Mid October. Meteorologists are sounding alarms about a battle between El Nino and ocean temps in the Atlantic making the tropics explode. Not sure what to expect. 2023 has given us just about everything except snow. Something tells me that's coming!

Looking forward to our fall meetings in Central Penn. Schuylkill Country Club in September and Country Club of York in October. I believe Schuylkill is a Willie Park/Donald Ross collaboration at different times. They will host our CPGCSA championship for those that wish to participate. Country Club of York is a Donald Ross original with some recent updates. Superintendents are encouraged to bring other staff from their clubs to this four man team format.

Gotta go. The radar is blowing up again!

Pete Ramsey  
CPGCSA President

## 3 Employee 'Beige Flags' That Should Give You Pause

BY STEPHANIE VOZZA  
07-21-23

Setting timers instead of alarms, preferring Pepsi over Coke, and being afraid of astronauts. These are examples of "beige flags," a TikTok trend where people share their partner's odd quirks. They're not considered assets, but they aren't dealbreakers, either. They just make you pause.

Max Wessel, chief learning officer at the enterprise application software provider SAP, says employees can display beige flags, too, and they often indicate that they've become disengaged.

"The relationship between an employee and an employer is like any relationship is that is managed on a spectrum and evolves over time," he says. "There is a point in time in a relationship where somebody begins to disengage. The signs are not outright negative, but they're things you have to pay pretty close attention to understand the beginning of the end."

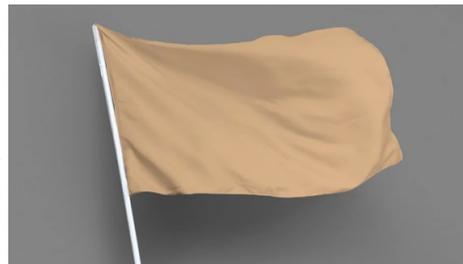
To identify the employees who might eventually leave, managers should look for these three signs:

### 1. THEY DO THE MINIMUM

Job descriptions usually include the basic expectations an employer has of an employee. However, an employee who is engaged in their job often goes above and beyond those line items. When someone who was always a go-getter starts to pull back, it could be a beige flag, says Wessel, who suggests considering an employee's intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, which can be revealing.

"Extrinsic motivators are the things that get you past a minimum threshold of satisfaction," he says. "You're employed, paid enough, and have the right title. It's what makes you satisfied enough to do the job. When people start to do the bare minimum, it's very clear that they're just passing those extrinsic motivators."

On the other hand, intrinsic motivators get you fired up in the morning. "People who are at the highest potential have the most visible intrinsic motivators," says Wessel. "Where we lose focus is the 80% of



They're not necessarily negatives or positives, but in a work context, they could signal your reports are disengaging.

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people in the middle who could be intrinsically motivated but are frustrated with either a lack of development or recognition. It is very easy to be demotivated if you think you've been passed off or if you think you're not being recognized for the work that you do."

**2. THEY WITHDRAW FROM OTHERS**

Another beige flag is when an employee disengages on a community level. "When work moved to remote settings, it became transactional," says Wessel. "During the pandemic, it became very common to work for a period of time, turn off your camera, and engage somewhere else."

Susan Kuczmariski, author of *Lifting People Up: The Power of Recognition*, calls this "egg shelling." "Employees manifest egg shelling in a variety of ways," she says. "They may increase sick days, come in late or leave early for in-person non-remote days, turn coworkers down for lunch or a drink after work, or keep quiet in meetings."

Sometimes, the actions are subtle, says Randall Peterson, a professor of organizational behavior at the London Business School.

"They start getting extraordinarily busy, so busy that they regularly miss meetings, cancel at the last minute as something has come up, or they often already have plans," he says. "[They are] always pleasant, but never have the time to chat to colleagues, with the old 'smile and wave' as a typical interaction."

**3. THEY SEEM DIFFERENT**

A third beige flag is a personality change. "For example, an assertive or energetic coworker becoming more reserved and quiet," says Amy Casciotti, vice president of HR for TechSmith, a provider of screen capture software and productivity solutions. "This is usually in conjunction with a lack of interest in career advancement opportunities with your company."

When someone's personality changes, it's important to look deeper, as it may be due to something other than work. Diane Rosen, a principal at Compass Consultants, employee performance, engagement, and productivity consultants, suggests that managers ask themselves a few questions.

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“When did it start?” she asks. “Was there any incident that may have triggered the behavior like feedback on a project, being assigned to a new team, or a conflict with a colleague? Is there anything going on with this person inside or outside of work of which I am aware?”

If you need more clarification, Rosen suggests making discreet inquiries with another manager or team members to get a fuller picture of what may be impacting the changes.

**WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SPOT A BEIGE FLAG**

Red flags, such as a sudden increase in paid time off, are usually obvious and often too late. These beige flags—things that make a leader pause—are essential to catch.

“The hard thing is how to train people to have the conversation around something quite ambiguous, such as doing the bare minimum,” says Wessel. “The employee might say, ‘I haven’t done anything wrong. Why am I having a conversation about this?’”

Instead, Wessel says it’s key for managers to hold routine check-ins. “If it comes out of the blue—if after nine months something is put on the agenda—then the employee knows something is wrong,” says Wessel. “You stigmatize it. When it’s an ongoing conversation, it’s that much easier.”

It’s important to avoid a display of negative emotions, like getting angry or upset, says Peterson. “If people sense they have been found out by the boss they go into defensive mode, making it worse rather than better,” he says. “Be careful to not alienate further. To address it you need to have a genuine desire to help the person feel more like they belong there. Ask questions of them about their work and goals.”

Focusing on the positive rather than the negative is more likely to get the employee talking, adds Rosen. “If the employee is not responsive, then at some point you have to ask them about their intentions as to this job,” she says. “Do they see a future with the organization? Do they have any performance goals? Where do they want to be in ‘X’ years?”

The goal is to let the employee know how much you appreciate them and their contributions. “Ensure you are focused on employee engagement and obtaining staff feedback as part of your culture and not as a reactive one-and-done element of retaining employees,” says Casciotti. “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Intervening with an employee you recognize as becoming disengaged is a huge first step towards re-engagement.”

[3 employee 'beige flags' that might signal a lack of engagement \(fastcompany.com\)](#)

**2023 CPGCSA Meeting Schedule**

- September 14** Schuylkill Country Club
- October 18** Country Club of York

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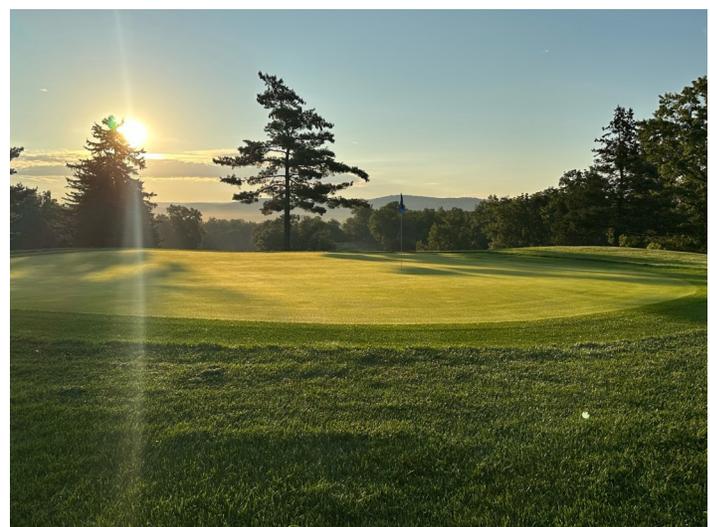
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Thanks to Corey Barnes for this beautiful picture at Chambersburg Country Club. This photo will join other member course photos on the new CPGCSA website.

Send your photo submissions to [cpgcsa@hotmail.com](mailto:cpgcsa@hotmail.com)



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The Wee One Foundation was founded in 2004 when friends of Wayne Otto, CGCS banded together to financially assist him in his battle with cancer. Wayne was a pioneer in the turf industry always searching for new and better ways to produce a finer playing surface. As Wayne learned more about his disease, he applied those same pioneering principles to overcome his illness.

Those that knew Wayne, knew a man small in stature and a man that placed more effort and enthusiasm into his friendships and care for his fellow man. As passionate as Wayne was about turf, his love for life could not measure. Wayne died in the fall of 2004 but his passion for life and his willingness to help still live on because of the work of the Wee One Foundation.

Through the perseverance and hard work of several friends of Wayne, the group developed its mission of helping those in need. Founded on the principle of assisting golf course management professionals (or their dependents) who incur overwhelming expenses due to medical hardship without comprehensive insurance or adequate financial resources, the Foundation has evolved into a cause that goes way beyond its initial reason for existence.

The Wee One Foundation was aptly named to honor Wayne. Nicknames are rarely chosen by their owner as in this case. On a golfing trip to Scotland with some friends, one of the group's caddies decided to place his wager on the "wee one". A small action (as legend has it) that turned out to be a sound decision by the caddie that day and a small gesture that has helped many other individuals through economic hardships due to overwhelming medical expenses. Simply, that is what the Wee One Foundation accomplishes today.

Since its inception in 2004 the Wee One Foundation has gifted over \$1,800,000 to those in need. The Foundation raises money through its membership, golf outings and sponsorships.

The members of the Wee One Foundation Benevolence Committee reviews all applicants and makes recommendations to the Wee One Foundation Board of Directors for financial support.

### **Eligibility**

Applicants must be a golf course superintendent, assistant golf course superintendent or an individual employed by a company or organization that services the golf course management industry or a dependent of named applicant and who has suffered a catastrophic medical hardship.

### **Criteria for Selection**

All applicants for assistance will be required to provide a written explanation of the medical hardship and indicate how the funds will be spent. The Wee One Foundation reserves the right to verify any information received.

### **Assistance**

The amount of assistance provided to each approved applicant differs by each situation. All requests shall be processed by the Benevolence Committee and legitimate claims shall be presented to the Wee One Foundation Board of Directors. Legitimate claims are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. The Wee One Foundation from time to time may conduct a fundraiser from which all funds may be directed towards one individual.

### **One for the Wee One**

**One Cause:** Help golf course management professionals and their dependents that are having trouble paying medical bills due to the lack of comprehensive insurance or adequate financial resources.

**One Goal:** Raise \$10 million in 10 years to help support families in need forever. The One Percent Endowment Fund will provide a permanent source of supplemental funding for Wee One mission and new endeavors to benefit individuals and families in the golf course industry. 100% of funds generated through this campaign will be placed in a permanent endowment fund.

**One Percent:** Pledge one percent of your salary and donate this amount over the next ten years.

#### Example Contribution

My current salary is \$65,000.

1% of that is \$650.

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$\$650 \div 10 = \$65$  per year.



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## Thank a Golf Course Superintendent Day to be Celebrated on September 12

Show your support on social media using  
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August 22, 2023 | GCM Staff

The previously announced global celebration of golf course superintendents will now kick-off Sept. 12 in order to align with more of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA)'s international partners. As Thank a Golf Course Superintendent Day, which began in 2017 to recognize those who are essential to golf's success, has grown, so has the number of organizations involved, and the Sept. 12 celebration date will allow more participation in the event.

Among groups taking part in the global event are the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA), the Australia Sports Turf Managers Association (ASTMA), the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA) and The Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations (FEGGA).

The celebration will include commercials that will appear on the Golf Channel and other media outlets and social media messages sharing the many ways that superintendents benefit the game and their communities. Golfers and others are encouraged to join in the conversation on social media using the hashtags "#ThankASuper" or "#ThankAGreenkeeper" depending on their country's nomenclature. In addition, golf courses and other groups are encouraged to provide special recognition for their superintendent and course maintenance staff on Sept. 12.



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“The growth of Thank a Superintendent Day has been phenomenal with more than 10 million people around the world reached on social media last year,” GCSAA’s CEO Rhett Evans said. “Through this global effort and work with our allies, this year we have the potential to spread the word even further about the superintendent’s essential role in the game of golf and to give them a well-deserved thank you.”

To learn more about GCSAA and the essential role superintendents play in the enjoyment and sustainability of the game, visit [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org).

[Thank a Golf Course Superintendent Day to be celebrated Sept. 12 - GCMOnline.com](#)

## Membership News

If you know of anyone who is interested in membership into the association, please have them contact Wanda at 717-279-0368 or [cpgcsa@hotmail.com](mailto:cpgcsa@hotmail.com).

Membership information is also available on the Central Penn website at:

[www.cpgcsa.org](http://www.cpgcsa.org)

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## No one in the U.S. eats dinner as early as Pennsylvanians, new report says

by [Emily Bloch](#)

Updated on Aug 7, 2023, 8:58 a.m. ET

Pennsylvania puts the “early bird” in early-bird dinners, data show.

A [new analysis](#) on when Americans eat dinner shows that of all 50 states, people in Pennsylvania eat the earliest. According to Nathan Yau, creator of the [popular](#) data visualization site Flowing Data, the average Pennsylvania household starts eating dinner at 5:37 p.m.

Yau analyzed data from 2018 through 2022 [American Time Use Surveys](#) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics to analyze when households across the country were eating. He did not include 2020 data, which was incomplete because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He found that Pennsylvania eats earliest, with Maine (5:40 p.m.) coming in second place. Meanwhile, D.C. starts eating dinner the latest at 7:10 p.m. In New Jersey, dinner starts at 6:17 p.m., according to Yau.

It’s hard to say exactly what drives the time discrepancies by state. Yau suspects it could be “an age thing” or have something to do with Pennsylvania’s later sunset times compared to other states, but he couldn’t find anything conclusive when he dug deeper.

According to World Population Review data, Pennsylvania has the eighth-highest age of residents; the average age of Pennsylvanians is 40.9 years old. But states including Maine, Vermont, Florida, and Delaware all have higher median ages and later average dinnertimes.

“I was surprised that Pennsylvania’s peak dinnertime was the earliest,” Yau told The Inquirer. “Although the range of dinnertime for Pennsylvania is relatively wide compared to other states.” His best guess is that it might have something to do with the state’s vast range of work and commuting schedules.

Other factors that could play a role in early dining times include family makeup and cultural diversity. For instance, a family with young kids may eat earlier than a childless couple.

“There have been some broad guesses about time zones, cities, and north to south,” Yau said. “But if you look at the times by geography, there isn’t a clear pattern. I also compared peak dinnertime for metro vs. nonmetro areas, but there didn’t seem to be much difference. So my best guess is still related to what people do before dinnertime, most likely commute-related.”

Yau suspects that in D.C.’s case, the late dinners are driven by the area’s much smaller geography compared to other states and a lack of variation in people’s work and commute schedules, leading to a narrower range than other states surveyed. His analysis also revealed that most households eat dinner between 5:07 p.m. and 8:15 p.m., with peak dinnertime dropping at 6:19 p.m.

It’s unclear what portion of diners in Yau’s analysis were dining at home vs. going out to eat. But available data from restaurants appear to support his dinnertime analysis, too.

OpenTable, the online restaurant reservation service, publishes some of its year-over-year data in a report called [State of the Restaurants](#). In its report of dining times by day, Pennsylvania shows an influx of diners between 5 and 6 p.m. on Saturdays. But in D.C. — which ranked the latest for dinnertimes in Yau’s analysis — the highest concentration of diners on a Saturday is at 7 p.m.

Marc Vetri of [Vetri Cucina](#) and [Fiorella](#) said that when his restaurants started dinner services without offering reservations, people would begin lining up as early as 3 p.m. Today, Fiorella takes reservations beginning at 4 p.m.

“It’s a much easier time to get in,” Vetri said. “People became used to getting to us early in order to get a seat. ... I guess people will do almost anything for good pasta.”



A new analysis of when Americans eat dinner shows that people in Pennsylvania eat the earliest, with an average dinner time of 5:37 p.m. Cynthia Greer / Staff

In other areas of Pennsylvania, some chain restaurants offer promotions for early diners, like family or kids' night.

And, while [happy hour snacks](#) are the predominant special in downtown Philly eateries, those in outlying areas continue to offer early bird specials. Benny the Bum's bar and restaurant in Northeast Philly begins its early bird at 4 p.m. while Ritz Diner, also in the Northeast, starts its specials as early as 2 p.m.

According to [the Wall Street Journal](#), more people of all ages are eating earlier dinners — and seeing movies and shows earlier than ever before. In some cases, the Journal says, the shift has prompted restaurants to change hours or close earlier.

Yelp data acquired by the Journal says restaurants currently seat 10% of diners between 2 and 5 p.m. — that's double the rate restaurants seated people in the same time window since 2019. Uber trips to restaurants between 4 and 5 p.m. have also jumped 10% since 2019, the newspaper reported. Rides to restaurants past 8 p.m. are down 9%.

During the pandemic, when labor shortages forced restaurants to truncate hours, the Kelly family of Kelly's Seafood, a fixture in the Northeast since 1958, noticed a shift to earlier dinnertimes.

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“We’re busy doing our early birds [from 4-6 p.m.], but when 7 o’clock comes, I’m like, ‘What’s going on?’” said Brian Kelly, who runs the restaurant with his twin brother, Brett.

They estimated that the number of dining room patrons after 7 p.m. is perhaps half of what they served before the pandemic. “All of a sudden at 8:30, we’re getting our last diner where we used to be 9:30,” Brett Kelly said. The bar often stays open till midnight.

As for why, Brian’s guess is it has something to do with habit. “I think with COVID, when everyone was staying home, people ate earlier and got used to it,” he said. “Now, 4:30 is dinner-time instead of 5:30. It’s weird.”

[No one in the U.S. eats dinner as early as Pennsylvanians, new report says \(inquirer.com\)](#)

Staff reporter Mike Klein contributed to this article.  
The Philadelphia Inquirer



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