

The Reporter

From the Rocky Mountain Chapter of GCSAA
Growing Green Since 1936



Breckenridge Golf Club

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President's Message

I hope this President's Message finds you fully staffed, your course in the shape you hope it to be in, and are ready for a great summer season. Here at *Saddle Rock*, I'm sure I am like the majority when I say things on the course are cranking, and with that, my high schoolers and college kids all have to be trained... or retrained again on what to do daily. A battle I dread every year but when they get it... It's on!

Golf outings for the association kicked off with the first **West Slope** event at *Aspen Glen* (it was cold with rain and snow, but it still went on) and the **Memorial** at *Legacy Ridge*. Next up is our new "**Futures Event**" with its new format, the popular **Affiliate Cup** in August, and 2 more events to round out the fall. And if you haven't yet, are all available to sign up online now! Sandwiched in between golf will be some more educational opportunities, **Pesticide CEC** chance, and another **West Slope** event... or 2. All in all, 14 events on the calendar this year to enjoy, learn, and network at. And to put the icing on the cake, PGA golf is back in Colorado for the **BMW Championship** at *Castle Pines Golf Club* and the **Korn Ferry** at *TPC Colorado*... with an education opportunity attached to it to boot!

The RMGCSA Board lost one of its members sadly to cancer. **Bill Tanner** was at the *Rio Grande Club* in South Fork and had served on the board for 2 years. His presence will be missed, a great guy and great attitude to be around for sure. After much thought, it was decided to not fill his spot until a past board member reached out and said he was ready to become active again. So, with that, please help welcome Mitch Savage back to the board to help fill Bill's place for the remainder of the year. Thank you, Mitch!

Legislation at the State Capital has wrapped up for the year with Joe Kunze, his outstanding Gov/Leg committee, and the help of Mitch Savage; all led by our Lobbyist for the Colorado Golf Coalition, Jennifer Cassell. They fought off a few advances from the House and Senate on pesticide regulation to start the session off early. We were then given an offer for golf to be exempt and to continue to be monitored by the **Colorado Dept of Ag**. Well, we were set to accept until the bill timed out in the house. So, we took that as a win! So, another year at the Capital and another win for the **Golf Coalition**, but this battle with pesticide control will not be going away any time soon and we are sure it will reshuffle itself early next session. Stay tuned.

With that, I will leave you be. Enjoy this issue as I am sure Aaron Fankhauser, Chad Gilkison and their committee have nailed it. Enjoy your staff, enjoy your course and make sure to take a day and enjoy yourself, your spouse, family or whatever else it is that brings you joy and just remember, the course will be there tomorrow.

Let's Go!

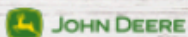
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Director's Corner

Overview: *Hiring and Retaining a Full Staff*

It's that time of season again when we are all in full swing with our operations.

The Problem: Do any of you have a full staff yet? I don't either, but like many of you, I wish I did. We are all looking forward to bolstering our team with students. High school students, college students, heck, I'd even take grade schoolers if they would just get here earlier in the season. The same is true come mid-August. All our hours training these employees and they were only with us for three months before they took all that time and effort and left us for greener pastures (pun intended!).

Two thoughts persist. Where do I find people who can be here in the shoulder season? How do I entice them to sign on and then stay? This is the crux of the problem with true seasonal work here in the Colorado region. Places like Florida that work all year can hire employees and not have to lay them off for months at a time. Places like Minnesota don't have as long of a season and have shorter shoulder seasons. We are stuck in the middle.

The Solution: It's always been a challenge to find quality employees. Moreso finding ones that can work all season long. My main answer to that challenge is finding retired individuals. Many retired people are older and from a generation that wants to show their worth by performing high-quality and hard work. They are usually able to work quite a few hours per week and can be at your club for the entire season. Another group of people who are used to hard work and want to perform are ex-military members. Where do we find these two groups? One visit to a VFW, American Legion, or similar facility gets two birds with one stone. Alternatively, recreation centers or community centers have lots of retired people looking for something to do. Post job openings on the bulletin boards of these facilities and you just may find the diamond in the rough for your team. There's always *Indeed.com*, *Craigslist*, *Turfnet*, the local paper, posting in your clubhouse, and a host of other options for finding people that may be able to work all year for you.

Word of mouth is also a great way to find those team members you may not have otherwise found. Do you already have a trusted member of your team whom you've asked to reach out to their friends? Where there's one, there may be others. Ask your staff for recommendations. Do they have a friend that's sitting at home doing next to nothing and wants to mow fairways three days a week? A neighbor that loves to manicure their lawn and would fit in with your crew? Have that conversation in your next morning meeting and ask for help finding your next mowing champion!

These employees can be your core returners every year. The more of them you can find and retain, the more you can get done in the critical start and end of the season. Investing training time, finding the right jobs for them on the course, and encouraging and praising them all go a long way toward creating the team atmosphere they want to return to. Spend time noticing and acknowledging the good work they do. Be gentle in your reprimands – we all make mistakes and depending on how you handle those may be the difference in retaining good employees year after year. **Good luck searching for and hiring the best team yet!**



Steve Schommer

Director, Indian Peaks Golf Course

West Slope Supers Defy Mother Nature Once Again!

Overview: 2024 Spring West Slope Golf and Education Series Event Recap



Travis Delgman hitting to #18 green

While most of the spring **West Slope Superintendents' meetings** experience amazing conditions early in the year, a few of them stand out because of the not-so-great weather. I can remember having a couple of inches of snow on the ground at *The Bridges* one year (we still played) and some pretty crazy, cold and wet weather at *Red Sky* where only one group finished to the best of my recollection. So, it came as no surprise that we were greeted with less than ideal conditions when we gathered at the **Aspen Glen Club** on May 7th.

The day began cold and wet with intermittent snow and rain showers when we arrived. At this point no one really paid much attention as we ate breakfast in the cozy confines of the clubhouse. The educational presentation followed afterward with host superintendent Jake Falke showing pictures of the bunker renovation project they undertook recently while explaining the challenges they faced along with the various reasons for making these changes.

After Jake was finished, Casey Jones of **Z-Line Bunker Systems** and **Fusion Golf** talked about his company's work on this project. He expanded the presentation to show how different types of bunker liners can be used for different situations and varying conditions such as annual precipitation rates, slopes, etc.

After the education session, the weather seemed to have broken, and the sun was starting to peek out, so everyone hit the range for a little warm-up before heading out to play. Unfortunately, that wasn't the only warming up we all needed. A short time before the shotgun start, all HECK broke loose and we were scrambling to put on more layers and rain gear as the wintry mix began to descend on the participants once again. Except for an occasional break in the clouds, conditions did not get any better. Many groups called it a day early, while a few of them continued on and finished all 18 holes of the 2-man scramble. Despite the weather, everyone had a great time.

I would like to say thank you to the **Aspen Glen Club** for hosting our group again. The course was in great shape and played well in spite of the conditions. Jake and his crew do an amazing job always. The golf shop staff was on top of things and went above and beyond getting us going and switching carts as people came in one minute and went back out the next. The F&B staff did a great job also. First class operation all the way.

Thanks also to our sponsors: **Colorado Golf & Turf**, **Nutrien**, **JRM Turf**, and **Helena Products**. Can't have these meetings without you!

West Slope Supers Defy Mother Nature Once Again!



Kass Severson, Travis Abitz, Drew Hunter and John Feeney on Hole #16

A final thanks to Kass, Drew, Robert and Jeff for all the work they do to organize these events. I did it for many years and it does take some time and effort to put it all together.

Now, the results:

1st Place – Jake Jacobs and Zach Haflin (-4)

2nd Place – Danny Machuga and Mitch Robinson (-2)

Closest to the pin awards: Justin Kochevar, Kyle Fick, Phil Ragsdale, and John Feeney

Andy Nikkari

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Legacy Scholarship Award Recipients

Overview: Getting to know the Recipients of the 2024 Legacy Scholarship Award



Ben Krick

My name is Ben Krick and I want to begin by thanking the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association for giving me the privilege of being the Legacy Scholarship Award recipient.

I am the second son of Sarah and Mark Krick. My Dad is the superintendent of *Fox Hollow and Homestead* for the City of Lakewood and has been an RMGCSA member since 1995, also serving as president in 2008.

I graduated from Wheat Ridge High School this year with a 4.14 GPA and I was part of the student senate body, the link leadership program, outdoor lab, and lettered in 7 different varsity sports for the Farmers. I especially enjoyed Swimming and competed in the State Finals both years. I had a great time in high school, but now I am onto new pastures at Colorado State University.



Right now I am undeclared, but I am interested in International Business, Environmental Science, Agriculture, and possibly Education. CSU will have many opportunities for me to explore my options and develop a sense of what I am good at.

The scholarship funds I have received will go towards purchasing a laptop and books for school next year. I am looking forward to college and getting involved with student groups, and clubs, and supporting the Rams. Once again, my sincere thanks to the scholarship committee and the board of directors for this honor and privilege. As stated in the award letter, I will work hard and stay determined.

Legacy Scholarship Award Recipients



Max Nikkari

My name is Max Nikkari, and I am a fourth-year Turfgrass Management and Agricultural Education student at Colorado State University.

I grew up in the golf industry with a father who was a golf course superintendent, and he exposed me to the maintenance portion of golf very early on. I started working on courses in high school and realized I wanted to pursue turfgrass management as a career. I now have six seasons of maintenance experience and most recently completed my internship at *Exmoor Country Club*, Highland Park, Illinois.

At CSU I participate on our newly restarted Turf Bowl team as well as doing the turfgrass identification event at the National Collegiate Landscape Competition. My passion for turfgrass and education led me to add an education degree during my time at CSU. My current goals are to complete a master's and doctorate in Turfgrass Science and pursue teaching and research at the university level.



Receiving the scholarship will help me pursue a large credit load for both my majors, purchase all requisite supplies and books, and cover all other educational fees. I am extremely fortunate and humbled to receive this scholarship for this upcoming academic year, and I extend my deepest gratitude to the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association.

The RMGCSA Board... Should I Get Involved?

Overview: *Aaron Fankhauser's Experience on the RMGCSA Board and Why Get Involved*

Serving the association as a board member for the past few years has really opened my eyes to all the behind-the-scenes activities that board members find themselves in each year. It was always easy to see the board members at our events and tell them thank you for serving, but I had no idea the extent and effort that goes into those positions.

Starting at *Rolling Hills* almost 20 years ago, I have had the privilege to work for and with some great individuals in our chapter and industry. Bob Kinder and his Assistant, Matt Zahn, took me under their wings and showed me the good, the bad, and the ugly that comes with turfgrass management in Colorado. Bob was kind/demented enough to tell me about his board service for the RMGCSA and how rewarding it was for him and the contacts that came from it. He was right, (don't tell him I said that), it has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career.

WHAT: Serving on the board comes with expectations of being at events, attending board meetings every couple of months, attending planning sessions, and attending our [Annual Conference](#). We have committees that focus on golf outings, educational opportunities, membership, reporter/website, social media, government/legislative, conference, our affiliates, scholarships, Rounds 4 Research, and our assistants & equipment managers. Working to serve over 550 members across multiple states takes effort from our committee chairs and their committee members. All these committees come with a great paycheck (\$0), but the benefit package is what is great. You may be thinking of health care, PTO, or other common benefits, but I am referring to the networking and friendships that come from working with others who are dedicated to serving the membership as well.


WHY: The friendships that I have gained from serving on the board will serve me long after my board service ends. The hours our committees spend to try and find a great course to host our association or clever educational ideas to garner member attention (always working on this – any ideas?), to line up speakers for the Annual Conference are often unnoticed by the membership at large but are great opportunities for the board to grow together. This year, so far, has been spent in meetings via Zoom or in person discussing major legislative issues that will impact every golf course in the state. Members of the board and of the Government/Legislative committee have spent time testifying at the capitol on behalf of our membership! (Thank you to all who have spent their time advocating for our association.)


HOW: Should you get involved...absolutely you should! If you have questions about the time commitment or if you are unsure of what all the board deals with, call or email me! If you are frustrated with the board, join to help us! If you are happy with the board, join to help us! It is more rewarding than you can imagine, and I have a team of people to call on when something isn't quite right or when it's time to grab a beer and vent/celebrate something! We need great people to keep the RMGCSA moving forward!



Aaron Fankhauser


Vice President, *The Club at Rolling Hills*








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Affiliate Angle

Overview: An Interview with Thad Layton of Thad Layton Design



Thad Layton in Silverthorne

What is your current affiliate company and your position? How long have you been in this position?

Thad Layton Design - Golf Course Architect. While I've been a golf course architect for over 25 years, I recently launched my own firm in late 2023.

Where are you based out of and what territory do you cover?

I'm based in Denver. Although I specialize in servicing the distinctive courses of the Rocky Mountain Region, I have clients across the US and around the world.

What are the responsibilities of your company to our industry, and how is your company involved with RMGCSA?

We are a full-service golf course architecture firm. From touching up fairway lines to long-range master planning and golf course shaping, our primary objective is to help courses in the RMGCSA region realize their full potential.

What might we be surprised to know about your company?

I am one of the few, true design/build architects in the ASGCA (*American Society of Golf Course Architects*). In other words, I prepare detailed construction documents and bring those ideas to life on a dozer or excavator.

Did you go to college? If so, where and what major did you graduate with?

I graduated from Mississippi State University with a degree in Landscape Architecture with an emphasis on golf course design.

How and when did you begin working in the golf industry and what do you like most about it?

Since I was 13, I've wanted to be a golf course architect. Adapting a landscape into something as beautiful as a golf course and then playing it has always appealed to me on a deep level.

My first job in the industry was working golf course construction on an Arnold Palmer course near my hometown in coastal Mississippi. I was fortunate (and persistent) enough to leverage connections from that project into an internship that would eventually lead to a full-time position with *Arnold Palmer Design* from 2000 to 2023.

Tell us a little about your family, and what hobbies or activities you participate in when you are not at work.

My wife Stef and I have two boys- Jake (21) and Hank (16), whom we've homeschooled from the beginning. This flexibility allowed us to see the world together while I worked in some pretty far-flung locations. While I love my job more than any of my hobbies, the pursuit of fly-fishing has drawn me in big time since moving to Colorado in 2019, and I relish any opportunity to wet a line in a remote stream.

Affiliate Angle

What are the biggest changes you have seen in the profession since you began your career? Or, what are the most important changes that the company has seen in the past 5-10 years?

The biggest change I've seen in my sector is the shift toward the design-build process. It's no coincidence that the best courses of the past 20 years have been built in this manner. The days of putting together a stack of plans and handing it over to a contractor for interpretation are a recipe for uninspired golf and a relic of golf's dark ages.

Do you regularly attend RMGCSA meetings or events, if so why are they important?

As a relatively new face to the group, I try to make it to as many gatherings as possible. Through the annual meetings and golf tournaments, I've made some solid connections with fellow members and been able to help them with their respective courses.

What would you like other people to know about RMGCSA?

Superintendents of the RMGCSA appear to be a tight-knit group who readily share best practices with one another to succeed in the face of the exceptional challenges of maintaining a golf course at elevation.

You know a lot of people in our industry. What are they saying are the biggest obstacles to overcome for them to be successful?

While supply chain issues seem to be easing, the lack of skilled, dependable labor doesn't seem to be going away. Other headwinds like extreme weather events and impending water restrictions are magnified by increased demand, pushing industry professionals to be creative problem solvers like never before. It has never been more important to consult a competent golf course architect to address these challenges head-on when considering any golf course reinvestments.

You get to see many facilities and properties. What is an interesting new or innovative practice you have seen?

I recently returned from a 22-course study trip to New Zealand and Australia. Their practical emphasis on function (how the ball reacts on the ground) over form (color, mowing patterns, cutting heights) yields a brand of golf that is more fun to play, more sustainable, and more affordable. It was also interesting to see clubs in the Melbourne area adding a 19th golf hole to allow the closure of one golf hole for maintenance operations while keeping 18 holes open for play at all times.

On the tech side, the USGA's GPS-generated heat maps have become an invaluable tool for supers and architects alike to ensure their work properly considers golfer's tendencies.



Thad Layton and Family

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EXCEL Leadership Program

Overview: Ethan Howard's Experience in the EXCEL Leadership and Management Program



Three and a half years ago, I was at work and got a phone call from a Superintendent I had previously worked for. As we were chatting, he mentioned a program that was taking applications, and he thought I should go for it. After we got off the phone, I researched the details about the program and what it entails. It was the **EXCEL Leadership and Management Program**. In reading about it, the purpose is to take current Assistant Superintendents and help them excel in their current role to become better leaders in the industry and provide the tools that will help them succeed in becoming a Superintendent.

From the information I read, the program accepts 8 Assistant Superintendents from the U.S. and Canada each year. After reading about the selection process, I did get a little deterred about the thought of the applicant pool from both countries. Regardless, I was determined to apply and I did. To apply there is an extensive questionnaire and 2 written essays. Once I submitted all of my required documents, it felt like it was taking forever for an answer. Finally, one afternoon when I was delivering lunch from the Clubhouse to our crew, I received a phone call saying I had been accepted into the program.

Fast forward to our first EXCEL meeting where we met the staff from the program and the companies that sponsor it. We were in Lawrence, Kansas, and we all were meeting for a meet and greet, and our first talk. They explained in depth why they created this program and how they came up with their purpose and goals. After learning the background, I knew this was going to be something beneficial for myself and everyone involved, to learn and help us advance and succeed in our careers.

EXCEL stands for:

- E** - educating golf industry leaders of tomorrow
- X** - cross-training opportunities to share what they have learned
- C** - creating community leaders who serve more than take
- E** - encouraging future leaders through advisory boards and councils
- L** - developing leaders who will mentor others

EXCEL Leadership Program

Every part of that acronym was taught and focused on at every meeting we had and was touched upon in so many different ways. Throughout my time in the program, we had some tremendous experiences on top of the educational portions we had. You really learn to do what it takes, and what you can do to be a mentor and a successful leader in the industry. The training also helps to enhance the skills that you are continually developing to become a more efficient leader in the industry and further your career.

In total, we had 9 sessions that brought us all together, and 3 of those were at the **GCSAA Conference and Trade Show**. The other 6 sessions were some of the best experiences I have ever had. The speakers we listened to and interacted with really opened up our eyes to the bigger picture in the industry. Every year there is a new class of 8 that comes in and then we all get to meet together and network with one another. Being part of the program, I have had the opportunity to make some great friends in the industry and to network with a broader community that I otherwise would not have been connected with before joining this program.

Throughout my career, I have had the opportunity to work for great Superintendents and learn a lot from them. Since becoming part of this program, I have learned how to develop and build my own leadership skills and industry knowledge.

I recently graduated the program this past April out in Raleigh, North Carolina. We were out to dinner with our entire group, members from GCSAA, and Nufarm. We were going through the last 3 years, looking back on the time we had with the classes, and we were all sad for it to be done. But we also knew it was time for the next round of Assistants to come in who are looking to take the next step in their careers with our support. This program not only helps you to learn and excel in your career, but I have built some great relationships with so many people that I will have for a lifetime. I would recommend this program to any and all Assistants who are looking to advance their career and build upon their foundation to become better leaders and mentors in our industry.



Ethan Howard

Assistant Superintendent, Pole Creek Golf Club

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Superintendent Spotlight

An Interview with Kollin Vandersluis, The Country Club at Woodmoor



Kollin Vandersluis and Family

Describe Your Facility

The *Country Club at Woodmoor* is a full-service club with an 18-hole championship Press Maxwell golf course, indoor/outdoor pool, indoor tennis/pickleball, fitness, and dining. The golf course isn't the longest at just over 6,700 yards from the back tees, but it is narrow and the greens are very challenging. With new ownership in 2015, the club has really taken off and many improvements have been made. Along with multiple clubhouse upgrades and a brand-new outdoor pool, the grounds department is getting some amazing improvements. We recently completed a new break room for the staff and are in the process of erecting a steel building to store our equipment. New bathrooms on the course were opened in 2023 and we are now renovating/adding 7 tee boxes along with a few bunkers. I have been here since June of 2016 and it is extremely exciting to see the direction we are going!

What Makes Your Facility Unique?

Our location makes us unique. We sit at over 7,000 ft and have the feel of a mountain course. I don't think there is anything else like it along the I-25 corridor.

What's the Biggest Challenge You Face at Your Facility?

The biggest challenge we face is our water situation. We buy water from the metro district here in *Woodmoor*, and the amount we can buy is limited every month. The most difficult time is spring as we can only buy 330,000 gallons of water each month until May. That's enough to water 1 night! On top of that we do not have water rights to the ponds on our property, so we are obligated to account for and purchase any rain and snow melt that fills our ponds. Last May, with all the rain we received, our ponds gained 2.5 million gallons of water. Because we do not have the rights, I had to purchase that water from the metro district.

What Do You Like About Your Team at Your Facility?

I like that we have a small team that works together to make it look like we have a big team. We typically will have between 2-4 seasonals working along with myself and our assistant. Every day we strive to provide tournament conditions and overall I think we do a really good job for such a small crew!

What Would You Tell Someone Who is Interested in Getting into Golf Course Management?

I would say you get out what you put in. This is not an industry that will reward you for just showing up. Working on a golf course is one of the most rewarding jobs out there if you are willing to put in the work!

Superintendent Spotlight

How Many Years Have You Worked in Golf and How Did You Get Started in the Industry?

I have worked in golf for 18 years now, and I can't see myself ever doing anything different. I started in high school with a group of friends working at *Kissing Camels*. We worked for Steve Blais for many seasons, and he is a huge part of why many of us out of that group are now assistants and superintendents!

What Do You Do When You're Not at Work?

When not at work I enjoy spending time with family, playing hockey and golf, and just started coaching roller hockey last year.

Favorite Movie?

Tie between *Happy Gilmore* and *Titanic*. If I had to pick one I'd lean towards *Titanic*.

Favorite Sports Team?

Avs and Red Wings but always Avs if they are playing each other.

Tell us a little about your family.

I have a wonderful wife, Stephanie, and two daughters, Brynlee (6) and Breklynn (3). Steph and I have been married for 9 years now. Before children, Steph worked as a surgical assistant for an oral surgeon and just recently started her own childcare business. Brynlee will be moving into 2nd grade next year, and Breklynn will hopefully take her temper to preschool as soon as possible!



The Country Club at Woodmoor

MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT EVENT

Overview: 2024 Annual Memorial Tournament Event Recap

The **Annual Memorial Tournament** got off to a hot start (pun intended) with near triple-digit highs. *Legacy Ridge* and the *City of Westminster* continue to be gracious hosts and gave the course away to help the RMEGI raise as much funding as possible for education and research in turf management. The **Memorial Tournament** raised over **\$15,000** for RMEGI!!! A huge thank you to Tim Davis, Joe Carlton, and their teams for making this an excellent event.



The shamble event was a hit with 120 participants across six flights. The flight winners are below with some fantastic scores:

- **Bender Flight (0-2):** Kevin Malloy/Garvin Paper – *TPC Colorado* – 66
- **Krueger Flight (3-5):** Richard Begay/Grant Javernick – *Saddle Rock Golf Course* – 61
- **Cahalane Flight (6-8):** Eric Nelson - NM/Larry Burks – *Grand Elk* – 59
- **Hughes Flight (9-10):** Dan McCann – *Aquatrols/Chris Lewis* – *Landscapes Golf Management* – 60
- **Anderson Flight (11-14):** Brian Young - *DBC/Jarron Cito* – *Mad Russian* – 57
- **Bolin Flight (15-29):** Tracy Richard - *HLM/Tracy Spence* – 56

MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT EVENT

The closest to the pin winners have clearly been playing more than working as there were several near aces! Great shots gentlemen and hopefully you made the putts!

#2: Dan McCann – *Aquatrols*

#8: Kevin Kallas – *Saddle Rock Golf Course*

#12: Scott Hallam – *Highlands Ranch Golf Club*

#16: Robert Gonzales – *Nutrien*

These individuals will qualify for the **end-of-the-year tournament**.



Another huge thank you to [Heritage Professional Products Group](#) for being our Title Sponsor for this great event!

Get your teams signed up for our upcoming events [here!](#)

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Emission Reduction Requirements for Lawn and Garden Equipment

On Friday, February 16th, 2024, the **Colorado Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC)** voted to restrict the use of the high emission gas-powered lawn and garden equipment on public property (See Regulation Number 29: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/aqcc-regulations>). The restriction bans small engines and handheld landscaping tools listed in Part A, Section II under 25 horsepower on state property, and under 10 horsepower on local municipal and federal properties. This rule bans the equipment use in the EPA's ozone nonattainment area in Colorado which basically includes the Front Range between Castle Rock and Fort Collins. The AQCC's new rule takes effect during the summer ozone season in 2025, which has been designated from June 1 to August 31. You can read more about it here.

Please see the map below for the EPA's ozone nonattainment area in Colorado. You can see which counties are included in the nonattainment area and all cities, state, and federal entities within these counties are subject to this mandate.

Colorado 8-hour Ozone Nonattainment Areas (2008 Standard)

04/30/2024



Emission Reduction Requirements for Lawn and Garden Equipment

If you manage a city or federal entity within the counties listed, you will not be able to operate any gas-powered small engine under 10 horsepower from June 1 to August 31. If you manage a state property, this restriction rises to 25 horsepower. Even though these restrictions are currently limited to local, state, and federal properties, they may be enhanced to other commercial or private entities in the future. It is important that we are all aware of these regulations and how we can prepare and be ready for anyone who deals with these restrictions.

Previously, there was a grant available that supported the electrification of this equipment. This grant was available for replacing weed eaters, push lawnmowers, and almost anything on the list of limitations that is provided in the first link above. One golf course, in particular, was able to use this grant for one of the new Toro eTriFlex 3370's that are 100% electrically driven. Others have been eligible for funding for other means of electrification of their small equipment. Please see the following link for information about this previous opportunity for more information. This particular grant has spent its funding, however, there should be additional grants and funding available in the future so it's important to start looking at information, preparing, and budgeting now. Information on the previous grant can be found here: <https://www.mowdownpollution.org/grant/>

Manufacturers, distributors, and retailers are also offering 30-40% incentives for purchasing electric equipment. In this issue of The Reporter, check out some of our sponsors and see how they can help with some of these needs. Many sell brand-name electrical equipment already, while others are bringing on more brands as we speak to help meet this new demand. Talk to your salespeople about what is available and how they can help you meet these requirements without being financially burdened.

Lastly, thought needs to be taken now on how we design our maintenance buildings and facilities appropriately for charging electrical equipment and batteries. If building a new facility or having one planned, it is important to add areas that meet codes and requirements for large charging areas. For example, anyone who has an electric golf cart fleet knows the ventilation requirements, additional fire protection, surge protection, and the electrical capability to draw enough energy to charge all of those batteries every night. Electrical usage budgets must also be evaluated and adjusted appropriately for the increased demand.

Small engines are currently classified as one of the highest polluting engines. While everyone can agree steps should be taken to reduce pollution, preparations also need to be made as we move forward with mandates and regulations being implemented. We all must be prepared to make these changes and adjust so we continue to provide incredible products to our customers.



Joe Kanze

Secretary/Treasurer, City of Arvada

Assistant Spotlight

An Interview with Kyle Kramer, Denver Country Club



Kyle Kramer

Describe Your Facility

Denver Country Club is an 18-hole member-owned club founded in 1887. It is one of the oldest clubs in the U.S. and the oldest west of the Mississippi River.

The club was originally founded around horse racing but quickly expanded into golf, tennis, polo, and other activities. The original architect is James Foulis, but the course was most recently renovated by Gil Hanse.

What's the Biggest Challenge You Face at Your Facility?

Irrigating with reclaimed water has proven to be challenging over time. We are constantly monitoring soil conditions and tailoring our agronomy plan to counteract the effects of reclaimed water.

What are You Getting Right at Your Facility?

Taking care of the golf course in sections has been totally new to me. I appreciate having more accountability in day-to-day jobs. It takes out a lot of the guesswork of who does certain parts of the property. I think it also adds another level of efficiency to our day-to-day operations.

How Many Years Have You Worked in Golf and How Did You Get Started in the Industry?

Somehow at the end of this year it will be a decade. I started off working in the forestry service and realized I loved working outside. Golf was already a passion, so I asked to be a part of the grounds crew at the Ohio University Golf Course and never looked back.

What's the Last Book You Read?

Emotional Intelligence 2.0 by Drs. Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves

What Do You Do When You're Not at Work?

When I am not at work I enjoy spending time in the mountains, hiking, skiing, golfing, and traveling home to see family when I can.

What's Your Favorite Tool in Your Cart?

Probably my Leatherman or a TDR.

Favorite Sports Team?

The Ohio State Buckeyes.

FFA and Turfgrass Management In CO

Overview: How the FFA aids in labor shortages and furthering careers
By: David Phipps, GCSAA NW Region

In the ever-evolving landscape of turfgrass management, one solution to addressing labor shortages might lie in an unexpected place: the **Future Farmers of America (FFA)**. Recent strides in collaboration between the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and FFA present a promising opportunity to reshape the turfgrass industry in Colorado.

Shelia Finney, representing the GCSAA, has been diligently fostering relationships at the National FFA Conference in Indianapolis for several years. Her efforts have yielded significant results, with the FFA announcing the introduction of a turfgrass management **Career Development Event (CDE)** at the national conference in 2026.

To understand the potential impact of this development, let's delve into what a CDE entails. Drawing parallels from an existing CDE, the Environmental and Natural Resources event, we can envision the turfgrass management CDE as an immersive experience for students. Similar to professionals in the environmental and natural resource industry, participants will tackle real-world scenarios, interpret data, utilize field equipment, and hone their skills in areas such as GPS navigation, soil science, water management, and wildlife conservation.

Imagine high school students demonstrating proficiency in turfgrass management through these challenges. Whether they choose to enter the workforce directly or pursue higher education, they'll possess a solid foundation, positioning them as valuable assets in the industry.

The Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association has already taken proactive steps to integrate with this initiative. Recently, during the **Colorado State FFA Conference and Career Fair** in Pueblo, Gary Leeper, Eric Gustafson, Joe Kunze, and I, set up a booth next to Zach Johnson and Chris Tragakes with Colorado State and engaged with students about careers in turfgrass management. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with many students expressing newfound interest in the field. Equally enthusiastic were the teachers, who welcomed the idea of the 2026 CDE as a gateway to introduce turfgrass management to their students.

Creating awareness around turfgrass management and providing educational pathways will pay huge dividends in the Colorado turf management industry. While this transformation may not happen overnight, with the support and dedication of the RMGCSA and Colorado State University, the next generation of superintendents is on the horizon!



Joe Kunze ,
Gary Leeper,
and others at
the FFA
Conference

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BEST TOURNAMENT EVER

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ANNUAL TOURNAMENT

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October 24, 2024
Webinar

RMGCSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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