

Overseeding Time and Seed Establishment Methods

By: Wayne Slaton, Golf Course Superintendent

The weather in central Texas will always be a challenge when it is time to spread overseed. You plan for the best week with no more than 30% chance of rain in the forecast for the day of, to the next 7 days if possible. Sometimes those early cool fronts can be tricky to predict. At our golf course, our customers are very lucky we only close tee times during the morning on the day we overseed greens to allow our team to do a good thorough job. We target our overseeding of greens at a rate of 7 to 8lbs/1000 square feet with poa trivialis. Not 6 -7lbs (as I laugh out loud)

What happens the day of overseeding our greens you might ask? We get ready ahead of time ordering seed, sand, and preparing our mowers. We test our spreader rates and ensure our settings are correct, days before overseeding. We double-check our water hoses and train our new team members on how we overseed. The day we overseed our greens, we double mow, light top-dress to see where we have been with the seed spreaders, hand hose water the seed into the turf, and also hand hose watering the seed the next few days. Then we begin using automated sprinklers to help establish, being careful not to have irrigation water pool and run off the surface of the green. Pooling and irrigation water that runs off the greens could carry seedlings off our target area. This is why it is very important to keep a close eye on the sprinklers.

Hopefully with good weather and good irrigation management, within 7 to 10 days after application we will see the 1st germination of the poa triv on our greens. It is very important not to mow too soon on the new seedlings of poa triv so it will have a good chance to root properly. You will have slower green speeds while the overseed is being established. Once the new seedlings have rooted, we will mow the greens and see wonderful cool season limeish green with the mowing pattern stripes as seen in this photo from the last few seasons.



Overseeding our tees, collars and select fairways will be different. We overseed the tee box, collars and select fairways with perennial rye grass seed. Please don't make the mistake of overseeding your own yard with annual rye grass. Perennial rye grass seed is slower growing and has a darker color. For the week after we overseed our tees, we will leave the tee markers at the very front of the tee box to allow the perennial rye seed to germinate and root. Same as the greens, we will delay mowing the tees, collars, and select fairways until the seed is established. During the time we overseed our fairway areas it is very important to keep **ALL** cart traffic off those areas. Cart traffic can damage the new seed and even keep it from establishment. This is why you will see our overseeded areas roped off from cart traffic.



With limiting cart traffic, it would be great if we didn't have to rope off everything, but unfortunately, not many people have good golf cart etiquette. The ropes are in place for a

reason. Please follow the instructional cart signs on the golf course. Allowing time for overseed to establish is necessary and critical to a successful operation when overseeding fairways. Geofencing to limit golf cart traffic control is improving. When a new cart fleet arrives, the geofencing will help eliminate a lot of the ropes we currently use. Our older system geofencing is not as precise as the new one will be. Prepare yourself to do better on your cart driving and cart etiquette skills. Next time you drive a cart into an area that is restricted, the only way to return the cart back to normal operation is to back the cart out of the restricted area. So please pay attention to the details of the geofencing. Poor cart etiquette can grant you walking privileges. Personal carts must pay attention as well. A cart permit is granted with the understanding you will follow good cart etiquette. The quality of our playing areas is dependent on good cart traffic management going into the fall, winter, to spring season. If we continue to let our golf course be beaten down with heavy cart traffic, the turf quality can greatly affect our playability. Please take some time, think about that golf was played as a walking sport. We are lucky that we are getting to ride a golf cart. We must work together and do our part to help limit the cart traffic on our golf course so it will be better in the future.

Areas of the fairways and roughs we plan to overseed during October, so be prepared that more walking than normal will be taking place with limiting our golf cart traffic on the following fairways:

Cart Path Only all of : Hole #1,7,9,10,18

Most of the hole **Cart Path Only** with approximate yardage out from the green roped off from starting point of overseed to the green:

- #3 150 yards to the green.
- #6 120 yards inside the cart path to green.
- #12 300 yards to green.
- #13 100 yards to green.
- #14 200 yards to green.
- #16 200 yards to green.

Once overseeding of the fairways is established and our mowing begins, we will be opening up some, not all areas of overseeded fairways depending on turf conditions, and if cart traffic is not negatively affecting our playing areas. Hopefully this has been educational and will help you to better understand some of the practices we do to help keep our golf course in good fall to spring playing conditions. A few great links below on cart traffic

management. See you on our course soon. May all your shots find the fairway near the cart path.

[Cart Traffic On Overseeded Fairways And Rough \(usga.org\)](#)

[The Impacts of Golf Cart Traffic on Dormant Bermudagrass \(usga.org\)](#)

[Course Care: Managing Golf Cart Traffic \(usga.org\)](#)