



# Soil Tech Cuts Costs and Boosts Turf For Illinois Golf Course Superintendent



Soil Tech's TurfTech Bio has been solving tough soil problems for golf courses since 1986. This triple-action bio-fertilizer cuts fertilizer needs,

reduces soil compaction, and suppresses turfgrass pathogens. The easy-to-use formulation consists of nitrogen-fixing cyanobacteria that restore the soil's biological fertility, beneficial bacteria to inhibit fungal development, and polysaccharides that improve crumb structure of the soil. "These polysaccharides form larger soil aggregates which appear to be beneficial to the soil," claims Iowa State University microbiologist Dr. Fred Williams. His research documented a structural change in soil treated with the product.

## CASE STUDY

Allen Wall has been the golf course superintendent at Danville CC in Danville Illinois for over 5 years.



"I started working here in August 2011. When I first came here we had bentgrass fairways that were struggling,

there wasn't a lot of turf coverage, there were lots of weeds and poa, there was lots of soil compaction, and lots of drainage issues. We began to do a program of seeding with L-93 bentgrass, which was what was already established here.

The following spring of 2012 we started using Soil Tech's TurfTech Bio on greens and fairways. The product was applied on a monthly basis and we quickly started to see improved drainage and the turf seemed to get healthier. That was what we were striving for, by creating a good, balanced soil.

In 2012, it seemed that our heavy clay soils were very tight and seemed bound up. Now, having multiple years of using TurfTech Bio, the soil is much freer, water and air move through the soil profile, which has created a

deep root system for us. It's very common for us to go pick any spot on our fairways in the summer and stick a probe in as far as we can and have roots hanging out the bottom.

In turn, we don't see a need to do core aerifying because we don't have compaction or thatch issues and everything that we want



to move through the soil does. So for us, core aerifying is just going to disrupt the biology that we've created and cause a lot of work for us. It creates a less than ideal playing surface in September, which is the best time to play golf in Central Illinois.

In the beginning, we continued to spread some synthetic nitrogen products to encourage growth, but then we were having annual soil tests done and they were consistently showing that there were adequate levels of nitrogen in



the soil. We didn't see the need to apply extra product.

Now it's been over 2 1/2 years since we've applied any other fertilizer, other than the TurfTech Bio. If we had followed a typical fertility program of 4 applications per year to last six weeks per app, it probably would have cost me about \$2000 or more per app, or \$8,000-\$10,000 per year depending on what product I used. Now, I can treat all my greens, tees and fairways with TurfTech Bio for \$4,000 per year. So for me, I see a savings of about \$6,000 in just fertility. And then for us, time is valuable and then also trying to find the right time to go out and spread fertilizer when conditions and play allows can be challenging. So with Bio, we can spend time out doing other jobs we need to do.

I tell other industry professionals to look deeper into what creating a good biology in your soil is going to do for you. Understand the science better, think back to your education on creating a healthy soil and the benefits of it. Realize that it's OK to move away from the old conventional wisdom because that's what's been done for years. If you don't have to do it, then why do it? Don't feel guilty about eliminating some of these practices from your program.

And with TurfTech Bio, stick to the program because it gets better over time. Changing the soils is not immediate or that instant gratification. It takes time and it takes some commitment but, the benefits far outweigh the uneasiness of jumping ship from that old school thought."

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