



MAUNA KEA GOLF COURSE

KOHALA COAST



HAPUNA GOLF COURSE

KOHALA COAST

## Mauna Kea Resort Golf Maintenance News “Growing Green while Going Green” November 2010

At golf courses throughout the country, everyone is trying to find new and improved ways to “go green” at their properties. The same thoughts and practices apply here at Mauna Kea and Hapuna as well; we are consistently improving and modifying our practices of staying green on the golf course. There are so many ways to become more efficient, cost effective, and producing a cleaner product for our environment. This can include examples such as water efficiency, safe and effective fertilizer uses, minimizing pest and chemical output, and using clean biodegradable fuels for our machinery. These are all broad spectrum examples of how to “go green” out on the golf course, but it is up to each facility to find which ways they can specifically improve their property. Here are some new ideas and practices we have implemented at Mauna Kea Resort to help do what we can to protect our surroundings and environment.

### **Water Usage and Efficiency**

Over the past few years, wetting agents have become widely used on golf courses. They are 100% safe for the soils and have no harmful effects for the other people, animals, and plants in the areas they are used. While there are many different types of wetting agents, the ones we are using at Mauna Kea Resort are allowing for us to improve dry spots and producing more uniform coverage of moisture in the turf. With all of the wind we have around the resort, it becomes very easy to have dry areas throughout the golf course. Even though we put out our regular water cycles in the evenings, we still rely on many additional watering cycles throughout the morning to aid these issues. With the help of wetting agents we no longer are required to use as many heavy watering cycles during the day, and we will be able to slowly cut back and reduce watering during the night. Ideally, through proper wetting agents, and maintaining good turf practices, we should be able to reduce our water outputs by between 10%-20%. It may not seem like a lot, but it can add up to as much as 50-70 million gallons of water per year.

### **Growth Regulators**

In Hawaii we have some of the best growing conditions in the country for turf grass. Due to these conditions, we are forced to cut the grass at very high frequencies. This creates higher usages of fuel, additional stress on machinery, additional stress on turf, and cost increases for equipment repairs. One way to help control the rapid growth is through the use of plant growth regulators (PGR) in the turf. These regulators have many benefits, including better color, creating a stronger plant, and of course less unwanted growth. PGR's are frequently used in landscape and fruit production as well. One benefit they have in farming and ornamental production is that they are able to help control flowering and seeding development within the plant. Our newest use for these regulators has been in the fairways. We currently mow our fairways everyday at Mauna Kea and 4 days at Hapuna due to the healthy turf and perfect growing conditions. By using growth regulators we can reduce our mowing by 25%-40%. This would allow us to save up to 40 hours of total machine use, 30-40 gallons of fuel, along with significant savings in our repair and maintenance costs.

These all may seem to be small examples, but over the course of a year they can go a long way. At the same time, they are only a few of the areas we address to go green here on the golf course. As we continue to improve and change our practices, we will continue to update the improvements and success we endure on the course.