

Science helps golf courses reduce water use

By Katharine Gammon, Inside Science

In California's current historic drought, there's one particularly easy target when it comes to pointing fingers: green golf courses.

Courses around the U.S. suck up around approximately 2.08 billion gallons of water per day for irrigation. That's about 130,000 gallons per day per course, according to the golf industry.

In California, Gov. Jerry Brown has announced a statewide mandate to reduce water consumption by 25 percent – but that number actually varies depending on the water district, signifying a reduction of anywhere between 4 and 36 percent.

Since there are about 1,140 golf courses in California, reducing water use by one quarter would reduce consumption by 37 million gallons of water per day – about a million bathtubs full.

The golf industry uses a substantial amount of water and is therefore working on ways to make courses more sustainable, with new irrigation technologies, new types of grass, and new layouts that are easier on the environment.

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