

Seed NOW for winterkill recovery**April 30, 2014**

The time for optimism and hope has past, and the vast majority of golf turf not yet recovered from winter will never recover. In other words, “what you see is what you’ve got” in terms of damage. Soil temperatures are now warm enough where we are seeing germination of newly-seeded creeping bentgrass or perennial ryegrass. Seeds will likely only germinate and survive where there is adequate seed-soil contact (Fig. 1), so aggressive shallow aeration (20+ holes/sq ft) followed by topdressing, seeding, and then a light brushing creates the ideal seed bed. Vertical mowing of greens normally does not provide wide enough grooves for the seed to fall into, but carbide tip vertical mowing units might. Triwave, Redexim, or other modern seeders are effective and even a power rake or a Graden will cut wide enough grooves to improve seed-soil contact. Starter fertilizer at 0.5 lb N and 1.0 lb P2O5/1000 sq ft in the seed bed and every 4 weeks after seeding will help establishment. Fungicides for seedling diseases like pythium or damping off won’t be necessary until temperatures stay consistently in the high 80’sF. Weed control may be needed for crabgrass and/or annual bluegrass depending on the setting and that information can be found in our “Comprehensive guide to winter turf damage and recovery in the Northern United States” at <http://turf.unl.edu/2014MarchCompWinterkill.pdf>

Let us know if we can help in any way.

Zac Reicher, Professor of Turfgrass Science, zreicher2@unl.edu

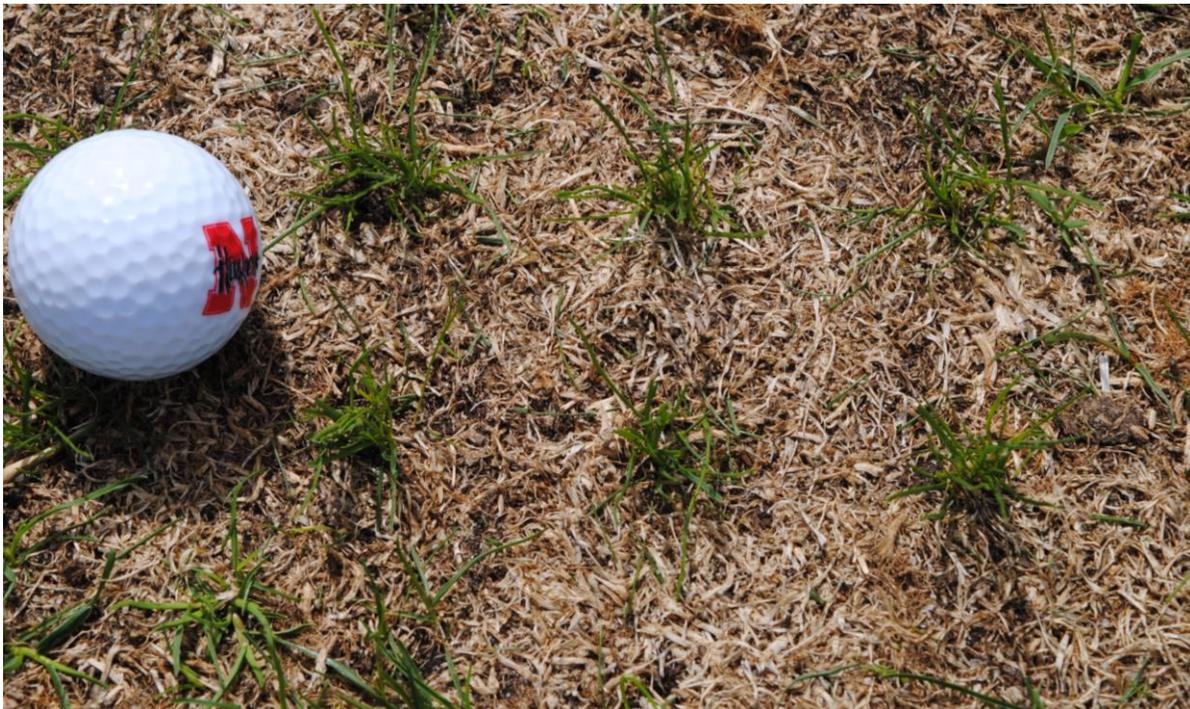


Figure 1: Perennial ryegrass germinating in a tee box in Lincoln on April 25, 2014. Germination is only seen within the aeration holes.