



How to Stretch Your Budget Dollars

*tips compiled at a California GCSA meeting
shared by Bruce Williams, CGCS of Los Angeles Country Club
via Lee McLemore, CGCS*

- A \$6,000 wetting agent injector for the irrigation system saved \$14,000 in water use over 6 months
- Accelerated equipment replacement schedule, including leasing to lower equipment repair costs by approximately 40% in dealing with old equipment fleet
- Adjust course maintenance schedule for less frequent grooming of bunkers and cart paths
- Adjust operating hours to best serve the majority of golfers, open later and close earlier
- Alternating start times to make better use of inadequate facilities (wash pad, break room, fuel station)
- An employee recently quit, and we decided not to replace him with a new man at his old salary. We instead increased a part-time guy's hours to pick up the slack.
- Begin fairway length cut further from the tees. Cut height only after 150 yards.
- Broke down my pesticide applications/costs and put them on their proper line items on the months they would be purchased. Didn't take \$50,000 and divide by 12. Instead got more realistic and divided the 12 month period into the actual correct usage.
- Call the water department to get an idea of any increases for the following year
- Change light bulbs, lower wattage and evaluate cost, but still consider safety
- Change pumps to VFD
- Change to time of use electrical billing
- Check Workers Comp carrier's prescribed treatment facility and get reduced rate
- Checking with utility companies on estimated increases on water and power.
- Collect aluminum cans on golf course and use to pay for employee pizza parties.
- Combine responsibilities and shifts to lower labor costs.
- Computerized HVAC throughout operation and adjust for savings
- Course currently installing new irrigation system to better manage water use, will reduce water bill
- Cut back overtime during winter months
- Delay capital spending schedule to build reserves to levels that earn sizable interest income
- Do "trend" budgeting on a line item basis, utilizing actual from the preceding three or four years. Then factor in any changes in the agronomic program for the coming year.
- Do time task analysis
- Email distribution of correspondences, promotions and billings
- Employee benefits cost control through greater employee contribution to plan
- Encourage vacation use during slow months
- Establish partnerships with outside agencies for supplies, materials and labor
- Find opportunities within national accounts
- Garbage – recycling program and cut back on the frequency of pick up
- Garbage expense reduced by proper disposal box size
- Giving aeration schedules to planners one year in advance so tournaments can be prepared or moved if necessary
- Grow and use herbs and flowers for food and beverage operation
- I mail out form letters soliciting bids for small equipment purchases to as many vendors as possible. Bids are faxed in, and we shop accordingly. We ask for "best price" from all vendors
- Implement and use of Hydra-Huma throughout the Golf Course

(Continued on Page 22)

How to Stretch Your Budget Dollars, Continued

- Installed a new wash rack and chemical shed. This has reduced liability along with amount of water used to clean equipment. Also labor time used to store chemicals in an organized fashion
- Installed new time clock at shop to eliminate time delay in AM and PM while employees drive from old time clock at clubhouse to (or from) shop
- Installing a Watt Miser System to allow for charging of golf carts at non-peak hours only, 2.5 year return on investment
- Institute line items for major events and important programs
- Institute an incentive program for workplace injuries. Every 60-day period in which no claims are processed results in each crew member receiving a gift value at \$20. Every 4 months every employee who has worked safely qualifies for a grand prize drawing \$80-\$100 value. Results have dramatically reduced claims, thereby reducing our x-mod.
- Insurance savings through increasing deductibles on policies, consider partially self-insured
- Less staff on "off" hours and slower operating times, less service during "down" times
- Lower inventory levels of all materials and supplies
- Maintain adequate replacement schedule
- Manage expectations (sales)
- Manage irrigation only in areas of play, allowing attractive native areas to develop elsewhere
- Meters are read daily to insure that there are no major leaks; irrigation programming is properly set daily, not making frequent adjustments could cost \$1,000 per day
- One employee starts 1/2 hour before others bringing out equipment and getting the shop ready for the day and crew ready for work.
- Paper supplies should be conserved, print on both sides, recycle for scrap paper
- Purchase according to prices and season as opposed to expectations of products
- Purchase of operating goods for multiple courses at best possible discounts, i.e. consignment, free shipping
- Recycle cans for employee lunch once a month
- Re-evaluate all the purveyors and vendors, requesting and seeking better prices
- Re-negotiate pricing with vendors, use open book pricing after receiving lowest bid
- Safety incentive program for employees to reduce incidents and subsequently insurance costs and claims (monthly, quarterly, yearly)
- Saved water by irrigating every other or every third day
- Shorten shifts, and complete tasks while supervised the next day
- Show importance and overall cost savings of purchase of equipment to do jobs in-house as opposed to out-sourcing
- Stretched capital equipment replacement schedule by involving employees to maintain equipment daily to a higher level
- Track monthly expenses on my own PC which allows me to have "real-time" data
- Trade golf passes for electrical upgrade work
- Trade unneeded machinery for grass seed/fertilizer at another golf course
- Turn off lights and fountains, change timers to cut utilities costs
- Uniform expense in check by proper replacement periods
- Use of spreadsheets and footnotes attached to my budget has saved numerous phone calls
- Use volunteers-members at the club to do some work; e.g. water young trees, fill divots on a weekly basis, etc...
- Utility savings by adjusting thermostats as much as possible but avoiding complaints
- Vendor bid sheet for all chemicals and equipment each year. Saves time and \$\$s.
- We use to aerify greens 6 at a time for three nights. Now we do 9 holes beginning at 4pm and finish in the morning (no back 9 tee offs). This is much more efficient, and the greens are all on the same schedule.
- Went to "salaried" so club doesn't have to pay any of my 15 hours overtime
- Worker's comp claims with minor injury use direct medical payment and do not submit as claim