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Hydroseeding Business Growing in Florida

Bob Arello, president of Hydrograss Technologies, says the company's Florida office has been busy since it opened in July 2002, with contracts to do hydroseeding work for golf courses and developers. He states that Hydrograss is educating people in Florida about the advantages of hydroseeding and hydrosprigging. The area had been "sod country," he notes, but more are seeing the lower-cost advantage of hydroseeding. Because of the area's sandy soil and sometimes heavy rains, there are days when sod cannot be harvested but hydroseeding with tackifier can continue. The company performs soil testing, then matches the type and amount of mulch and tackifier needed. He says the company does a lot of test spraying to demonstrate that hydroseeding works.

One big project is the Greg Norman golf course at the Emerald Bay Resort in the Bahamas. For this 20-ac. project, Hydrograss is using a Kincaid 1200LS hydroseeding machine on a trailer pulled by a four-wheel-drive tractor. They chose the 1200 because it was fairly large yet still small enough to be transported to the Bahamas by ship. The pump is a centrifugal pump because they are hydrosprigging about 5 ac. of the project. Hydrosprigging includes Bermuda grass and pas palum grass plugs that are shot out of the standard 1.25-in. hose along with the mulch and water. Each tank covers about 4,000 ft.² A "trash pump" on the trailer allows the operator to suck up water from onsite lakes instead of hauling extra water. Extra supplies of mulch and seed are carried on the trailer shelf.

Hydrograss Technologies also is hydroseeding the fairways, tees, and greens for a Jack Nicklaus golf course in Jupiter, FL. For this project, the equipment is a Finn T-330 with a live reel hose and two pumps. Arello explains that they are using a four-man crew because the truck and trailer must stay off the course; the hose is pulled up to 300 ft. through trees. One person minds the hose, one operates the unit, and two work the nozzle end. They can store three loads of material on the deck of the trailer and use a lake water source. Two pumps are required to get the distance the mixture must travel.

Kincaid machines, including the smaller 425 and 700 Agitators and the 1,200-gal. Pro, are used for much of Hydrograss' residential work. "A 425 and a guy in a pickup can handle most residential jobs," he maintains. The company operates machines as large as the 3,300-gal. Finn T-330. "We try to use the largest machine possible to save on time and employee costs."