

# go Green

At Journey at Pechanga, there's more than meets the eye

By Stephanie Conner

Golf courses can be beautiful—winding green fairways lined with exquisite trees and shrubbery. Even water hazards, which can single-handedly ruin a day at the links, are aesthetically appealing. At Pechanga Resort & Casino's new course—Journey at Pechanga, opening in 2008—you'll discover this outward beauty, along with something you might not expect: a devotion to protecting the environment.

In building and maintaining the course, three key environmental aspects—plants, water usage and pesticides—were taken into consideration.

## THE GREENERY

No golf course is complete without trees, shrubs and, of course, grass. But one of the most environmentally and culturally sound approaches is to use native flora. As with the rest of the resort, you'll find native shrubs—manzanita, sumac and ceanothus—as well as native oak and sycamore trees.

"We were driven by the cultural aspects of the golf course," says Dennis Orsborn, Journey Superintendent. "We wanted to preserve the natural surroundings as much as possible and tried to align everything to what is indigenous to this area." According to Orsborn, there are no non-native plant materials on the course, except for the turf itself.

In addition, the resort made sure that none of the native oak trees were killed in the building of the course. "If an oak tree was in the way of the course, it was either replanted or we built the course around it," Orsborn says. "It was a painstaking effort. We ended up moving and replanting more than 200 oaks."

## WATER USAGE

Using plants indigenous to Southern California helps save water, because these trees, shrubs and grasses are acclimated to the precipitation here.

"We're going to be in a program where we're going to be as environmentally friendly as possible," Orsborn says. That includes a state-of-the-art computerized irrigation system with its own built-in weather station.

"It can tell us exactly how much water is needed," he adds, "so we don't waste water."

## PESTICIDES

To deal with unwanted critters, the resort uses something called integrated pest management, or IPM, Orsborn says, the end goal of which is to avoid pesticide applications whenever possible. "With IPM, you look at how much you're irrigating, the weather, the turf—and you try to work with those factors before you go to the last resort, which would be a chemical."

Even when chemicals are a must, they are used only sparingly and according to precise legal recommendations, he adds.

"Everything is operated to the highest degree of environmental concerns," Orsborn says. "We're also concerned with the historical and cultural preservation of the golf course." \*

## Planet-Friendly Pointers

OK, so you aren't running a full-scale resort and golf course, but there are things you can do on your own to help the environment. Here are some thoughts:

### 1. When to

**water.** Water plants at night when less water evaporates. And if it just rained, turn off your timer so you don't overwater and waste that precious H<sub>2</sub>O.

**2. How to water.** Consider installing a drip system, which wastes less water than sprinklers. A rainwater collection system can make the most of what rain you do get.

**3. Recycle.** Recycling glass, aluminum, plastics and paper is one of the easiest things you can do to have a green home.

**4. Hot and cold.** Heating and cooling are the most significant use of household energy for Americans. Simple changes such as closing blinds in the afternoon hours when the sun is strongest can reduce how hard your air conditioner has to work.

**5. Shower power.** An AAA-rated showerhead or a flow restrictor on your current showerhead can save water, as well as the electricity or natural gas needed to heat the water.

**6. Light me up.** Replace incandescent lightbulbs with compact fluorescents, which may cost more but are more energy-efficient and last longer.