

The *Sideline* Report

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association

April 2011



Spring is Here

What is your Seasons
Game plan?

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We would like to say thank you to all the companies that have placed an ad in this months issue of the Sideline Report. Your support for the Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association is very much appreciated.

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For more information regarding articles and advertising rates contact the editor.

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A Letter from the President

By Tony Senio



There is nothing common about common courtesy. In fact, to show any these days makes you a rarity and to have some shown to you seems almost unheard of. This is something that has bothered me for a while now. Several recent events have inspired me to finally say something. Without sounding too preachy, (Who am I kidding? That's exactly what I'm doing) I have to share some thoughts with you.

On my way into work last week, I was sort of half-listening as the morning radio jocks forced entertainment on me with zany sound effects and loud voices, quirky facts and celebrity birthdays, not to mention trying to make the traffic conditions in Cedar Rapids sound like a life or death situation. Just as they were about to cut back to *The Bob and Tom Show* they made quick mention that it was National Common Courtesy Day. Briefly, I thought to myself, '*That seems nice.*' Then I thought, '*That seems unnecessary.*' Finally, I thought, '*That just seems completely insufficient.*' A reminder to be nice to other people for a day - Is that what it has come to? Shouldn't we be nice to people every day? Celebrating one day in the name of common courtesy makes it pretty uncommon if ask me. It's like saying – **Be nice today. Tomorrow you can go back to being a jerk!**

I'd like to think, and have noticed, that most of us in this industry, particularly those of you reading this, are already uncommon. Most of us practice good manners on a regular basis. I suspect that through dealing with pushy user groups and coaches, administrators with nothing but the bottom line in mind, and parents who feel their kid is the second coming of Pelé or Ted Williams or Walter Payton, that we feel the need to be respectful in the hopes of getting a little respect in return.

I recently heard a sermon that mentioned a list of ten rules to salt the earth. What does that mean? Think about what you use salt for. It makes steak better. It makes eggs better. It makes sweet corn better. It's used to enhance your dining experience. The rules that were mentioned are not the new Ten Commandments or anything like that. You don't even have to believe in God or any other organized religion in order to be able to apply these to your own life. They're simply ten things you can do to make the world a more palatable place and enhance your living experience.

1. Make other people feel important.
2. Share the hurts of others.
3. Have a mild disposition.
4. Live a consistent life.
5. Have a forgiving spirit.
6. Keep your heart pure.
7. Be easy to live with.
8. Have courage in adversity.
9. Endure unfair treatment.
10. Be positive and excited!

So go out and be uncommon. Salt your life and in doing so, perhaps those around you will do the same. March 21 was National Common Courtesy Day – Let's make it more common than that.

Creating a Game Plan for a Successful Year

Jason Koester, CGCS, Grinnell College



Having a game plan is crucial for the success for all athletic teams. Having a thought out plan for your facilities is also a must. What do I consider a game plan for our athletic facilities? First get a schedule of all the events for the year on each of your fields. Dates, times, number of participants, painting/ set up requirements and any special requests. I like to use a calendar in the shop that we can record all the upcoming events and make notes when needed; it also serves as a great quick guide to follow. Remember the need to be flexible and make changes on the fly when unsuspected circumstances develops.

Next set your cultural practices (aeration, spiking, top dressing, sweeping, dethatching) around the events to allow recovery time for the playing surface and proper seasonal timing. Excess play or weather conditions may dictate an increase or decrease in your scheduled cultural practices, but I like to set up the minimal targeted aeration or top dressing applications and hope to seek in a few extra if possible.

Fertilization is a major aspect of field maintenance that cannot be overlooked. Soil testing is the backbone to developing an effective fertilization plan, the soil test will tell what nutrients are sufficient and the ones that are lacking. Having a soil test performed on individual fields is the most effective strategy. This will pin point your nutrition needs for each field, problem areas within fields is another area that an individual test can be effective. I like to pull soil for testing in the fall; this allows me to have the test results for the whole winter when I am planning for the upcoming season.

There are different testing labs available thru your local fertilizer distributors, they will also help you read the

soil test results and make product recommendations. Don't be afraid to ask questions and try different labs for your soil testing, you may have more success understanding and reading the results with one lab or another.

A few general tips on pulling soil for tests, a consistent depth of 3- 4" (a stainless steel sampling rod works well). Collect 10-15 subsamples of soil which roughly equals one cup or one pound, use a plastic bag or plastic lined bag (usually provided by your testing agency), mark on the bag the date, turf type, your facility information and the location the sample. Most testing sites recommend including the thatch layer in your sample, since it is biological active site. Keep in mind this residue may contain fertilizer granules not yet dissolved, a good practice is to wait a minimum of two weeks after an application to collect samples.

Two different types of soil test are exchangeable and extraction tests. The exchangeable test reports on the chemical components found in the soil, which are gathered by chemical extraction (i.e. strong acids). The second type of soil test is the extraction or soluble paste test, this method uses water, not acids, to extract the nutrients and is a more accurate predictor of plant nutrient availability. I like to perform both tests because you can determine the nutrients in the soil and also what elements are getting into the plant structure. The standard exchangeable test could come back saying a certain element is sufficient but the extraction test could reveal the same element is not in a soluble form that is available to the plant. Chemical applications such as herbicide, insecticide, and fungicide applications should also be thought about, preventive applications can be planned but also flexible, weather conditions will dictate increased or decreased applications of these specialty products. An extended camp or event may order an application timing conflict so be prepared to be proactive with your decision.

Employee staffing is very important to game planning, knowing when to staff people in advance for events

- "Game Plan" continued on page 5

“Game Plan” Continued

will be a major help when hiring employees and setting up work schedules for the season.

Special projects also need be thought about in advance, a project that can be timed during field down time will be the most effective and less stress full for you and your staff. The off season is a great time to get caught

on edging, top dressing, seeding, aeration, and working on equipment.

Having a game plan in place is the foundation to a successful turf management program. Good luck on the upcoming season and hope to see everyone at the upcoming meetings.

Visit
www.iowaturfgrass.org/istma/istmahome
for ISTMA updates:

Pesticide Applicator Testing Moving to DMACC

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey today said starting on Monday, March 28 pesticide applicator certification exams will be offered at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) campus in Ankeny. Testing will continue to be offered at the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship's office in the Wallace Building in Des Moines until July 1, 2011.

Those using the new, web-based testing will need obtain a user name and password before they arrive at the test center. Information and obtaining a username and password can be on the Department's website at www.IowaAgriculture.gov and then clicking on the “Pesticide Testing” link under “Hot Topics.”

Each person taking an exam through the DMACC test center will be required to pay a \$20 fee for each day of testing. Cash or credit card may be used for paying the fee. Multiple exams may be taken during the same day provided the exams are finished at least 30 minutes before the test center closes. Exam will be available at the DMACC college test center, 2006 South Ankeny Blvd.,

Building 6, Room 23, in Ankeny. Directions to and hours of operation for the testing center can be found at www.IowaAgriculture.gov under the “Pesticide Testing” link. To become certified, all commercial and public applicators are required to pass exams related to their type of work. All private applicators must also be certified to apply a restricted use pesticide.

Pesticide applicator certification exams will continue to be offered by appointment at existing community college sites throughout the state. In addition, the Department will maintain the approximately 58 winter test sites around the state until additional community college sites are organized. Finally, summer testing will continued to be offered each month at ten different Iowa State University Extension offices across the state.

A full schedule of when tests are offered can be found at www.iowaagriculture.gov/Pesticidepesticidetesting.asp.

Iowa Turfgrass Office Update - Jeff Wendel, CGCS

Iowa Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show

The final numbers are tallied and registration for the 2011 Iowa 'show' was up 11.5%. Thanks to everyone who attended, exhibited and presented. We are working now on the 2012 Conference, let us know if there is a topic, speaker or idea you have for that event. Thanks again to all the Iowa GCSA, ISTMA and IPLCA members who helped make our event a success.

Iowa GCSA Extension Fundraiser

The 2011 Extension Fundraiser is June 28th at Westwood Golf Course in Newton. The Event will be a 9am shotgun start with lunch by Luke Dant of Syngenta and education by Dr. Minner after golf. This event was started in 2005 by Doug Snook, CGCS and is a critical component of Dr. Minner's travel across Iowa.

We will have registration forms online soon, or you can call the Iowa Turfgrass Office at 515-232-8222. Format is a 4-person scramble, so get your group together. Iowa GCSA Member Nick Cummins is our host and the course is interesting and challenging!

Tee Sponsorships are available for \$100, please call the Turfgrass Office if you would like to sponsor. Hope to see many of you in Newton June 28th.

10th Annual Field Day Classic

The Annual Field Day Classic is at Jewell CC on July 13th. Brian Abels will be hosting the 10th Annual Field Day Classic! Take time to relax, have fun with fellow turf professionals, enjoy a beautiful course and play golf in a tournament that is known for fun & relaxation. Do not worry about your golf ability; the event is designed for all levels. Put together your own foursome or enter as an individual and we will team you up with a winning group. Entry is limited to the first 72 entries (18 teams)!

Tee Sponsorships are sold out, but there is still room for teams, sign up early, the event has been sold out every year since 2002.

Online Directory

Be sure to click the RED Online Directory link at www.iowaturfgrass.org, log in and then click the 'My Information' tab on the left to make sure we have your listing correct. Let us know if you have trouble logging in or negotiating the website. Look for Sarah's update on Avectra on the next page.



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Renewing Your Membership Online

It is April. Have you renewed your membership yet? If not, don't worry there is still time to renew! ISTMA invoices were sent out in March. However, the big thing this year is to renew your membership online and for some of you this may be a scary concept, but hopefully we can help you out.

First you will need to get onto the ISTMA Webpage at <http://www.iowaturfgrass.org/istmahome.htm>. Right under Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association you will see [Manage Your Membership](#). If you click on it, it will bring you to our new membership database. Here you can log in with the email address you have provided to us. If you have never logged on before your password is Password1 and remember it is case sensitive. After that it will ask you to change your password to your own unique password. Please save your new password in a safe place. So now you are logged in and should see something similar to the picture below:



First you need to find the invoice that was created for you in March. Don't worry it's not hard. On your left hand side, you will see a column of clickable links. Close to the bottom of that list you will find [My Transactions](#). Click on it and it should look similar to this:



From here you have a couple of different options. If you are an employee that needs to turn in an invoice to your employer or you would like to send cash or a check the following steps will show to how to find your current invoice. To find this printable invoice is easy. In bold letters just under the [My Transactions](#) heading it says **'The section below displays open orders and invoices that are 1 year old or less, and closed orders and invoices that are 60 days old or less'**. Right under these words is a link. It will open a new page with your Invoice.

If you would like to pay with a credit card online you need to follow slightly different steps. On the same [My Transactions](#) page you will see  button. Click on it and it will bring you to a new page. Now click the box by your name and select next at the bottom of the page. Now you will be at the Payment page. From here you can enter in your information from the scroll down boxes. After your credit information is selected, continue on by following the next buttons towards the bottom of the page. If you are using a Visa, it will ask for a CVV number, the three numbers on the back of your card.

Hopefully these steps have helped you with your membership renewal. At anytime if you have questions please call Sarah at 515-232-8222 or email to sarah@iowaturfgrass.org. Look in the upcoming issues for more reports on how to use the new features of ISTMA online.



DIAMOND PRO BASEBALL WORKSHOP

COMMUNITY FIELD, BURLINGTON, IOWA
MAY 10TH 2011

The Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association is proud to announce the premier baseball field maintenance workshop of the year. This will be a full day of baseball field maintenance education for all levels of play. The topics will cover all aspects of skin, mound and plate maintenance, and turfgrass management.



Diamond Pro is proud to be sponsoring Jesse Cuevas and Tom Burns to speak at this event. Tom Burns is widely known and respected as one of the top groundskeepers in Major League Baseball. Tom is now with TXI Diamond Pro as a sales/professional consultant. Prior to working for Diamond Pro, Tom was the Head Groundskeeper for the Texas Rangers at Ameritrust Field in Arlington for 10 years. Tom has been recognized for his dedication and service to the Sports Turf Industry.

Jesse Cuevas is one of the most well known and respected groundskeepers in America. Jesse managed the grounds at Rosenblatt Stadium in Omaha starting in 1979. He has become one of the most recognized groundskeepers as the host of the College World Series. Jesse began his career at Rosenblatt as a ball boy in 1969. He moved up the ladder until he began to work on the grounds crew in 1979 and finally became the Head Groundskeeper in 1986. Jesse has been recognized by the NCAA and the City of Omaha for his efforts. He has also received the George Toma Golden Rake from the STMA and the Golden Cleat Award from the ISTMA, the highest honor from each of those associations.



ISTMA is proud to present the legendary George Toma. George has been an icon in the Sports Turf Management profession for years. He started working in baseball in 1942 at Artillery Park for the Wilkes Barre Barons of the Eastern League. He became the head groundskeeper at several other ballparks in baseball, soccer, and football. George is now the lead Natural and Artificial Turf Consultant for the National Football League. As a consultant, he has been in charge of 37 Pro-Bowl fields and every single Super Bowl field from I - XLV. When George is not preparing fields for the NFL, he spends time in Ft. Myers, Florida at The Lee County Sports Complex, the spring training home of the Minnesota Twins.

Chris Schlosser is the Head Groundskeeper for the Iowa Cubs. In 2010, he was named the Pacific Coast League's Sports Turf Manager of the Year. This is the fourth time Chris has won Sports Turf Manager of the Year. Chris and his crews have been nationally recognized for their work. Their hard work helps provide Minor League Baseball with one of the best playing surfaces in the league.



The day will also include talks from T.J. Brewer of the Burlington Bees, John Newell of the Burlington Rec-Plex, Michael Murphy from the City of Iowa City, and more.

Diamond Pro Baseball Workshop

Schedule of Events

<p>8:00 Registration w/coffee & donuts - sponsored by Diamond Pro</p> <p>8:20 Welcome & Overview - T.J. Brewer</p> <p>8:35 Setting Up your Skin Materials - Tom Burns & Chris Schlosser -How to make your material work for you</p> <p>9:00 Skin Maintenance Materials - Tom Burns & Jesse Cuevas -What's the difference between calcined, vitrified and other products out there? When/where do you use the different products?</p> <p>9:30 Break - Sponsored by B & D Enterprises/Diamond Pro</p> <p>9:45 Skin Maintenance - George Toma & Tom Burns Different methods and tricks of the trade used to maintain skin. What are their philosophies?</p> <p>10:30 Skin Maintenance Practices & Materials - Q&A participate involvement, find your answers!</p> <p>11:00 And Then Some - George Toma The Nitty Gritty Dirt Man shares some of his life's and grounds keeping experiences, and then some.</p> <p>12:00 Lunch - Sponsored by Diamond Pro - Visit with Vendors</p>	<p>12:45 Mound Reconstruction - Jesse Cuevas & B&D Enterprises -Re-working the Bees game mound</p> <p>1:15 Mound Maintenance & Materials - Tom Burns & Jesse Cuevas - How to maintain mounds to high standards and keep them up to the high performance</p> <p>1:45 Break - Sponsored by B & D Enterprises/Diamond Pro</p> <p>2:00 Preparing your Field for Multiple Levels of Play - Michael Murphy, & John Newell - How to make the transition between different levels of play on the same field</p> <p>2:30 Grass Management - Chris Schlosser, John Newell & TJ Brewer - How do these managers want their grass, how do they get it there?</p> <p>3:00 Mound Shaping & Measurement - Jesse Cuevas & Tom Burns - Different methods and practices used to measure & shape a mound. Final measurements of game mound.</p> <p>3:45 Cutting Edge Technology in our own Backyard - Steve Bush - GPS technology</p>
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For More Information and to Register online please visit www.iowaturfgrass.org/istmahome.htm and look under 2011 ISTMA Events

Registration Form

ISTMA Diamond Pro Baseball Workshop - May 10th, 2011

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Pre-Registration by May 4th

___ Members (\$40)
 ___ Non-Members (\$50)
 ___ Students (\$20)

STUDENTS MUST PRE-REGISTER

On-Site Registration

___ Members (\$50)
 ___ Non-Members (\$60)

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 Signature: _____ sarah@iowaturfgrass.org

Networking Feeds Success

Brad Vermeer, Sioux Center Parks

I used to be chairman of the membership committee, and at that time our goal was to reach the 200 membership number. (that was about 10 years ago) As we tried to sell “why to become a member”, we mentioned the workshops, the speakers at those workshops, the speakers at the Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, and we always talked about the networking that is so valuable. Well, the information in this article all came from information I received through networking at the workshops and conferences, so even though you might go to listen to the speakers, (and most are excellent) make sure you interact with fellow sports turf managers also.

The football field that I take care of had 33 games on it this year, and the players of those games were from Jr. High, freshman, J.V., and varsity in High School, College J.V., and College Varsity. In the past with that many games, it was hard to keep healthy grass on the field. Through some research projects from Dr. Minner, and input from other Sports Turf Managers, I began to try some things that would help me grow grass. I will admit that last fall was partly successful because I was able to control the moisture on the field for the last half of September and all of October, so that was big for keeping grass on the field. I was just looking at the stuff I did to the field since May of 2010, and I want to share it with you since it has worked for three years in a row now, so it feels like what I am doing is working for me. I apply primo every other week starting May 25, and I apply 1 lb. of N each time after the primo application. This process seems to slow the top growth because of primo, but it steps up the root growth with the extra nitrogen. (years ago someone said that grass doesn't grow up and down at the same time, so spring fertilizer promotes top growth, but doesn't do much for roots) My field 5 years ago had many skid marks where the big players would slide through the grass and make a divot down in the dirt, but now the root mass and top growth are so thick that there are cleat marks in the turf, but not many 4 inch wide skid marks. It takes a lot less time to fill the divots now, and it takes less divot mix too. I think the monthly deep tine aeration

and the follow up top dressing helps with the success, but two years ago Dr. Minner did some research on stepping up the amount of fertilizer on sports turf, and I believe that has been a key part of the healthy turf we now have. Two lessons I have learned; I don't need to treat the whole field, but the field within the field, and sports fields can handle more than 4 lbs. of N per year. This past year I ended up with 9 lbs. of N in the middle of the field plus where the players stand, and 5 ¾ lbs. outside that area. At the end of the 33 games and 8 other events, we did the aeration, over seeding, and top dressing, but did not have any bare spots on the field. Of course we had very thin grass by the hash marks and from the 20 to the 30, but we had some comments from college coaches at the end of the season wondering if anybody played on the field.

Without the information gained from networking with people who face the same struggles and the same frustrations as I do, I would now have the middle of the football field roped off to keep the track kids from running on that part of the field. This year I don't have to think about the field until the middle of May, so I can concentrate on other things. I am just offering this information because it is working for me, so don't think this is the answer for you, but you may use it as an option to grow more grass on your fields.



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Never Stop Learning

Jeff Bosworth, Drake University

I can remember going through my final year of college and thinking to myself how great it will be to never have to take a test, research and write a paper, or give another presentation ever again. Once I graduated and found a job, it felt like the weight of the world was off me. School was not my thing. After having been out of college for 5 years for some odd reason I missed all those things and decided to pursue a Masters of Public Administration degree. I had the same sort of relief after completing that degree and vowed that was it. A couple years later I decided to take an undergraduate course just to learn and feel that sense of accomplishment.

While every class that I took, I did learn something that I could relate to my job and felt a sense of self satisfaction and personal accomplishment. However the one thing that I learned and didn't expect to learn was how different college is now then 10 years ago when I was in school. Everything seemed different, from how students learn, to how students are taught, to all the new technology. Not to take away from those my age (36)

April 2011

and older, but the younger generation is learning technology we never had. They are growing up with the technology and using it in ways probably most of us never imagined. I felt like time had passed me by seeing how technology is used and how fast and competent the younger generation is using what is available. Now to give credit to those my age and older, we still have experience that is not taught in the class room and is valueless.

I guess the moral of this article is to never stop learning! You don't have to go back to college, or even take a college class, however make some attempt to keep up on the technology that is available. Learn from those around you, attend workshops, and utilize continuing education money from your employer if it is available. For those of you in college or freshly out of college, the same holds true. Five years from now things I'm sure will be vastly different, technology will continue to evolve and new and better ways of utilizing that technology will make us better at doing what we do.

What does Your Intern Learn from You?

Paul Swafford, City of Iowa City

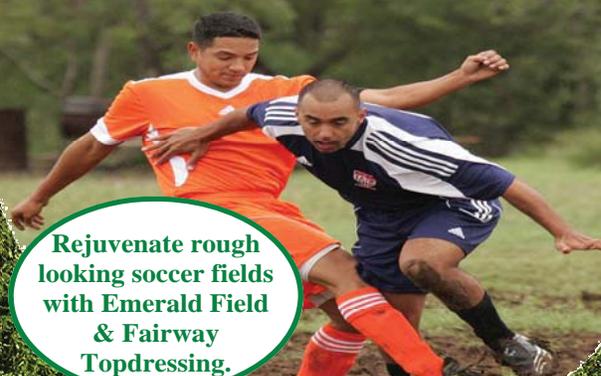
In an internship a student should learn every aspect of the job, though they must learn to crawl before they can walk. Yes, I know; that statement is very broad. The student should learn how the head grounds keeper runs their facility, which means learn his/her style of maintenance. When I took my internship, I learned how to repair a game pitching mound and bull pens along with repairing the batter's box area, how to drag an infield, how to edge a field, learned different mowing patterns for the outfield and the infield, learned how to chalk straight foul lines and batters boxes for games and getting the warning track level and smooth. I learned how to take all of these practices and implement them to make it playable and safe for game days. On off days in preparation for a home stand, we would take a different approach to getting the field ready. Some of the tasks that I was shown and preformed where blowing out lips, painting foul lines and logos, aeration and topdressing, mowing both the infield and outfield in the opposite direction to stand up the grass from the previous pattern, along with fixing irrigation and putting down fertilizer applications prior to the start of a new home stand.

Now comes in where you, as the grounds keeper, should let your intern start to walk. Give them a number of tasks that involve what you have taught them to do. Blowing out lips prior to a home stand or mowing a pattern in the outfield on the morning of game day. As the season progresses let them take over a game or two, that is if you think they are ready for the challenge. If they want to be in your shoes one day, they need to feel what it's like in certain situations. Such as, you are aerating a field to relieve compaction then later you are running an irrigation cycle and all of the sudden you see some of your turf bubble up due to a head struck by aeration. Once the problem is under control ask the intern what could have caused the problem and their solution to fix it. Let them take what you have taught them and take it to the next level. There is nothing like being presented with a challenge and meeting the expectations of a mentor. Take the time to ask your interns questions of possible problems that arise, make them think about possible solutions and if their off on their explanation

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tell them how or why. That's what makes the job fun and enjoyable to learn.

In conclusion, I feel the best way to serve your interns is to teach them every aspect of your job. Let them get a lot of hands on experience with the practices you have taught them. It is the interns job to learn, but that can't happen with support from the top. If interns or student employees are not challenged they are not learning. I did an internship with T.J. Brewer, CSFM he has the philosophy: "If you don't give someone the opportunity to fail they will never truly succeed!" Sounds pretty bad, but think about it, it gives the ones trying to learn the ability to do just that.

Safer Equipment for Children

Jody Gill, Blue Valley Schools

Recently, I learned of the death of 9 year old Jonathan Nelson in Bentonville, Arkansas. Based on media reports I understand that Jonathan was playing with friends during school recess when a soccer goal tipped over on him causing fatal injuries. I don't know any other details and I will not speculate why this terrible tragedy happened nor is this intended to place blame on anyone.

As Professional Sports Turf Managers student and athlete safety should be at the top of our priority list. This tragedy should cause us to re-evaluate our current safety procedures but especially those procedures and policies regarding portable goals and other portable field equipment.

Many of us are dealing with high school, college and professional athletes who are generally going to use equipment, such as soccer goals, as they are intended to be used. Those of us who are responsible for elementary school facilities and equipment need to be especially aware that elementary age children are unpredictable and have not yet developed common sense that would cause them to stop and think before climbing onto or hanging from a structure such as a portable soccer goal. Most of us were taught the concept of defensive driving as a way to anticipate the actions of other drivers and hopefully prevent the collision from ever happening. As Professional Sports Turf Managers, especially at the elementary school level, we must adapt the defensive driving concept to our field safety programs. We must anticipate the unpredictable actions of children. They are not always going to follow the rules and we cannot expect them to use common sense. It is our job to anticipate their actions and provide them a safe environment whether at recess on the playground or during football practice after school.

Whether on multi-purpose fields or soccer specific fields, it makes sense to use portable soccer goals so we can move the goals around the field to spread the wear and tear on the grass. Preventing tipping of the goals should be a top priority. There are many tools and methods commercially available to anchor goals. We have addressed this by using 4 earth auger anchors per goal to keep the

goals secured to the ground. We also use chain and padlock on each anchor so the goals cannot be removed from the anchors and to prevent goal relocation by anyone other than my staff. Occasionally the anchors can work loose especially after freeze/thaw cycles. As the snow melts, we will be relocating the goals again and re-anchoring them to get ready for early spring use. You should make sure that school staff such as teachers, paras, custodians, etc. are aware of the anchoring procedures and encourage them to inspect them daily and report missing or loose anchors.

Additionally, we only use 12 foot wide, all aluminum goals at all of our elementary fields. These goals are very lightweight so if these goals tipped the chances of a serious injury is greatly reduced. There are many different soccer goal manufacturers who provide very lightweight, high quality goals. Remember though, even the lightest goal must be anchored. I know that school budgets have been squeezed to the breaking point. There are many other ways to seek funding for safer goals and for field maintenance needs including school PTA/PTO, local businesses, neighborhood associations, neighborhood garage sales, advertising on school fences, etc. The point is we must use our skills, knowledge and every other available resource to make sure accidents like the one that killed little Jonathan never happen again.



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Preparing Annual Gardens for Plant Installation

Ben Grimm, Kirkwood Community College

Since having been hired at Kirkwood Community College, I now spend more of my time working with flowering plants than turf. This has given me insight and experience in another side of the horticulture industry. Currently at Kirkwood's horticulture facility we have approximately 10,000 sq ft of annual and perennial bed space, with plans for expansion. In an average year we plant between 130-150 different species and cultivars plants.

Garden's, like turf, rely heavily on what is going on under the soil surface. To a certain extent the success of a garden can be measured by the quality of the soil the plants are grown in. When dealing with Perennial plants, the soil amending needs to be completed prior to installation. Annuals, on the other hand, can be

amended over the course of several years. This does not however take away from the importance of having a properly prepared bed.

Before amending your beds, keep in mind the location of the bed, the quantity and quality of light, the types of plants you will be growing, and what types of plants will perform best in different locations. At Kirkwood we have a variety of beds and a variety of soil mixes ranging from well drained to slow draining. Just like many other facilities we started with less than ideal soil for growing ornamental and foliage plants. We did not have the initial funding to amend all our beds on the initial startup; instead, we have been amending them slowly over the last couple of years.

On the initial ground breaking, we concentrated our resources on the beds where perennials were to be installed right away. We amended with topsoil, sand, and compost. We target 1 part topsoil, 1 part sand, and 1 part compost as a general soil profile. By adding the compost we increased nutrient and water holding capacity and by adding the sand we increased the drainage in the location. In locations that held moisture, we increased the % sand to help with drainage. Before adding our amendments we tilled the area multiple times and as deep as we could possibly go. We did this to try to relieve as much compaction as possible from the construction of our facility. After the soil was broken up and tilled to a nice texture, we then dumped and spread the compost and sand onto the bed. We then tilled the amendments into the bed while ensuring the soil had proper moisture.

During the tilling process, whether the bed was for annuals or perennials, we incorporated a complete slow release fertilizer with micros into the soil. Fertilizing during the tilling process allows for the fertilizer to not only be located on the soil surface but incorporated through the entire soil profile. Performing yearly soil

- "Plant Preparation" continued on page 15

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tests on both your compost and beds will help ensure you are applying proper amounts of fertilizer. When applying fertilizer during planting we apply half of the fertilizer we intend to use for the year. The slow release fertilizer we use has the capability of lasting up to 3 months depending on the environment. This initial fertilizer helps in the establishment of the plants and slowly releases during the first half of the season. We will then apply the second half of the fertilizer around 1.5 months later. We do this to ensure optimum fertilizer during peak times of flowering, and to help prolong the flowering time of some of the plants. This gives us a window of 4 to 5 months of fertility with the nutrients slowly decreasing as the season comes to an end.

When planting annual beds the amendment of the soil can be performed slowly over time; by reducing the quantity of amendments initially applied and spreading the process over multiple years. To help in the amending process we do not rip the root ball out of the garden at the end of the season. We simply cut the plant off at ground level and till the root ball into the bed the next year. Doing this adds organic matter to the bed, you add greenhouse grade soil mixes to your bed from the initial root ball, and you are not taking any already amended soil from the bed.

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Appeals Court Grants New Six-Month Stay For Clean Water Act Pesticide Final Permit

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit March 28 granted the Environmental Protection Agency's request for an additional six-month stay of a court order to require hundreds of thousands of pesticide applicators to obtain Clean Water Act permits before they discharge pollutants into water bodies (*National Cotton Council v. EPA*, 6th Cir., No. 06-4630, *motion for stay granted 3/28/11*).

The order granting the stay responded to a request by EPA that the court-imposed deadline be extended from April 9 until Oct. 31. The court previously had granted a stay of the mandate from April 9, 2009, until April 9, 2011, at EPA's request.

The latest stay followed the White House Office of Management and Budget's clearance for release March 25 of the EPA final general permit requiring that pesticide discharges to waters be covered by National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits under the Clean Water Act.

The agency has estimated the permit program will affect approximately 365,000 pesticide applicators who perform 5.6 million pesticide applications annually.

NPDES Permits Mandated in 2009

The requirement for NPDES permits was mandated Jan. 7, 2009, by a Sixth Circuit decision that vacated an EPA rule authorizing permit exemptions for farmers, public health officials, and ranchers who apply pesticides into, over, or near water bodies to control mosquitoes and other pests.

In its most recent request for an extension, which was made March 3, EPA cited several remaining challenges, including:

- completing a consultation required by the Endangered Species Act,
- allowing states authorized to issue their own permit programs more time to review EPA's final permit, and
- giving EPA more time to develop an electronic system to help the regulated community give notice of the discharges to be covered under the permit.

Meanwhile, two House committees have approved legislation (H.R. 872) that would prevent implementation of the court order. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved legislation March 16 by a vote of 46-8. The House Agriculture Committee approved the legislation by voice vote March 9 ([35 CRR 308, 3/21/11](#)).

The general permit, which the court required, would cover discharges in areas where EPA is the permitting authority for the NPDES program. These areas include several states, Indian Country lands, and certain federal facilities.

The permit would apply to pesticide control of mosquitoes and other flying insects; aquatic weeds and algae; aquatic nuisance animals, including mollusks and lamprey eels; and forest canopy pests.

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