

How Do You Do...?

The question: How Do You Re-condition Your Fields Following 4th of July Activities?

Answered by Kevin Parnell; Grounds Maint. Supervisor; City of High Point, NC

Whether it is baseball, soccer, cookouts, or fireworks Fourth of July activities involve the majority of our facilities and after a busy day of fun this makes for several days of work on our different athletic fields.

We begin re-conditioning with a deep watering. This is then followed up by aerification in two directions which is then followed by topdressing with a mixture of 70% sand and 30% organic matter. After dragging the mix in we apply a 34-3-11 slow release fertilizer at a rate of 100# per acre followed again by deep watering.

The final step takes place about 2 weeks after this process began. The fields are aerified once again with slicing tines in two directions.

The Fourth of July celebration for us tends to last for 2 to 3 weeks, but the results from our "celebration" helps to get us through the busy fall season.

Answered by Chris Calcaterra, Mark Janz, Darin Budak, Al Siebert; Maintenance Crew, City of Peoria (AZ) Sports Complex

The Fourth of July brings many enthusiastic people out to enjoy the fun, festivities, and fireworks all in one day! The problems facing turf managers is the set-up time, event time, and tear down time. If all goes well, it would be a smooth, seamless entry and exit for the event. More than likely, a turf manager will deal with many issues and concerns within a short time span before the event. Where does the stage go? Where does the beer truck park? And lastly, where to place those port-a-johns? These are necessary evils to sustain the thousands of people that come to ooh and awe at the fireworks spectacle. One of the first precautions you can take against damage to the turf areas is your watering schedule. Cut back two days out from your planned event to allow for move in and set up times. Cut back does not mean cut off. You may have to syringe several times during the day to keep the canopy cool and lessen the affects of stress on the turf plant. After you have planned your watering windows, pre-plan with the event coordinator to allow for the most minimal impact to your sensitive turf areas. Remember that forcing thousands of people into roped off vendor tents or seating areas causes severe trampled aisles. Avoid this by allowing open seating and spreading vendor tents across your event area. When moving heavy trucks and trailers into a turf area, use plywood roads to spread the weight (center of gravity). After your event you will want to survey the event area for worn and compressed areas. If applicable, aerify those areas that are compacted and fertilize the entire turf area with a starter fertilizer to begin the process of healing the turf. Resume your normal watering schedules and mowing schedules to promote growth. The most important advice of all is never let your turf area alone when vendors, contractors, and

event staff are moving in and setting up. They have little if any stake in how it looks when they leave, so, for them, the turf manager or turf manager's concerns are more of an inconvenience.

Answered by Connie Rudolph, CSFM; Head Groundskeeper, Midway Stadium, St. Paul, MN

The main problem I have after a Saints game on the Fourth of July is fireworks debris. On that day we cross our fingers and pray the wind is blowing out of the ballpark to make our job easier. If the wind isn't in our favor, we've had debris to pick up as far away as home plate (they are shot from behind the center-field homerun fence) and many labor hours can be spent picking up the mess. Over the years, I've tried many pieces of suction equipment, but so far the only one that does a decent job on the grass is called a "Billy Goat". It's a medium sized walk behind vacuum with a fabric bag catcher. It clearly worked better than the rest on grass. Another option, which doesn't always work

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Chapter Events

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Henrico Recreation and Parks, via e-mail: buc06@co.henrico.va.us or at 804-261-8213.

Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association:

For more information on the Wisconsin Chapter, or other pending events, call Richard Miller at 608-756-1150.

Chapters On The Grow

Kentucky: For information on the chapter forming in Kentucky, contact Tom Nielsen at TNielsen@batsbaseball.com or Aaron Boggs at AVBoggs@netscape.net.

Las Vegas: For information on the chapter developing in Las Vegas, contact Rod Smith, Grounds Manager/Cashman Center at e-mail: rms@lveva.com or at 702-386-7140.

New York: For information on the chapter forming in Central New York, contact Kevin Meredith, National Soccer Hall of Fame, at e-mail: Kevin@wpe.com or at tel. 607-432-2953.

Across the Border Sports Turf Events

Canada's Sports Turf Association will hold their 15th Annual Field Day on September 12 at River Oaks Recreation Centre in Oakville, Ontario. Educational sessions include: "Intelligent Irrigation," with Gregory Snaith of Rain Bird International; "The Olympic Experience," with Becky Kellar, member of the Team Canada Women's Hockey team; "Introduction to Turf Covers," with Dr. Julie Dionne of the University of Guelph; and "The Ace of Diamonds Tour Athletic Field Maintenance Seminar," with Mel Lanford. Also included in the day's events will be opportunities to view both indoor and outdoor exhibits and to meet with the exhibitors.

For more information contact Executive Manager, Ms. Lee Heuther, via e-mail: sta@gti.uoguelph.ca or at 519/763-9431.

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but is worth a try, is to get the front office staff to come out and help. It's amazing how fast the work goes when there are many hands helping. But, you have to ask REALLY nice.

A couple of other 4th of July issues I've had this year have been burn marks where they ignited the fireworks on my sod nursery area and a between inning site gag, which involved contestants wrestling in a plastic pool full of potato salad. Some of the potato salad spilled on to the grass and killed a small area. On the burned turf, I put a seed/soil mixture on it. On the potato salad area, I did the same, plus sprayed it with green paint, since it was on the field area. Who knew potato salad could be so dangerous!



Are You Ready To Tackle Certification?

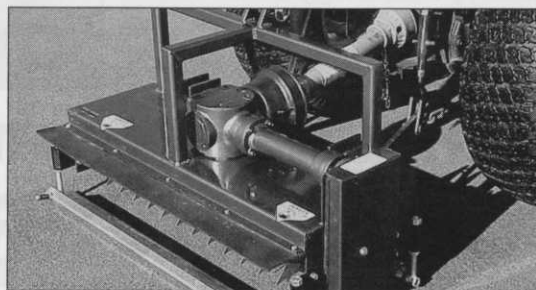
Having recognized the importance of fostering and improving professionalism within the sports turf industry, the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) developed the certification program for sports turf managers.

The STMA firmly believes that a combination of education and experience are necessary to be the best possible athletic field manager. However, it also recognizes that in a profession as diverse as the sports turf industry, experience should play a major role.

In order to successfully gain certification, you must meet certain education and/or experience requirements. These requirements were set to establish minimum criterion for becoming certified. You will notice, however, that there is a strong leaning toward experience as a sports field manager. For example, it is possible to be certified without having any formal education beyond high school if you have enough years of experience. You can not, however, become certified by virtue of education alone.

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