

# STA Member Profile

Dave Ellis • Manager of Parks Maintenance • City of Regina

## What is your role with the City?

As Manager of Parks Maintenance, I am responsible for the lifecycle and maintenance of Parks and Open Space, managing two cemeteries and the maintenance of athletic fields in the City of Regina.

## What kind of team do you work with?

Our team consists of three Parks District Foremen, one Cemeteries Foreman and a Foreman of Parks Services, Al Sandalack. Al is responsible for athletic fields; playgrounds; herbicide application, ice rinks and city-owned vacant land maintenance. We have 21 permanent em-

ployees and approximately 120 employees who work seasonally.

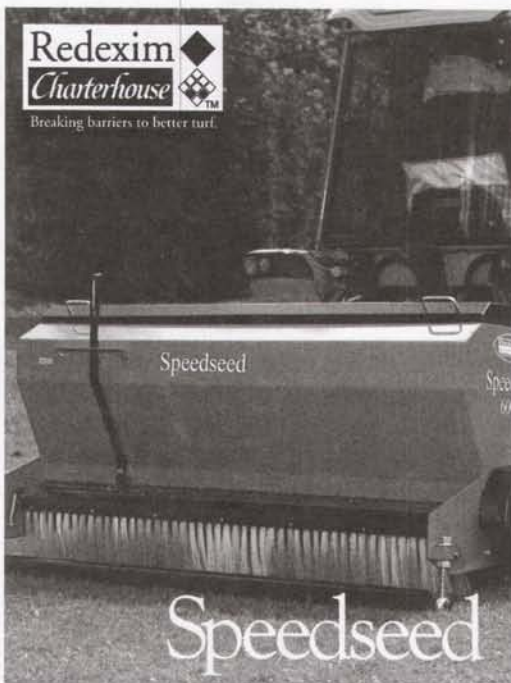
## What are you and your team responsible for?

We manage the lifecycle and maintenance of 285 parks covering about 3,000 acres of parks and open space. We have 43 athletic fields; a city pathway network; 68 outdoor skating rinks including two on residential lakes; 147 playgrounds; a herbicide application program; a spring boulevard cleaning program; and two active cemeteries with approximately 600 interments per year. We manage a diversity

of open space from dry land turf to our Class-A parks with computer-controlled central irrigation. We manage native prairie grassland and wetland parks.

## What is your biggest challenge?

This is a diverse job requiring expertise in everything from cemetery management to natural area care and the high-end maintenance of athletic fields. The trend in our seasonal work force is towards a higher turn-over rate. We deal with balancing public and user group expectations with available resources. Of course, pesticide use has been a sensitive



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However, there is no sand hopper with this model. The SS6000H is the same as the SS6000, but with its own fully floating, hydraulically operated rotary brush. Ideal when overseeding after you have top dressed the area first. The rotary brush will brush-in the sand and the seed, for the perfect finish.

After the seed is delivered, the built-in brush and roller finish the job.

Length:	30"
Width:	64"
Working width:	58"
Minimum tractor size:	17 hp
Seed hopper capacity:	2.5 cu ft
No. of holes:	60 per sq ft

## Feature

Fast random disbursement of seed  
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Rear mounted roller and dry brush  
Large seed hopper

## Benefit

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Saves time and money  
Surface is left ready for play  
Less time filling

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issue here for the past few years. We are somewhat isolated from horticulture schools and suppliers of horticultural materials and equipment.

**What is the most satisfying part, what makes the job worthwhile for you?**

Regina is a great community. The public places a very high value on our park system and each year in our City Public Satisfaction Survey, Parks and Open Space has ranked number one in customer satisfaction of all City services. It is very evident here that Parks and Open Space contributes to the high quality of life we enjoy in Regina.

**What is the biggest misconception about your job?**

This job, and parks maintenance work in general, is sometimes seen as such a general job that no special skills or abilities are needed and that maintaining the landscape is no more difficult than what a homeowner does in the yard. However, the scale of the work and an understanding of use patterns, public safety, having technical expertise, and general management skills all combine to make this a unique and fulfilling career. I think some in our industry view parks management as a horticulture job. I tend to believe that we are in the recreation industry as opposed to the horticulture industry. We use horticulture knowledge, skills and resources to fulfill our role in the recreation industry.

**What is your educational/employment background?**

I have a B.Sc. in Agriculture from the University of Alberta where I specialized

in horticulture and weed control. The courses I took in Range Management have proven beneficial in managing native parkland and natural areas. I have held a pesticide applicator license for more than 20 years. I have nearly completed a certificate program from the University of Calgary in Environmental Management and have completed several short courses over the years in areas such as IPM and arboriculture. I have worked in City Parks Management for 20 years, the past three have been in the City of Regina.

**Tell us about your family.**

This year, my wife Wendy and I will celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. We have four children and one son-in-law. Our youngest son and daughter are in high school.

**What do you enjoy doing outside of the workplace? Hobbies, favourite past times?**

I have always enjoyed our native flora and enjoy hiking and camping and learning about native flowering plants. I have been active in the Boy Scout organization for many years in varying capacities. I am a certified SCUBA Instructor and was a very active SCUBA diver prior to moving to Regina. I haven't done much diving in Regina, but my golf game is getting a little better!

**What direction(s) would you like to see the industry, as a whole, move towards?**

I think our industry provides so much to society that is mostly unnoticed and we should be more active in promoting the benefits. Our industry contributes to

enhancing property values; the cooling effects of landscape in urban environment; oxygen production; carbon dioxide absorption; traffic calming; space that encourages a more active lifestyle; and the general enhancement to quality of life provided by urban landscapes. This is something we should be proud of and promote.

**What do you consider to be the biggest benefit of being a member of the STA?**

It is important to keep up with trends, best practices, research, new ideas and products. I have found the most effective way to do this is through networking within the industry. Membership in the STA has provided an excellent forum for this kind of networking. ♦



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