Often the only assessment of a sports field occurs at the beginning of a game as the referee quickly peruses the field to assure that it will be safe for play. This is necessary and will identify irrigation heads that are stuck or possibly identify large holes in the field caused by concerts and other alternative uses. However, this assessment will not help the sport field manager fulfill the goals of identifying management problems and moving towards improving overall quality.

One of the most important steps of sports field assessment is to determine and explicitly state the goals of the assessment. There are many things that can be assessed. Generally we think of assessing the playing field but other things need to be addressed concurrently, such as construction, the management plan, the implementation of the management plan and possibly even the classification system that many municipalities and athletic facilities are implementing. The goals for identifying problems...