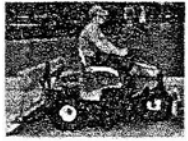
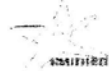


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“Letter from the Editors”

by *Eleanora Murfitt & Jim Hermann, CSFM*

As co-editors of SFMANJ Update and also both sports field managers, Eleanora and I feel compelled to continue to provide our readers with a plethora (I love that word) of information applicable to the day-to-day activities involved in sports field management. The challenges in sports field management bring with them the demand for commitment, perseverance and knowledge. Much of the information we provide will by design test the knowledge and understanding of our readers.

We hope to continue to provide information intended to help you to develop a proactive and effective sports field management program. As part of a proactive management program it is important for the SFM (sports field manager) to remain up to date and aware of the rules and regulations affecting the industry.

There is currently state legislation slated to take affect within the next eighteen months which will govern the way that many schools and institutions initiate their pest control strategy both indoors and out. This legislation will mandate the implementation of IPM (Integrated Pest Management) into the system.

IPM necessitates the need for a deeper understanding of those factors affecting environmentally conscientious pest control. SFMANJ Update will therefore be providing information and education concerning those factors.

One such factor affecting the development of an environmentally sound IPM program is an understanding of the weather conditions and how day-to-day variations affect decisions. The following column written by Dr. Joe Russo and Dennis Watkins will provide the SFM with a deeper understanding of this decision making tool. ▲

“Information as a Decision-Making Tool “

by *Dr. Joe Russo and Dennis Watkins*

This is the first in a series of columns in which we wish to share with readers our knowledge, experience, and in some cases, our opinions about the scientific and technical issues that either directly or indirectly impact sports turf management. Who are we? We are an agricultural meteorologist and systems scientist (Joe) and a turfgrass agronomist (Dennis). We have between us over fifty years of experience in agricultural and turf-related fields. The information provided in our columns is aimed at the practitioner of sports turf management and it will be delivered with an awareness of related environmental, social, and economic concerns.

In this column, we would like to talk about information itself. If correctly understood and appropriately

Continued on next page.....

applied, information can be a powerful ally in decision making. Information, like decision making, can be divided into two types: strategic and tactical. Strategic information is associated with long-range planning – typically months ahead of a particular action. Tactical information is associated with short-range planning – typically hours or a few days ahead. Strategic information tends to be general, while tactical is specific.

The difference between strategic and tactical information can be best understood with examples. As everyone knows, weather varies day-to-day and season-to-season. A maximum temperature for one day in April in a given year will likely be different from maximum temperatures observed on the same day in previous years. If we average all the maximum temperatures together, say over a 30-day period, we can compute a “climatological” value. This climatological value, referred to by meteorologists as the “normal” maximum temperature for a given day, represents a strategic bit of information. That is, “on average,” the maximum temperature on a given day in a given year should be close to the computed “normal.”

Of course, there will be a range of values if years are considered separately, but a normal maximum temperature should be representative for a given day.

A sports turf manager can utilize climatological data as strategic information for planning out future, weather-dependent activities. As weather events become more immediate in a given season, day-to-day observations and short-term forecasts can provide tactical information. That is, the present-day weather conditions and forecasts can be used to “fine-tune” pre-planned, strategic decisions. Climatological and weather data are just simple examples of how strategic and tactical information can help a sports turf manager become an informed decision-maker. ▲

Dr. Joe Russo is president of ZedX, Inc., an information technology company located in Bellefonte, PA.

Dennis Watkins is a turfgrass agronomist located in Lords Valley, PA.



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