Winter Field Management Tips

Clean-up. Leaves, sticks, and other debris that accumulate on the grass over the winter should be raked when weather permits. Debris lying on the turf too long can smother the grass and create bare spots. Bare spots will probably transform into weeds later in the season.

Mowing. Winter is a good time to clean, lubricate and repair your mowing equipment. You do not want to find out that your mowers do not work properly at first use in the spring. Because of the chance for wet weather and rapid shoot growth any delay in mowing at the start of the season (spring) can turn into a “behind the eight-ball” scenario very quickly.

Fertilization. Plan for your fertilization needs by testing your soil to determine whether liming is necessary to adjust soil pH (6.0 to 6.7 recommended) as well as which nutrients are needed and how much. If you applied a thorough late season (autumn) fertilization, your turf probably will not need as much fertilization in early spring (March - April). Without a fall fertilization program, your field may require some rather aggressive fertilization to encourage recovery from play or winter damage or to enhance spring green-up. Refer to the popular internet search engines to see examples of numerous companies that can supply covers in various sizes and shapes.

Cover Skinned Infield Areas. Wet winter weather can lead to considerable erosion of skinned areas on baseball/softball infields. Consider covering these areas during the winter to eliminate much of the skin restoration headaches this spring. Type “baseball field covers” in any of the popular internet search engines to see examples of numerous companies that can supply covers in various sizes and shapes.

*James A. Murphy, Ph.D. is Extension Specialist in Turfgrass Management, Rutgers University; and SFMA NJ Advisor

DID YOU KNOW?

Turfgrass is a major land cover in New Jersey, accounting for 880,542 acres and making-up 18% of the State’s total land area.

Calendar of Events 2007

Three-Day Athletic Field Construction and Maintenance
February 27 - March 1, 2007
Rutgers University - Office of Continuing Professional Education
Cook College, New Brunswick, NJ
732-932-9271
www.cookce.rutgers.edu

Understanding Synthetic Fields
March 7, 2007
Rutgers University - Office of Continuing Professional Education
Cook College, New Brunswick, NJ
732-932-9271
www.cookce.rutgers.edu

Baseball/Softball Infield Skin Construction and Management
March 14, 2007
Rutgers University - Office of Continuing Professional Education
Rutgers Snyder Research & Extension Farm, Piscataway, NJ
732-932-9271 bb
www.cookce.rutgers.edu

SFMANJ Annual Spring Field Days
April 12, 2007
South River, NJ - Rutgers Hort. Farm II
908-730-7770
www.sfmanj.org

Rutgers Lawn, Landscape, and Sports Turf Field Day
SFMANJ Equipment Demos back for 2007
August 1, 2007
NJ Turfgrass Assoc., SFMANJ, Rutgers University
908-730-7770

NJ Turf & Landscape Conference and Expo 2007
December 4-6, 2007
Trump Taj Mahal Casino-Resort
Atlantic City, NJ
www.njturfgrass.org

The entrance to Edward A. Grekoski Park, South River, NJ, site of the SFMANJ 2006 Field of the Year, was well maintained.

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Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey

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