

# Not Your Ordinary Turfgrass Program

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Unlike many other programs that are reactionary responses to an immediate or developing problem, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Turfgrass Research and Extension Team has been involved over the past year developing an Integrated Turfgrass Management (ITM) program. The ITM program is a proactive program that will provide the necessary training, education, and outreach (consulting) to turfgrass managers of five contiguous acres or more. Such information will enable all turfgrass managers to develop practical turfgrass management programs that are cost-effective, agronomically and environmentally sound, without compromising ecosystem quality, yet are in compliance with foreseeable and likely state and federal regulations.

Since its conception, everyone involved in the development of the ITM program has been working diligently to ensure that the program is of the highest quality, professional, useful, as well as successful. Yet another step has been successfully completed, on January 1, 2002 Kevin Hensler officially joined the ITM program. Kevin's title is Integrated Turfgrass Management Specialist. His responsibilities will include: collaborative development of an ITM manual, coordination and delivery of educational workshops and training seminars, on-site consultations and annual visits, interpretation of soil sample results and respective fertility recommendations, as well as marketing of the ITM program.

Without question, Kevin has his "work cut out." However, we are confident that with everyone working together, we can make the ITM program a success. As we near the final and the most important stage of the program, this is where you, the end user, comes into the picture. Most importantly, in order for this program to truly become a success, we need your support. The ITM program invites you to get on board and take a proactive role in the pursuit of environmentally responsible turfgrass management.

Since the ITM program is a self-funded (fee-based) outreach program, a modest program fee will be associated with participation. Enrollees will be entitled to the ITM manual, full-scale training and educational workshops, an annual on-site consultation, turfgrass diagnostic services, and access to an interactive turfgrass web site. A program brochure that outlines the types of program packages is now available. This brochure will be mailed to everyone that is a member of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association, Northern Great Lakes Golf Course Superintendents Association, Wisconsin Golf

Course Superintendents Association, Wisconsin Landscape Federation, and the Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association. Should you have any questions, please contact Kevin Hensler at 608-845-2545 or [hensler@entomology.wisc.edu](mailto:hensler@entomology.wisc.edu).

We are confident that the ITM program will provide valuable information, education, and resources, as well as aid turfgrass managers in their continually increasing need to justify management plans, policies, and procedures. Participation in the ITM program may also enhance the frequently perceived public opinion or misconception that turf is potentially an environmental hazard. Moreover, this program has the impetus to potentially reduce unwarranted or unjustified inputs, thus saving monetary resources, and providing agronomically and environmental sound management practices. ♣

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