

# How Do You Do...?

## The Question -- How Do You Deal with Excess Precipitation on your Fields?

Answered by Bob Womack, Supervisor, Southwestern College, Chula Vista, CA

Our main objective in dealing with any kind of precipitation is to be prepared to make decisions. This approach is best handled through recordkeeping of past experience with field conditions related to light, medium and heavy rains.

The time it takes for our field's surface and subsurface to drain assist us with decisions regarding all cultural practices; clearing of drains, mowing, slice aeration, type and method of fertilizing and fungicide applications, irrigation scheduling, spot treatments of Turface, turf damage/repair, field preparation and equipment selection.

Decisions regarding field conditions during the rainy season become our #1 priority. We consider the sport being played, the needs of the coaches, the safety of the field being played on and whether or not games should be canceled. As a sports turf manager, it is my opinion that the recording of the past holds the key to success.

Answered by James Cornelius, West Chester (PA) Area School District

Actually, this is kind of a trick question. Our budget isn't set up for separate areas of grounds (i.e., grounds and sports facilities), so we take what we can get for our 26 sports fields out of the same budget as the rest of the grounds. Add to that the fact that only two (2) of our fields have actual drainage, so we often do end up dealing with damage after the fact.

We do attempt to avoid damage by following good cultural practices within our budget constraints. To that end, we topdress with Turface and pre-germinate seed and put it down after games.

Answered by T. Mark Clay, Spectacor Management/Jacksonville Jaguars

We're here every day for 10-12 hours during the football season and we know to keep a good eye (and ear) on the weather. If there's even a hint of precipitation in the forecast, we have a 360' x 200' field tarp that we will put down. Our field also has USGA Green Spec drainage that will drain 10-12 inches per hour -- so we're pretty much okay that way.

If it happens to be raining while we're painting logos, etc., we just stop while it's raining, put down plastic, and go back out once it stops. If, for some reason, it doesn't stop raining and the logos look like they might not dry for game time, we'll bring out torpedo heaters and set them up under a "tent" to dry the logos. To keep the heat off the grass, we use backpack sprayers to blow the air up and circulate it.

Answered by Connie Rudolph, Midway Stadium, St. Paul, MN

This summer in Minnesota was a true test of dealing with excess precipitation. The St. Paul Saints were forced to rain out 4 games (usually they only have 1 a year), and precipitation was a factor with 4 scheduled concert dates. We also had a flash flood during a Saint's game that claimed about 25 cars, including mine.

When the sky opens up during a baseball game, at least the game can be halted and the field dried with calcined clay and stand *continued on page 14*



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# Headquarters Update

by Steve Trusty, Executive Director

Conference Registrations are starting to pour in. Have you made plans to be in Florida in January? Every indication points to a record number of attendees and a record number of exhibitors. Don't miss out on the opportunity to learn from your peers and to see the newest in products that can make your job easier. You will also have the opportunity to attend many very worthwhile educational sessions and visit facilities that you might not otherwise have a chance to see. It is not too late to get your reservation in.

Another incentive to be in Orlando in January is the announcement of the Certified Sports Turf Manager (CSTM) program. Your committee has been hard at work and have a preliminary program approved by your Board of Directors. We plan to present the official program during the conference. Thanks to all of you who took time to contact headquarters or committee members with your thoughts. While it is not possible to adopt every suggestion made or to make everyone happy, your committee did give every response consideration. While the "official" program is being introduced, any good program is a growing program and will continue to be tweaked.

Would you like to assist your association and receive immeasurable benefits in return? Volunteer to serve on one or more of the STMA Committees. Refer to page 9 of your Membership Roster and decide which committee(s) you would like to contribute to. Contact President-Elect Stephen Guise or the STMA Headquarters and express your interest. Your board is always looking for people with ideas to share.

Speaking of the Roster, since STMA has grown so dramatically this past year, we have decided to publish an addendum to the 1996-97 Roster. You should receive your copy very shortly. This addendum lists all of the new members that have joined between the first of the year and the end of September. Between the two volumes you can find all of the current STMA members.

Use these valuable resources to contact your peers whenever you need assistance. We constantly hear stories of STMA members helping others. That is one of the great joys of working with all of you.

Be sure that you have your 1998 dues paid no later than March. That is when we will be preparing the 1998 issue of the Membership Roster. Only those whose dues are paid by that time will be listed. The intent now is to publish the current year's Roster for distribution each May.

We at Headquarters hope that you all had a very thankful Thanksgiving and wish you a most joyful Holiday Season.

STM

## How Do You Do...?

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ing water pushed aside with foam covered rollers. However, during a concert, the show goes on rain or shine. For immediate solutions, I use stakes and ropes to steer people to better areas, and on the heaviest traveled areas, I put plywood down to help spread the weight around. With the exception of placing field tarps in front of the stage areas, not a lot else can be done at that time.

Short term solutions for removing standing water include digging a small hole in the center of your puddle and using a "trash" pump along with foam covered rollers to push the water towards the hole. Afterwards, the area can be dried further, if needed, with a calcined clay product.

Depending on how your drainage handles excess water, sometimes a longer term cure is needed. At Midway, a July 17th concert really did the field in after a 3" rainfall the night before. Because of all the rainfall, compaction in front of the stages (there were 3) was horrible. My solution, short of reconstructing these areas, was to aerate with a deep drill machine, which drilled a 1" diameter by 8" deep hole and backfilled the holes with a ceramic product (sand can also be used). I did the worst areas and it seemed to do the trick for me.

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