

# STA Ontario Field Day

MORE THAN 200 PROFESSIONALS WERE “ONSITE IN OAKVILLE” SEPT. 22!



## Continuing Success Year After Year.

**TRUE TO FORM** (or, at least as one would hope), the last day of summer was bright and sunny; a clearing of skies from the rain which preceded and then followed. More than 200 participants representing the turfgrass industry joined us “Onsite in Oakville” for the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Field Day at the Glen Abbey Community Centre on September 22. The respected speakers, topics that were varied and on trend, tremendous supplier support and presence, delicious lunch, and of course, the delegates who were keen to learn, all contributed to the day’s success.

**FOR BETTER, SAFER SPORTS TURF... YEAR AFTER YEAR... 25 IN 2012!**



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# Facility Profile

GLEN ABBEY RECREATION FACILITY, OAKVILLE, SITE OF STA FALL FIELD DAY

**General information regarding the facility.** Glen Abbey Recreation Facility, 1415 Third Line, Oakville, has three natural playing surfaces, one hardball, one softball and a field hockey pitch that doubles as a mini soccer field. Adjacent to the fields are a skateboard park, one basketball court and four outdoor tennis courts. The recreation building houses two community rinks, a gymnastic facility, squash courts, pool and a library facility for the Glen Abbey community.

**What types of sports fields are on site? Natural? Synthetic?**  
All fields are natural and irrigated.

**How many employees are involved with turf care at this facility?**  
No permanent staff are designated to the facility. It falls under an area serviced by one full-time sports field operator with two seasonal summer students. A sports field cutter cuts irrigated surfaces three times a week. Another crew cuts general parkland.

**How many acres of turf are maintained at this facility? How many acres of sports turf?** Glen Abbey is just over 5 hectares, three of which are used for playing surfaces.

**What percentage of this acreage is irrigated?** Over 50%. Baseball diamonds, the field hockey pitch and select shrub beds surrounding the site are on our central irrigation system.

**What is the primary type of turfgrass? Name of varieties.**  
Perennial rye and Kentucky blue.

**Is yearly overseeding part of your sports turf maintenance program?** Yes, we overseed in the spring, summer and fall with extra attention paid to high traffic areas.

**How many times do you fertilize?** Irrigated surfaces are done three times; general parkland once.

**Do you aerate? Topdress?** We aerate 5x/year and topdress three times with lots of spot seeding/topdressing during play.

**If applicable, what is your maintenance regimen for synthetic turf?** Not applicable at this location.

**Are community user groups involved or have they been involved in the construction/maintenance of this facility? In what manner?** Community volunteer groups sometimes pick up litter in the skateboard area and along the creek trail.



2011 STA Fall Field Day at Glen Abbey in Oakville.

**How many hours per year are the fields permitted? Who permits them? Are the fields ever closed during the season to give them a rest? How much input do you have in the amount and timing of use?** Our fields are operational from late April until mid-October, weather permitting. For the most part, our user groups are community based and school boards. Occasionally, we receive bookings for special events. We close the fields when we get inclement weather as long as permitting has enough notice to get the information to user groups. As far as closing to help the turf recuperate and do some maintenance, we are currently unable to do so because there is a lack of alternate sites for groups to be moved to.

# STA Member Profile

DWAYNE MCALLISTER, SUPERVISOR, SPORTS FIELDS & IPM, OAKVILLE

**What is your role with the Town of Oakville?** Supervisor – Sports Fields and Integrated Pest Management.

**What kind of team do you work with?** I am fortunate to work with a highly dedicated parks team who do their best to ensure the internal and external client experience at our sports facilities is top notch.

**What are you and your team responsible for?** Our team covers the entire Town of Oakville and is specific to the maintenance of sports fields and the Town's IPM program. We maintain 56 irrigated fields, two artificial, one cricket pitch, and assist with the community run bowling green. We also maintain numerous class B&C fields on parkland and school board properties.

**What is the biggest challenge in your job?** One of our largest challenges is balancing permitting hours with down time for maintenance. Like so many municipalities, Oakville is growing in leaps and bounds. It is a long process to get new community parks in place to accommodate increased user enrolment. Each year, groups want a bigger slice of the available time. The end result is that there is more use on existing fields.

**What is the most satisfying part, what makes the job worthwhile for you?** It is exceptionally nice to look at the address section of an e-mail and see that the Mayor, Commissioner, Director and Manager have all been notified that frontline staff did a great job. I know they did, but acknowledgment from the client and being the bearer of that message to the team who did the work is very fulfilling.

**What is the biggest misconception about your job?** That we take winter off. The general public has no idea how much work goes into scheduling, hiring and equipment maintenance to make the following season run smoothly. Throw in the natural ice rinks and snow removal and our winters can be as busy as the summer.

**Tell us about your family.** Born in Oakville, with my teen years spent in Ottawa, it is fitting that I landed back in Oakville to work. My fantastic wife Linda and I have an eight year-old son David. We recently moved to Oakville from the Puslinch/Guelph area. My wife and I are football fanatics – she's a Packers fan and I'm a Bears guy. Makes for some interesting discussions.

**What do you enjoy doing outside of the workplace? Hobbies, favorite past times?** My current hobbies pretty much involve being the taxi driver for David's sporting events. I'm the coach of his hockey and lacrosse teams and have a blast doing so at the house league level. We use my brother's cottage up Minden way in the summer but for the most part enjoy down time working around the older home we bought.

**How has the industry changed and in what direction(s) would you like to see the industry, as a whole, move towards?** We are all so much wiser on the benefits of IPM and reduced pesticide use, but I think water conservation and reuse needs



to be brought more to the forefront. We know in that in the near future it's going to be a huge issue. I would like to see a movement towards central irrigation systems as part of the blueprint for our new parks along with greywater recycling.

**What do you consider to be the biggest benefit of being a member of the STA?**

There are several. It's an easy avenue to keep abreast of all the advancements and technologies out there for us to use, and the networking, which occurs from being an active member, is also a great benefit.

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