

STA Member Profile

Dave Ellis • Manager of Parks Maintenance • City of Regina

What is your role with the City?

As Manager of Parks Maintenance, I am responsible for the lifecycle and maintenance of Parks and Open Space, managing two cemeteries and the maintenance of athletic fields in the City of Regina.

What kind of team do you work with?

Our team consists of three Parks District Foremen, one Cemeteries Foreman and a Foreman of Parks Services, Al Sandalack. Al is responsible for athletic fields; playgrounds; herbicide application, ice rinks and city-owned vacant land maintenance. We have 21 permanent em-

ployees and approximately 120 employees who work seasonally.

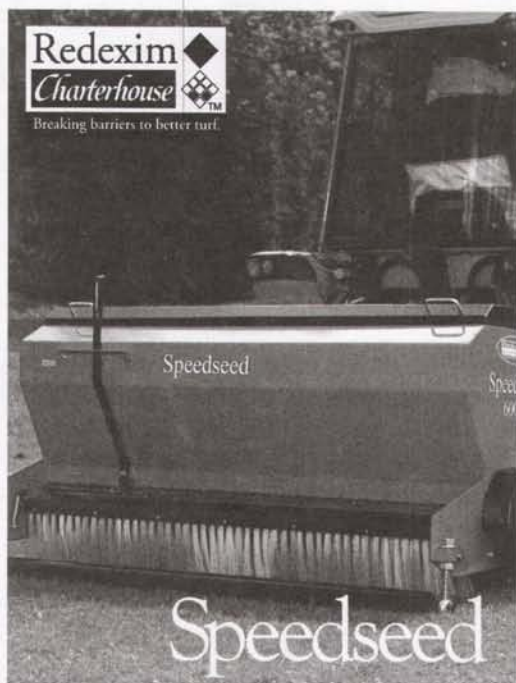
What are you and your team responsible for?

We manage the lifecycle and maintenance of 285 parks covering about 3,000 acres of parks and open space. We have 43 athletic fields; a city pathway network; 68 outdoor skating rinks including two on residential lakes; 147 playgrounds; a herbicide application program; a spring boulevard cleaning program; and two active cemeteries with approximately 600 interments per year. We manage a diversity

of open space from dry land turf to our Class-A parks with computer-controlled central irrigation. We manage native prairie grassland and wetland parks.

What is your biggest challenge?

This is a diverse job requiring expertise in everything from cemetery management to natural area care and the high-end maintenance of athletic fields. The trend in our seasonal work force is towards a higher turn-over rate. We deal with balancing public and user group expectations with available resources. Of course, pesticide use has been a sensitive



The Speedseed is ideal for sportsgrounds where economy and random seed disbursements are important. The Speedseed overseeding machines offer the same accurate means to produce thousands of holes, deliver the seed and brush in, all with a single machine.

However, there is no sand hopper with this model. The SS6000H is the same as the SS6000, but with its own fully floating, hydraulically operated rotary brush. Ideal when overseeding after you have top dressed the area first. The rotary brush will brush-in the sand and the seed, for the perfect finish.

After the seed is delivered, the built-in brush and roller finish the job.

Length:	30"
Width:	64"
Working width:	58"
Minimum tractor size:	17 hp
Seed hopper capacity:	2.5 cu ft
No. of holes:	60 per sq ft

Feature

Benefit

Fast random disbursement of seed	No drill lines
Economic	Saves time and money
Rear mounted roller and dry brush	Surface is left ready for play
Large seed hopper	Less time filling

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issue here for the past few years. We are somewhat isolated from horticulture schools and suppliers of horticultural materials and equipment.

What is the most satisfying part, what makes the job worthwhile for you?

Regina is a great community. The public places a very high value on our park system and each year in our City Public Satisfaction Survey, Parks and Open Space has ranked number one in customer satisfaction of all City services. It is very evident here that Parks and Open Space contributes to the high quality of life we enjoy in Regina.

What is the biggest misconception about your job?

This job, and parks maintenance work in general, is sometimes seen as such a general job that no special skills or abilities are needed and that maintaining the landscape is no more difficult than what a homeowner does in the yard. However, the scale of the work and an understanding of use patterns, public safety, having technical expertise, and general management skills all combine to make this a unique and fulfilling career. I think some in our industry view parks management as a horticulture job. I tend to believe that we are in the recreation industry as opposed to the horticulture industry. We use horticulture knowledge, skills and resources to fulfill our role in the recreation industry.

What is your educational/employment background?

I have a B.Sc. in Agriculture from the University of Alberta where I specialized

in horticulture and weed control. The courses I took in Range Management have proven beneficial in managing native parkland and natural areas. I have held a pesticide applicator license for more than 20 years. I have nearly completed a certificate program from the University of Calgary in Environmental Management and have completed several short courses over the years in areas such as IPM and arboriculture. I have worked in City Parks Management for 20 years, the past three have been in the City of Regina.

Tell us about your family.

This year, my wife Wendy and I will celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary. We have four children and one son-in-law. Our youngest son and daughter are in high school.

What do you enjoy doing outside of the workplace? Hobbies, favourite past times?

I have always enjoyed our native flora and enjoy hiking and camping and learning about native flowering plants. I have been active in the Boy Scout organization for many years in varying capacities. I am a certified SCUBA Instructor and was a very active SCUBA diver prior to moving to Regina. I haven't done much diving in Regina, but my golf game is getting a little better!

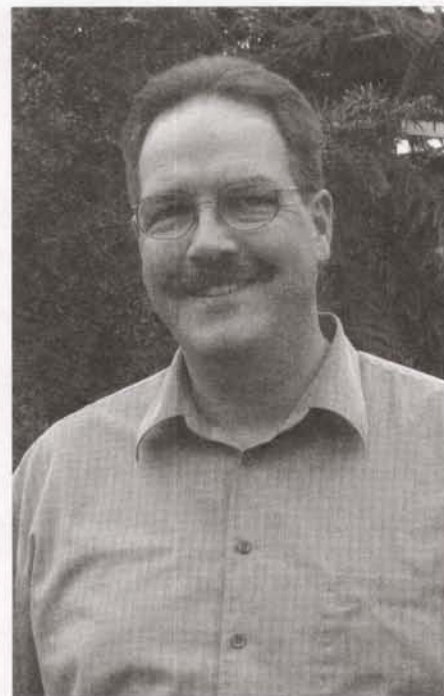
What direction(s) would you like to see the industry, as a whole, move towards?

I think our industry provides so much to society that is mostly unnoticed and we should be more active in promoting the benefits. Our industry contributes to

enhancing property values; the cooling effects of landscape in urban environment; oxygen production; carbon dioxide absorption; traffic calming; space that encourages a more active lifestyle; and the general enhancement to quality of life provided by urban landscapes. This is something we should be proud of and promote.

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

It is important to keep up with trends, best practices, research, new ideas and products. I have found the most effective way to do this is through networking within the industry. Membership in the STA has provided an excellent forum for this kind of networking. ♦



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STA Facility Profile

City of Regina

Optimist Ball Park



Name, location of facility.

The City of Regina has 43 athletic fields city-wide including seven sport field complexes that are used for higher level competition. These include Mt. Pleasant Sport Park, Optimist Park and the Rugby Centre which are venues for the 2005 Jeux du Canada Games hosted by Regina this summer.

General facility information.

Mt. Pleasant (6 fields), Rugby (4), Lakeridge (4), Optimist (2), Realtors (2), Rambler (12), Douglas (7), are all sport complex sites. All others are situated as single fields within a park.

What types of sports fields are on site?

Soccer, fastball, baseball, football and rugby. Ultimate Frisbee, field hockey and

lacrosse are also played on these sites.

How many employees are involved with turf care?

In addition to two fulltime employees, six seasonal staff maintain 43 fields. Their duties include mowing, aerating, fertilizing, topdressing, overseeding, turf repair and restoration, line painting, litter collection, bleacher and net moving, and field inspection.

How many acres of turf are maintained? How many acres of sports turf?

Our athletic field staff maintains 117 acres including 96 acres of actual play area. The other area is apron around some of the fields.

What percentage of this acreage is irrigated?

Ninety-nine percent of the 117 acres are irrigated. The irrigation is controlled by our computerized central control system.

What is the primary type of turfgrass? Name of varieties.

Our specification for grass seed has varied over the past years and sod suppliers have changed, but the majority of our turf is

Kentucky Blue. Our current seed specification includes 50% Crest Kentucky Blue; 20% Jasper Creeping Red Fescue; 15% Victory Chewing Fescue; 10% Sparton Hard Fescue; and 5% Fiesta III Perennial Ryegrass. We do allow alternatives on some of the varieties.

Is yearly overseeding part of your sports turf maintenance program?

We have two cycles of overseeding and topdressing per year. However, fall play schedules and early winter sometimes prevent the fall program.

How many times do you fertilize?

Our current fertilizer is a polymer-sulfur coated 40-0-0. We apply two pounds per 1000 square feet, three times per year. We usually apply at beginning of May, late June, and in mid August.

Do you aerate? Topdress?

Our heavy clay soils mean we must constantly work to prevent compaction, so our program is constant. We aerate all fields three to four times per year with two to three slicings to help thin out and generate new growth. We topdress up to two times per year.

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Rambler Park

Has your municipality banned the use of pesticides?

No, but reductions are being implemented. We have not needed to use herbicides on sports fields for several years with the exception of some glyphosate prior to reseeding or sodding an area.

Are community user groups involved or have they been involved in the construction/maintenance of facilities? In what manner?

Community sport user groups have varied levels of involvement in the ongoing maintenance of some ball diamonds, but all athletic fields are maintained by City of Regina staff. A number of these groups have contributed to many of the facilities which allows them priority use in some cases. Annual meetings are conducted with the Athletic Field Advisory Committee which is comprised of sport-user groups to discuss any issues, special events and identify potential future capital projects as they relate to athletic facilities. Ongoing communication between City

program and maintenance staff and user groups allows maintenance concerns to be addressed as required. Typically any improvements requested by the user group above the standards set for the level of the facility become the cost (both capital and operating) of the user group.

How many hr/yr are 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?

The City of Regina's Central Scheduling Office is responsible for providing all permits for sport and recreation facilities. In 2004, athletic fields, parks and ball diamonds were permitted for 70,819 hours of use from May 1 to October 31. Better quality sport fields are permitted based on 18-20 hours/week usage per field. Fields are closed as required or as time permits for extra maintenance. Groups are contacted or are asked to call the athletic field supervisor to get current information on field status or "rain outs." ♦

THE GREAT CANADIAN WEATHER QUIZ...



What fell from the sky during the freakiest shower in Belleville, Ontario?

- a) toads picked up by a whirling funnel of vapour
- b) snow blizzard in July
- c) three days of unrelenting rain
- d) fist-sized hail

Answer: d

Calendar of Events

March 23 & 24

Ontario Parks Association
49th Annual Educational Seminar &
Explorations Trade Show
Hamilton, ON
Information: (905) 864-6182
www.opassoc.on.ca

May 1-5

Ontario Recreation Facilities
Association 50th Annual Professional
Development Program
Guelph, ON
Information: (416) 426-7062
www.orfa.com

July 19-22

Ontario Parks Association
Annual General Meeting
Brampton, ON
Information: Steve Preston, City of
Brampton (905) 874-2918
www.city.brampton.on.ca

January 30 – February 24, 2006

Guelph Turfgrass Institute
Turf Managers' Short Course
Guelph, ON
Info: (519) 767-5000

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Contact the STA if you have an event you'd like to advertise in the next issue of the *Sports Turf Manager*.



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Grass Seeds

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The Sports Turf Association strongly recommends to athletic field managers that they use only improved cultivars that have been tested and found superior under local conditions.

SPECIES	SUPPLIER									
	Bishop		EroGreen	Ontario		Pickseed		Quality		Speare
Kentucky Blue	Award	NuGlade	Barrister	Award	Alpine	Langara	Abbey	Midnight	Award	
	Baron	Princeton105	Limousine	Beyond	America	Limousine	Alene	Midnight II	Bluechip	
	Bluemoon	Rambo	Marquis	Caliber	Blue Velvet	Mercury	Apollo	Midnight Star	Goldrush	
	Everglade	Rugby II	Quantum Leap	Chicago II	Crest	Moon Shadow	Arcadia	Moonlight	Jewel	
	Goldrush	Shamrock	Shamrock	Liberator	Explorer	Quantum Leap	Awesome	North Star	Liberator	
	Liberator	Total Eclipse		NuBlue		Touchdown	Blacksburg	Perfection	Minnfine	
	Minnfine	Tsunami		NuDestiny			Blacksburg II	Princeton 105	NuBlue	
				NuGlade			Blackstone	Raven	NuGlade	
				Rambo			Blue Sapphire	Rita	Odyssey	
							Brilliant	Rugby II	Rambo	
							Cabernet	Serene	Shamrock	
							Champagne	Unique	Total Eclipse	
							Denim	Voyager		
Ryegrass	Accent		Cutter	ASAP	Annual	Futura 3000	Divine	Inspire	Academy	Goalkeeper
	Barclay (creeping)		Express	Evolution	Blazer 4	Perennial #1	Elfin	Majesty	Accent	Passport
	Elf		Fiesta III	Extreme	Cutter	Quebec	Esquire	Pearl II	Archer	Pizzazz
	Goalkeeper			Top Gun	Edge	Transist	Grand Slam	Stellar	Barclay	Top Hat
					Fiesta III				Elf	
Fescue: Blue					Azay Blue Fescue		Big Horn	Little Big Horn		
Fescue: Creeping Red	Aruba		Boreal Jasper	Aruba Fenway	#1 Creeping Red Fescue		Boreal	Rose	Aberdeen	Franklin
					Boreal		Florentine	Seabreeze GT	Aruba	Florentine
					Jasper II		Laurel	Shademaster II		
					Sealink		Navigator			
Fescue: Chewings	Bridgeport Sandpiper		Bridgeport Silhouette	Jamestown II Southport	Victory Windward		Banner III	Shadow II	Bridgeport	Sandpiper
							Cascade	Tiffany	K-2	Wilma
							Lomgtellow II	Wrigley		
							Sandpiper			
Fescue: Hard	Heron		Serra	Ecostar Rescue 911	Spartan		Aurora Gold	Ridu	Brigade	
							Discovery	Saxson	Heron	
							Osprey	Serra		
Fescue: Sheeps	Azure	MX86	Barok	MX86AE	Azay		MX86		Azure	MX86
Fescue: Tall	Arid III		Barlexas Vegas	Arid III Jaguar II	#1 Tall Fescue		Dawson	Shenandoah II	Arid III	Monarch
	Barlexas				Crossfire		Marksman	Wildfire	Colorado Gold	Pedestal
	Pedestal				Team Jr.		Olympic Gold	Wolfpack	Millennium	
Bentgrass: Colonial	Highland		Highland	Highland	Exeter Highland		Alister Highland		Highland	
Bentgrass: Creeping	18th Green	Penneagle	L-93	Dominant Plus	Aggressor	Penn G-6	Penn A-1	Penneagle	18th Green	Penneagle
	Bengal	Pennlinks	Penn A-4	L-93 Pennncross	Cato	Pennncross	Penn A-2	Penneagle II	A-4	Pennlinks
	L-93	Pennway	Pennncross	Penn A-4 Penneagle	Mariner	Penneagle	Penn A-4	Pennlinks	Bengal	Pennway
	Penn G-6	Providence	Penneagle	Penn G-6 Pennlinks	Penn-4	Pennlinks	Penn G-2	Pennlinks II	G-6	Providence
	Pennncross	Seaside II	Pennlinks	Penn Trio Providence	Penn G-1	Pennway	Pennncross	Seaside II	L-93	SR1020
			Trueline	Coated Pennncross T-1	Penn G-2	Seaside II			Pennncross	
Bentgrass: Velvet					Vesper		Greenwich			
Poa trivialis	Winterstar		Cyprus	Laser Sabre	Colt		Sabre II	Winterplay	Sunup	Winterstar
Poa supina			Supranova				Supranova			
Poa compressa	Canada Blue		Canada Blue	Canada Blue Reubens	Canada Blue		Canada Blue	Reubens	Canada Blue	
Weeping alkali	Fults		Fults Salty	Fults			Fults	Salty	Fults	Salty

Turf Seeding Rates

The following are seeding rates per 100 m² for specific species of grass seeds: 1) Creeping Bentgrass, 0.5-1.0 kg; 2) Kentucky Bluegrass, 1.0-2.0 kg; 3) Perennial Ryegrass, 2.0-4.0 kg; 4) Fine Fescue, 1.0-3.0 kg; and 5) Tall Fescue, 2.0-3.0 kg.
(Source: OMAFRA Turfgrass Management Recommendations, 2000)



Above: Damage caused by cutting too close to pond.

Cutting Slopes and Around Waterways

Safe Operating Procedures

JANE ARNETT-RIVERS, SUPERVISOR SPORTS & TURF, TOWN OF OAKVILLE

So yet again it's time to train new staff and refresh the rest of us. Training all staff on all equipment can be daunting for both trainer and trainee. One step of starting or operating a piece of equipment missed can compromise all other safety precautions taken. It is imperative that you have a written plan for training and orienting workers. In order to train 60 summer staff in a short period of time, Oakville has devised a system which has greatly improved past practices. By designing a *Safe Operating Procedure* for every piece of equipment, the message is loud and consistent for every employee. Once reviewed, the trainer and trainee sign off that the information is acknowledged and understood. The safety of the operator and the corporation's investment in the equipment is protected. The following is an example of a *Safe Operating Procedure*.

Standard Operating Procedure. User Department: Public Works, Parks & Facilities.

WARNING!

This Safetygram is designed as a tool to be used in conjunction with the operator's manual in the safe operation of **Cutting Slopes and Around Waterways**. Further site training and experience are necessary for competent operation.

SAFE PRACTICES

- **DO NOT USE** equipment unless trained.
- If equipment is damaged or malfunctions, **DO NOT USE**. Report to your supervisor immediately.
- **DO NOT REMOVE** or circumvent any safety devices on the equipment.
- **ALWAYS WEAR** prescribed personal protective equipment.
- **FAMILIARIZE** yourself with the operating manual before use.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Safety CSA boots
- Eye protection
- Ear protection
- Gloves
- Dusk mask if desired
- Seat belt

SITE CHECK OF THE AREA TO BE CUT

When entering a park that has pond, waterway, or steep slope, always get off the mower and check the area before cutting. If you have any questions, ask your crew leader or leadhand. Never take an unnecessary risk or make a wrong guess.

OPERATING PROCEDURE

PONDS AND WATERWAYS

- When cutting around a pond or waterway, keep the drive and steering wheels back three feet from the crest of the bank.
- Drive slowly and don't make sudden changes in direction.
- Stay alert and watch for holes and debris.
- When cutting around deep water, take seat belt off.
- If you ever get stuck or in a dangerous position set the parking brake, turn off the machine and call a leadhand for assistance.

OPERATING PROCEDURE

DITCHES AND SLOPES

- When mowing a steep slope, always mow up and down the slope – never across. A good rule of thumb is if you can't back up the hill, don't cut it. Do not spin the tires trying to get up a slope. This will only damage the turf.
- Drive slowly and don't make sudden changes in direction.
- Stay alert and watch for holes and debris.
- Always wear a seatbelt.
- If you ever get stuck or in a dangerous position, set the parking brake, turn off the machine and call a leadhand for assistance.



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