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Sports Turf Manager

FOR BETTER, SAFER SPORTS TURF. SUMMER 2011.

The trouble with weather forecasting is that it's right too often for us to ignore it and wrong too often for us to rely on it. ~Patrick Young



Inside this issue...

REGULAR COLUMNS, DEPARTMENTS & SMALL FEATURES

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26 Industry News. New equipment, seed and partnerships (plus dandelions).

Deadline for Autumn 2011 Sports Turf Manager: Sept. 9th.

WHAT'S ONLINE

www.sportsturfassociation.com

Postal Strike

In the event of ongoing postal disruptions, check often for STA event information including program & registration forms, sponsor & exhibitor details, maps & directions & where to stay.

STA Membership Directory

Is your contact information current? Your email address must be registered to login to the "Members Only" section.

Members Only Section

- 1) STA Constitution & By-Laws
- 2) From Our AGM: Executive Manager's Report, Membership Analysis & Financial Statements

Shop for Resource Publications

The Athletic Field Construction Manual & Understanding Turf Management.

Sports Turf Manager

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STA OFFICE HOURS

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include the vital information of name,
telephone number with area code, and
time of calling. The office may be reached
at any time by faxing (519) 766-1704
or via e-mail.

President's Desk

BY PAUL GILLEN

The spring of 2011 will long be remembered for the excessive rain and cool temperatures. I know that we are all playing catch up with our mowing and spring fertilizer applications. I hope we can now look forward to a moderate summer with respect to both moisture and heat.

As we get into the summer regimes, we thought it would be prudent to include a reminder about heat stress and sun safety. With all of the pressures to get things done, it's too easy to overlook some of the basics of a safe working environment. In this edition, we are also publishing three additional highlight articles from the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium to keep you abreast of the latest research. Your association is committed to providing you with the most up-to date information available for best management practices. If there is something that you want more information on, contact us and we'll do our best to get it for you.



STA President Paul Gillen and the "kids."

The association has a busy summer schedule planned. By the time you read this, we will have completed the Parks and Open Space Alliance (POSA) 5th Annual Summer Operational Forum, hosted this year by the City of St. Catharines. The theme was "The New Face of Parks and Open Spaces."

Our expansion into eastern Canada will be highlighted with the Atlantic Field Day on July

21st in Moncton, NB. An excellent speaker program has been arranged and the day includes practical 'on-the-field' training and a tailgate trade show component. STA member Gord Horsman has been instrumental in bringing all of this together and there will be something of interest for everyone. If you are reading this in the Maritimes, we encourage you to come out and participate. Visit www.sportsturfassociation.com for information and registration details.

Finally, a reminder to mark Sept. 22nd on your calendar for the STA Fall Field Day. This year it is being hosted by the Town of Oakville, always a popular venue, and we have arranged a first-rate program with top-notch speakers. See you there!

Member Feedback: Grass Clippings

With all of the disproportionate grass growth and weather interference with normal cutting schedules this spring, is anyone out there using drags behind their mowers to scatter the clippings? I see a lot of unsightly clumps laying on sports fields and golf course fairways during my travels. It seems to me that a simple drag of chain link fence would clear these up, or is it not considered a problem? Email your thoughts to info@sportsturfassociation.com (Subject: Clippings) and we'll publish your replies online.

Summer is Here: Take The Dangers of Heat Stress Seriously...

WORKING IN A HOT ENVIRONMENT puts stress on the body's cooling system. When heat is combined with other stresses – like hard physical work, loss of fluids or fatigue – it may lead to heat-related illness, disability, or even death. Individuals over age 40 need to take extra care when the weather is hot, because our ability to sweat declines as we age. However, heat stress can also affect individuals who are young and fit.

Water is crucial to helping the body adjust to high temperatures. The rate of water intake must equal the increased rate of water loss by perspiration to keep body temperature normal. When it's hot, drink plenty of water! Your body must work even harder to get rid of excess heat when conditions are both hot and humid. Unfortunately, perspiration can't evaporate as readily under muggy conditions. The process is easier if the surrounding air is moving. That's why we welcome a cool breeze, or turn on a fan when the air is "sticky."

Sickness and accident rates increase when heavy work is done at temperatures above 30 degrees. Don't push yourself beyond your limits. It could be harmful to your health, and could put you at increased risk of having an accident. Learn the signs and symptoms of heat stress like cramps, heavy sweating, cool, moist skin, blurry vision, clumsiness and confusion and realize that if allowed to progress, heat stroke can kill a person quickly. Get medical attention immediately.

~ "Dangers of Heat Stress," Farm Safety Association, www.farmsafety.ca

NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS

Jay Kivell, Jay Kivell and Associates
Thornbury, ON

Lorna Hill, Dol Turf Restoration Ltd.
Bond Head, ON

Mike McQuade, Woodbine Entertainment
Group, Rexdale, ON

Robert Mackie, Waterloo Region District
School Board, Wingham, ON

Tom Oldham, Grand Erie District School Board
Brantford, ON

Robert Broughton, R. Broughton Consulting
Toronto, ON

Sue Gilpin & Gord Noble, City of Hamilton, ON

John Engelberts, City of Ottawa, ON

Kim Berge, City of Saskatoon, SK

Rob Allison, Kubota Canada Ltd., Markham, ON

Doug Gough, City of London, ON



POSA Summer Operational Forum
STA Director/Treasurer Rick Lane (left), Director, Recreation & Community Services for the City of St. Catharines, together with Peter Second, Councillor & Deputy Mayor, welcomed participants at the POSA Summer Operational Forum, June 22nd.

Odds & Ends...

STA MEMBERSHIP PLAQUES

Display membership plaques are available in executive engraved walnut for \$50 plus S&H and HST. To order, contact Lee at the STA office.

TURF TRADES EMPLOYMENT ADS

Are you advertising a position or job searching? Visit us online at www.sportsturfassociation.com and click on Turf Trades. Cost is \$75 plus HST for STA members for a 2-month listing.

STM EDITORIAL CONTENT

Opinions expressed in articles published in the Sports Turf Manager are those of the author and not necessarily those of the STA.

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Glen Abbey, Oakville, Ontario

WATER AWARENESS

July is Smart Irrigation Month

July is traditionally the month of peak demand for water for lawns, gardens and landscapes in North America. The Irrigation Association named July as Smart Irrigation Month to increase public awareness about simple practices and innovative technologies homeowners, businesses and property managers can use to:

- Save money on utility bills.
- Minimize or defer investments in infrastructure to store and carry water, typically paid for by property taxes or municipal bonds.
- Protect their community's water supply for generations to come.

Turn to page 11 to read about qualifying cultivars for drought tolerance & other characteristics related to water conservation.



Homeowners typically overwater lawns and landscapes by up to 30 percent. By selecting and planting carefully, watering wisely, and maintaining and upgrading automated irrigation systems, consumers can save money, save water and see better results.

To find a certified local professional to design, install, maintain or audit your irrigation system, visit www.irrigation.org/hirecertified. For tips on efficient irrigation, go to www.smartirrigation-month.org.

Smart Irrigation Month is an initiative of the Irrigation Association, a non-profit industry organization dedicated to promoting efficient irrigation. Visit www.irrigation.org to learn more.

Event Calendar

ASSOCIATION EVENTS ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN GREEN

July 21. Sports Turf Association Sports Turf Field Day (Atlantic)

Note: Pre-registration required by July 8

Moncton Coliseum (am) / CN Sportplexe (pm), Moncton, NB

Info: 519-763-9431, www.sportsturfassociation.com

August 9. Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation Annual Fundraising Golf Tournament, Greystone Golf Club, Milton, ON

Info: www.otrf.ca

September 22. Sports Turf Association 24th Annual Sports Turf Field Day (Ontario)

Note: Pre-registration required by September 14

Glen Abbey Community Centre, Oakville, ON

Info: 519-763-9431, www.sportsturfassociation.com

February 22 & 23, 2012. 21st Annual Ontario Turfgrass Symposium

University of Guelph, Guelph, ON

Info: 519-767-5000, www.ots.open.uoguelph.ca

If you have an industry-related event you'd like publicized, contact Lee at 519-763-9431, info@sportsturfassociation.com

QUOTABLE QUOTE....

It is best to read the weather forecast before praying for rain. ~ Mark Twain

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It's not just about the fiber design or how close to natural grass you can get. It's not just about whose fields you've done or not done. It's about the entire experience. From the stability and backing of the company itself to engineering functional and high performance turf systems that combine durability, safety and ease of use, Shaw Sportexe brings it all together. No other company can give you the assurance, satisfaction and personal service that we provide.



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Sports Turf Field Days

WE'RE OUT EAST THIS JULY & BACK IN ONTARIO AS ALWAYS IN SEPTEMBER



CN Sportplex, Moncton, New Brunswick

Onsite in Oakville

WE'LL BE ONSITE IN OAKVILLE for the Sports Turf Association's 24th Annual Field Day, September 22, 2011. Located in the Greater Toronto Area between Toronto and the Niagara Region, Oakville's two beautiful harbours, creeks and shorelines, numerous parks, scenic nature trails, and sports fields form a great base for outdoor activities. The town boasts recreational amenities that include 12 community centres, four public libraries and 1,000 acres of parks with 141 sports fields.



OAKVILLE

The Field Day Committee is in the midst of applying the finishing touches to this year's program that will take place at the Glen Abbey Community Centre. Stay tuned!

Meet Us In Moncton on July 21!

ALL DETAILS HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED and registration is now open for the first Atlantic Sports Turf Field Day on Thursday, July 21, 2011. At the geographic centre of the Maritimes, the City of Moncton is well situated to welcome sports turf managers from across the Atlantic provinces. Educational sessions will be held at the Moncton Coliseum followed by a BBQ lunch, tailgate trade show, and practical "on-the-field" training at the nearby CN Sportplex.

Presented by the Sports Turf Association, the speaker line-up features Dr. Eric Lyons and Dr. Katerina Jordan from the University of Guelph, home of the world class Guelph Turfgrass Institute, together with industry professionals Gord Dol, Dol Turf Restoration Ltd., and George Bannerman, Gordon Bannerman Ltd. The program has been accredited by Plant Health Atlantic for continuing education credits.

Long-time STA member Gorden Horsman encourages his fellow turf managers to attend. "The City of Moncton is pleased to host this event. We hope turf managers from across the region will take advantage of the day's offering of sports turf focussed education – and what a great networking opportunity! Spread the word to your colleagues and suppliers!"

Robert Daniels, Adjunct Professor, Turfgrass Science, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, will preside over the day. "Due to the increased expectations of recreational, amateur and professional athletes, many sports turf facilities have been or are in the process of being either upgraded or constructed in Atlantic Canada. To meet the expectations of these end users, seasonal maintenance practices must be continually improved. The hosting of such an event as this turf field day provides an opportunity for individual managers to increase their knowledge of the latest products and cultural practices available."

Meet us in Moncton this July! Visit www.sportsturfassociation.com for information and registration details.

An advertisement for the Bannerman BA-600-CT Super-Ject Aerator. The image shows a green machine with multiple rotating tines. The text "BA-600-CT" is prominently displayed in large, bold letters, with "Super-Ject Aerator" below it. A "NEW!" starburst is next to the product name. Below the product name is a list of features:

- 10 individual rotating tine wheels with 10 tines per wheel.
- Closer Centers for greater number of aeration holes per square foot.
- Three point hitch with float feature allows the aerator to follow the turf contours and reduces tire damage.
- Options - Fracture & Slitter lines, and rear floating roller assembly

At the bottom, the Bannerman logo is shown, followed by the text "Now with 100 3/4\" data-bbox="664 665 917 928"/>

IMPROVING SOIL HEALTH WITH COMPOST

Sports turf managers taking care of fields that have been built using very poor soils, or in some cases, sub-soil material, can improve soil health by amending it with organic matter. In an ideal world, organic matter would be incorporated into the top 4-6 inches of soil prior to grading, so that the seed or sod is growing in a healthy soil from the beginning. In some situations though, poor soils are seeded or sodded by contractors as part of a larger job (new school build, etc.) and the sports turf manager inherits a mature stand of grass that will not grow and quickly becomes infested with typical soil compaction indicator weeds like prostrate knotweed, clover and plantain. The soil is typically hard when dry and thus creates a very hard playing surface. When wet, the same soil turns quickly to mud and puddles form because the water infiltration rates are so low.

In these types of situations, an aggressive plan of soil cultivation (core aeration, shatter tine, verti-drain, etc.) coupled with organic matter incorporation/topdressing is vital to improving the quality/health of the soil.

Selecting a compost material for soil improvement requires some investigation and planning because not all composts are the same. Composts are made from a variety of sources such as manures, bio-solids, yard waste and spent mushroom compost. They should be regulated to make sure they contain no harmful bacteria (like *E. coli*) and they should be decomposed enough that the carbon:nitrogen ratio is not excessive (>30:1). They will also vary from one another in nutrient status, moisture content, odour and amount of soluble salts.

Because the purpose of improving poor soil with compost is to create air spaces and improve the drainage capability of the soil, composts used on athletic fields need to contain adequate organic matter (>30%) and have a bulking agent, like wood chips. The bulking agent eventually decomposes,



leaving large air spaces, as well as mixing with the poor soil to improve soil aggregation. The size of the bulking agent is important – pieces that are too large cause playability problems and they stay on the playing surface for a long time. If they are too small (<0.25 inch), they break down too readily and do not create large pore spaces.

Field managers can find compost suppliers via www.FindaComposter.com. To make sure that a compost is truly adequate for soil improvement, ask compost suppliers to have the compost material tested at a reputable turf lab and then the test results can be evaluated to make sure the material is going to truly improve the soil and not just cause an odour for a few days!

— Pam Sherratt & Dr. John R. Street,
“Compost Resources for Ohio,” The Ohio State University, <http://buckeyeturf.osu.edu>

Editor's Note

Looking for additional information on this or other topics? The complete back files of the Sports Turf Manager and its predecessor the Sports Turf Newsletter are available online via the STA website at www.sportsturfassociation.com. Click on Publications/Resources/Archive. Sports Turf Association members continue to enjoy complete subscriber access to the Turfgrass Information File, the most comprehensive publicly available collection of turfgrass educational materials in the world, via the Michael J. Bladon Educational Link. Simply login for access to the Members Only section of the website.