

Tell us about your family. My family lives in the Township of Langley in the community of Brookwood. My wife Christine is employed by Surrey School District as a Special Educator. Christine and I have two teenage daughters. The oldest one graduates from high school this year and then is off to university and my other daughter is in grade nine and plays both school and club volleyball.

What do you enjoy doing outside of the workplace? I enjoy sailing, skiing, gardening, travelling, golf and a good cigar with a dry gin martini on my back sun deck.

How has the industry changed and in what direction(s) would you like to see the industry, as a whole, move towards? Synthetic turf fields are providing sports field managers with another tool in their tool box especially in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island out here in British Columbia where it rains, rains, rains and rains, some more! The only other all-weather field option was gravel before synthetic turf became reasonable to afford and user groups no longer are willing to use those gravel fields... expectation levels have been raised! Some cities in BC are converting the all-weather gravel fields to synthetic turf fields. The Township of Langley completed a conversion in 2012.

What do you consider to be the biggest benefit of being a member of the STA? It is the network of people that I have been able to meet over the past couple of years. I enjoy reading the Sports Turf Manager and I find the articles most informative.

What percentage of the acreage of sports fields are irrigated? 84%

What is the percentage of sand based sportfields in the Township of Langley? 64%

What is the primary type of turfgrass? Perennial ryegrass

Is yearly overseeding part of your sports turf maintenance program? Yes, the Township overseeds twice a year using a 4-way perennial ryegrass mixture (the varieties vary each year depending on the NTEP trials/cost) with a slit seeder at a rate 10 – 12 lbs/1000 square feet on high use areas and 8 – 6 lbs/1000 square feet on low use areas of the field.

How many times do you fertilize? Sand based sports fields receive 6 lbs of N/year, irrigated soil sports fields 4 lbs of N/year, and non irrigated soil sports fields 2 lbs of N/year.

Do you aerate? Topdress? Twice a year; pull cores in the spring and solid tines in the fall. All sports fields are topdressed annually with ¼-inch of 3 ml washed sand.

What is your maintenance regimen for synthetic turf? The high wear areas are topdressed every two weeks, baseball home plate and pitcher mound are topdressed 3 times a week during ball season, the fields are groomed every two weeks and the fields are

If you are interested in being featured in this column, please contact Lee Huether at the STA office.



Willoughby Community Park, Langley, BC

swept/vacuumed every four months. Gmax, Head Injury Criteria (HIC) and Depth Infill are tested annually by an independent firm.

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? Natural turf during fall/winter season, 6 hours of play area allowed Saturday and Sunday for a total of 12 hours per week. During spring/summer season 20 hours of play are allowed per week. The Township of Langley permits the sports fields and makes the final decision if a sports field is to be closed or not. Generally, the sports fields are never closed during the season to give them a rest. The only break sports fields receive is during the month of August when there is very little activity occurring on them. Last year I did remove one sand sports field from the fall/winter inventory because it was constantly failing prematurely into the season. This sports field will be reopening this fall/winter season to see if its playability conditions have improved due to a rest. Synthetic turf fields are permitted 60 hours/week within the Township. •

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