

# SPORTS TURF MANAGER

... for safe, natural sports turf

WINTER 2004 • VOL. 17, NO. 4

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The STA Social & Annual General Meeting is Tuesday, February 22 from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. at the OTS. Elections for the Board of Directors will take place at this meeting. Nomination forms have been mailed to all members in good standing and are due December 23. Get involved with your association! Volunteer, nominate a peer, cast your vote, join us at the social!



## OTS 2005: Back to Our Roots

FEBRUARY 21 & 22, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH, ONTARIO

**B**uilding on long-standing expertise in turf science and management, the Ontario Turfgrass Executive Committee extends an invitation to return of OTS to the University of Guelph campus for OTS 2005.

Seminars focusing on irrigation and water conservation, best practices for turf management, new tools for integrated pest management, and organic solutions for turf management will enhance the existing golf, lawn care, sod production and sports turf management sessions.

Seminars will feature the latest in scientific research, practical turf management, legislation, technology and human resources management. An opportunity to write the Voluntary IPM Accreditation Exam further enhances the

professional development opportunities available at OTS.

In celebration of our return to home turf, a *Turf Managers' Short Course Alumni Banquet* is certain to be a highlight for past participants and faculty – a great time to reconnect with old friends and colleagues (see page 4 for details).

Proud sponsors of the symposium are the Sports Turf Association, Guelph Turfgrass Institute, Nursery Sod Growers Association, Ontario Recreation Facilities Association, Professional Lawn Care Association of Ontario, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and the Office of Open Learning at the University of Guelph. For further conference information, see the enclosed brochure or visit [www.open.uoguelph.ca/ots](http://www.open.uoguelph.ca/ots). ♦

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## SPORTS TURF MANAGER

Volume 17, Issue 4, ISSN 1201-3765

is the official publication of the  
**SPORTS TURF ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO**  
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### SPORTS TURF MANAGER

is published quarterly by the STA for free distribution to its membership. An annual subscription may be obtained for \$40/year. Please direct advertising inquiries to Lee Huether at the STA office.

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### CANADA POST PUBLICATIONS MAIL SALES AGREEMENT No. 1461370

Postmaster: Please return undeliverable copies to the STA at 328 Victoria Rd. South, Guelph, ON N1H 6H8.



### STA OFFICE HOURS

Lee Huether is in the office from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. The office phone number is (519) 763-9431. At other times, a message may be left on the voice mail system. Please 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.

# The President's Desk

ANDREW GAYDON



## Seasons Greetings...

**H**appy winter greetings to all our members. The snowy season is not everyone's favourite, but it comes without fail year after year, and here in Canada we sure need to make the best of it! There are lots of activities to fill our winter time. Sitting by a log fire reading a book quickly comes to mind, but perhaps 'professional happenings' are more relevant here. The big event in Ontario this winter is the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium (OTS) which will be held February 21 and 22 at the University of Guelph.

A detailed brochure is enclosed with this newsletter. The theme *Back to Our Roots* is relevant because the symposium is returning to the campus of the University of Guelph and focusing on education for all industry sectors: sports turf management, golf, lawn care and sod production. The excellent program will allow for continuing accreditation credits for golf courses and parks.

The STA Annual General Meeting will be held at the symposium in the OAC Boardroom in Johnston Hall at 3:30 p.m. on February 22. We invite you all to join us for a great opportunity to meet other STA members and enjoy a wine and cheese social. Also at the AGM, the Board of Directors will be voted in for the year 2005. Any members wishing to stand for nomination for the Board, please put your name forward. We encourage and welcome new people.

As this is the last issue of the *Sports Turf Manager* for this year, I would like to thank all contributing authors, the editorial committee and of course our advertisers. Many thanks to Lee Huether, our Executive Director, for ensuring that the Directors and the Association are all running smoothly resulting in a proactive organization.

The Board of Directors would like to wish all its members and their families and friends a very happy and relaxing Christmas. ♦

### Register for the industry event of the year!

## OTS 2005: Back to Our Roots

February 21 & 22, 2005, University of Guelph

### Three Ways to Save...

1. Early Bird Registration Date: December 22, 2004.
2. Association Discount. As an STA member in good standing you qualify for lower association rates.
3. Group Discount. Others from your facility/organization who are not STA members qualify for the lower association rates **when registered with a member**. Send the registration in the same envelope, fax it at the same time, or make just one phone call to register. **Visit [www.open.uoguelph.ca/ots](http://www.open.uoguelph.ca/ots) for details...**

SPORTS TURF  
SESSIONS  
ON PAGE 16

# News from the Guelph Turfgrass Institute

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## Associate Diploma in Turfgrass Management Program Applications

Application to the Associate Diploma in Turfgrass Management program is due in **early January**. Application is made through the Ontario Universities Application Centre website at [www.ouac.on.ca](http://www.ouac.on.ca). An additional requirement is completion of a Supplementary Information Form that can be found at the program's website [www.oac.uoguelph.ca/learning/learn\\_dip2003t1m.asp](http://www.oac.uoguelph.ca/learning/learn_dip2003t1m.asp). If you are personally interested or have staff or high school students who are considering applying for the program, please be aware of these important deadlines. For more information, contact Rob Witherspoon at [robwith@uoguelph.ca](mailto:robwith@uoguelph.ca), 519-824-4120 ext. 56886.

## Diploma Student Internships

Our experience from last year is that many diploma students make arrangements for their summer internships over the Christmas break. We are trying to encourage students to seek internship

opportunities further afield although the appeal of home cooking and cheap room and board can be difficult to overcome. If you are interested in having an intern work and learn with you this summer please let us know as soon as possible so that we can make students aware of the diversity of opportunities that exist. I will be meeting with first-year students on **Thursday, December 2nd** to discuss the internship program in detail. I hope to provide the students with a list of potential internship opportunities at that time. For more information, contact Rob Witherspoon at 519-824-4120 ext. 56886, [robwith@uoguelph.ca](mailto:robwith@uoguelph.ca).



## ONTARIO TURFGRASS SYMPOSIUM

### Turf Managers' Short Course Alumni Banquet

In conjunction with the return of the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium to the campus of the University of Guelph, an Alumni Banquet for participants in the popular Turf Managers' Short Course is planned for Sunday, February 20, 2005 at The Cutten Club here in Guelph. Anyone who has taken the course since it was first offered is invited

to attend. Past and present instructors will be in attendance as well. Since the program has been running for over 30 years, some of our address records may be a little out of date. If you attended the course and would like to participate in the reunion dinner, please contact Rob Witherspoon, 519-824-4120 ext 56886, [robwith@uoguelph.ca](mailto:robwith@uoguelph.ca), and he will insure that you receive all the required information. We will try to group class years by table so you have an opportunity to visit and reminisce. It should be a fun evening!

## THE GREAT CANADIAN WEATHER QUIZ...



Which region is Canada's lightning capital, logging more than 50 thunderstorm hours each year? a) British Columbia's lower mainland, b) Prairies, c) Atlantic Canada, or d) extreme southwestern Ontario.

ANSWERS



## STA NEW MEMBERS

**Chris Herstek & Greg Lancaster**  
Town of Lincoln, Beamsville, ON

## Odds and Ends

### Quotable Quotes

To err is human, but to really foul things up requires a computer.  
– *Farmers' Almanac*

Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face.  
– *Victor Hugo (1802-1885)*

### STA Membership Plaques

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

### Spring 2005 Submissions

If you have something you'd like to submit for the next issue, please forward it to the STA office by January 30, 2005.

### Editorial Content

Opinions expressed in articles published in *Sports Turf Manager* are those of the author and not necessarily those of the STA, unless otherwise indicated.

# Should Calcium be Used on Ontario Soils?

PAM CHARBONNEAU, OMAF TURFGRASS SPECIALIST, INVESTIGATES AND REPORTS ON RECENT STUDIES

**M**any fertilizer suppliers to the industry are recommending the addition of calcium to turf. This practice has been adopted by some golf course superintendents in the province. This begs the question – should calcium be used on Ontario soils? I am going to try to answer that question by looking at the role of calcium in the turfgrass plant, the role of calcium in the soil and report on some research findings on adding calcium to turf.

## Role of Calcium in the Turfgrass Plant

There are 17 elements that are essential for plant nutrition in relatively large amounts. These are classified as plant macronutrients and are found in the plant dry matter in concentrations of at least 1,000 ppm. They are: carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, potassium, calcium, magnesium and sulfur. Calcium ranks

third after nitrogen and potassium in abundance in the turfgrass plant. Calcium plays an important role in cell wall formation, cell division and cell growth. Calcium deficiencies may occur in low pH, sandy soils. Turf leaves turn reddish brown. These symptoms have only been able to be demonstrated by using hydroponic solutions in a laboratory situation. Deficiency symptoms are very rare in the field. Sufficiency ranges for tissue nutrient content for calcium in turfgrasses is 0.5-1.3%. Sufficiency ranges for the major nutrients can be found in Table 1.

## Role of Calcium in Soil

Calcium is a positively charged element that occurs in the soil. Soil particles are negatively charged. These negative and positive charged elements work like magnets and are attracted to each other. The negatively charged ions in the soil



hold on to the cations so that they can be exchanged with cations in the root system and be taken up by the plant. The ability of the soil to attract these cations is called the cation exchange capacity (CEC) and it is measured in milliequivalents per 100 grams of soil. The CEC... → page 6



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**Table 1. Sufficiency ranges for tissue nutrient content of turfgrasses.**

Element	Content
Nitrogen	2.8 - 3.5%
Phosphorous	0.3 - 0.6%
Potassium	1.0 - 2.5%
Calcium	0.5 - 1.3%
Magnesium	0.2 - 0.6%
Sulfur	0.2 - 0.5%

has an impact on how fertilization is conducted. A low CEC soil may need repeated applications of moderate levels of fertilizer. A soil high in CEC can have larger amounts of fertilizer applied less frequently.

The second role of calcium is its role in soil pH. The pH is a measure of the hydrogen cations in the soil solution and on the cation exchange sites in the soil. Soil pH ranges from 3-11 with 7 being neutral. Soils with a pH below 7 are categorized as acidic and above 7 are

alkaline. The pH of the soil has an effect on the availability of plant nutrients. Some nutrients are more available at high pHs and some are more available at a low pH. The optimum range of soil pH for most turfgrasses is between 5.5 and 7.

If a soil pH is low, calcium in the form of lime can be added to the soil to raise the soil pH. This should not be done unless a soil test has been performed and has indicated the need for lime. The standard form of lime is calcium carbonate (CaCO<sub>3</sub>). If too much lime is added to a soil, the pH of the soil may be increased to a range that is too high for proper plant growth. Lime can burn turfgrass plants. This is especially true when lime is applied during hot weather. It is also very difficult to get lime into the rootzone of mature turf. The best time to add lime to adjust pH is at the time of turf establishment.

#### Role of Lime in Controlling Moss

Another reason that is cited for the addition of calcium in the form of lime to

soils is to control moss. The addition of lime to soils to control moss is only effective if the soil pH is low. In most cases in Ontario, moss is a result of soil compaction, poor drainage, overwatering or too much rain, shade, low mowing height and poor fertility – not because of low pH soils.

#### Ontario Soils

When glaciers receded from Ontario 10,000 years ago, the materials left behind were deposited directly by the glaciers, deposited by melt waters running from the retreating glaciers or deposited in the bottom of glacial lakes. These became the parent material of soils in southern Ontario. Most of these materials are limestone based and are neutral to basic in pH and are termed calcareous soils. Because of this, it is rare to find soils in this part of Ontario that are low in pH and that would benefit from additional calcium in the form of lime.

There are areas in Ontario where the soil pH is not alkaline. These include

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pockets of soil in the Canadian Shield, but the majority of soils in southwestern and south-central Ontario are calcareous.

### Fertilizer Company Claims

Based on this role of calcium in the plant and in soils, fertilizer suppliers make the claim that it makes plants stronger and more resistant to wear, neutralizes soil acidity, improves activity of favourable soil bacteria, promotes root development, improves soil structure, improves the efficiency and availability of fertilizer, reduces phosphate fixation and increases water penetration and water holding capacity. Some of these statements are true, but only in very specific situations or circumstances, and they should not be used as generalizations for the benefits of calcium.

### Calcium Fertilization Research

Researchers at the University of Iowa, Nick Christians and Rodney St. John, conducted trials on calcareous-based sand greens. Their research was to determine the benefits or detriments of applying supplemental calcium to turfgrass established on calcareous sand. They wanted to know whether additional calcium increases the amount of calcium absorbed by the grass plant, whether it increases clipping yield and quality and if it affects the availability of other nutrients to the plant.

A greenhouse study looked at adding additional calcium to Kentucky bluegrass and creeping bentgrass grown in calcareous sand. The additional calcium treatments consisted of calcium sulphate, calcium carbonate, calcium nitrate and a chelated calcium. The calcium, regardless of the source, was incorporated into the growing medium at a rate of 4.7 lbs of calcium per 1,000 sq. ft.

A two-year field study on creeping bentgrass established on a calcareous sand putting green also received 4.7 lbs. of calcium per 1,000 sq. ft. applied as five separate monthly applications.

In both the greenhouse and field studies, the additional calcium did not increase the growth, colour or leaf calcium content of the grasses established on the calcareous sands. In the greenhouse study, the additional calcium reduced the leaf

magnesium content by 15% and by 11% in the field trial. In the field studies, the calcium carbonate and calcium nitrate treatments reduced the soil extractable potash levels and the calcium sulphate, calcium nitrate and calcium chelate reduced the amount of soil extractable magnesium. Over time, with continuous additions of calcium, both magnesium and potash could become deficient in the soil leading to deficiencies in the turfgrass plant. The greenhouse study did show that creeping bentgrass had nearly twice the amount of calcium in the leaf tissue as did Kentucky bluegrass and none of the treatments increased the tissue calcium levels in either species.

So the claims that additional calcium increases resistance to wear can only be true if the added calcium is taken up by the turfgrass plant. This research demonstrates that it is not. As far as the addition of calcium increasing the availability and efficiency of fertilizers, the calcium actually made the magnesium and potash less available.

The take home message from this research is that supplemental applications of calcium did not increase clipping yield, leaf calcium content or turf quality and that the addition of calcium could limit the availability of magnesium and potash to the plant when applied to calcareous sand. ♦

### Literature Cited

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Turner, T.R. and Hummel, N.W. Jr. 1992. Nutritional Requirements and Fertilization. p. 416-417. In: D.V. Waddington, R.N. Carrow and R.C. Shearman (eds.) *Turfgrass Agronomy Monographs* No. 32. CSSA, Madison, WI.

— *Green is Beautiful*, October, 2004

## COMING EVENTS

### January 6 - 11

56<sup>th</sup> Annual Canadian International Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show  
Toronto, ON, Info: (905) 602-8873  
www.golfsupers.com

### January 11-13

Landscape Ontario Congress 2005  
featuring Fencecraft 2005  
Toronto, ON, Info: 1-800-265-5656  
www.locongress.com

### January 19-23

Sports Turf Managers Association  
(USA) Annual Conference &  
Exhibition, Phoenix, AZ  
Info: (712) 322-7862  
www.sportsturfmanager.com


### January 31 - February 25

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


### February 2-4

Turfgrass Producers International  
Midwinter Conference  
Cancun, Mexico  
Info: (847) 705-9898  
www.TurfGrassSod.org

### February 21 & 22

Ontario Turfgrass Symposium   
University of Guelph  
Guelph, ON, Info: (519) 767-5000  
www.open.uoguelph.ca/ots

### February 22 (at the OTS)

Sports Turf Association   
Social & Annual General Meeting  
Information: (519) 763-9431

### February 27 & 28, March 1 & 2

Western Canada Turfgrass  
Association 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
Conference & Show  
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### March 23 & 24

Ontario Parks Association  
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& Explorations Trade Show  
Hamilton, ON  
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# To Test or Not to Test – That is the “Compost” Question!

R.W. SHEARD, P.A.G. CONCLUDES THE COST OF ANALYSIS IS WELL WORTH THE ADDED QUALITY ASSURANCE

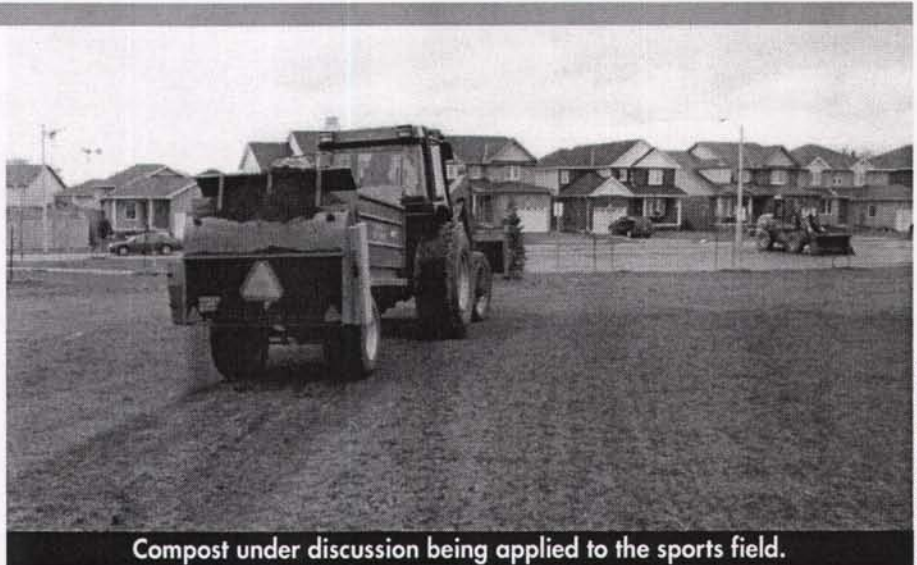
**U**rban waste disposal systems are steadily moving toward the composting of all organic materials rather than placing them in a land fill site. Uses for this material in the landscape industry are increasing as more material becomes available.

In a recent article in the *Sports Turf Manager* (Winter 2003), Pam Charbonneau reviewed the role of compost in sports field management. Research at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute has shown a suppressing effect on pink and grey snow mould, two of the few diseases which affect sports turf. An additional benefit Charbonneau observed was improved spring green-up.

The use of compost has a major problem – inconsistency in quality. Very diverse analysis is common, primarily the result of the wide range of material which is composted and variations in the composting process used.

This article summarizes a recent incident where a parks department was misled by a compost supply company. Several hundred tonnes of the material were purchased to use in their organic-based management program. In the fall of 2003, during the evaluation of some fields for the parks department, we observed a heavy application of the material. Examination of the black “compost” suggested a significant mineral content. Permission was obtained for further examination of the material. Some yellowing was observed of the grass leaves where the material had been applied several days previously.

Initial analysis of the material was done in conjunction with a number of other samples testing for routine fertility and particle size of the mineral fraction. This analysis showed two surprising results. The potassium level was 1,280, four times a normal very high reading. The particle size distribution analysis revealed 74.9% sand, 14.6% silt and 10.7% clay. The very pronounced gritty feel of the material



Compost under discussion being applied to the sports field.

GUELPH TURFGRASS INSTITUTE

prompted a third analysis (a separate laboratory test) for total organic matter. This analysis revealed the “compost” contained only 10.5% organic matter. The material was, in fact, classed as a high organic, fine sandy loam. The sand fraction was made up of 61.3% fine and very fine sandy loam which when combined with the 14.6% silt would make the material a very inferior top dressing material, contributing to, rather than alleviating any compaction or infiltration problems.

The source of the high potassium is not known. Any relationship between the observed yellowing and the potassium test is pure conjecture. It was a red flag, however, that something was wrong with this “compost.” The material used to impart the black colour and raise the organic level to 10.5% may contain other contaminants, not included in the analysis, which were causing the yellowing of the grass leaves.

Due to the lack of any regulations stipulating what is compost and the high variability in materials, it is strongly suggested that some certificate of analysis be provided by the supplier before a contract to purchase is made. The basic information should state percent organic matter, particle size distribution and routine fertility analysis. The analysis should be done by one of the labs accred-

ited by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (see box below).

The cost of the analysis conducted on the “compost” was \$70. This is a small price to pay for the assurance that the material is in fact compost. Due to the lack of quality control on compost it might be wise for the purchaser to suggest that samples will be taken from random loads as they are delivered for verification of the analysis on which the purchase was made. ♦

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# Safety Makes Cents: Summary of Presentation Given at the Recent STA Annual Field Day

TERRY MURPHY, MANAGER, EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SAFETY, LANDSCAPE ONTARIO

**N**o one wants an accident to happen. They can cause personal injury, pain and suffering; thoroughly disrupt a person's life; result in property and equipment damage; and create major cost and profit implications to an organization. They are a major cost to society in general – especially considering all accidents can be prevented.

One person dies each week in Ontario from a workplace accident. There are 300,000 major accidents in our province each year resulting in at least one amputation a day from such incidents. These accidents can be prevented. We have the power to reduce and eliminate them. It is not easy but it can be done. We need to take the time to make it happen!

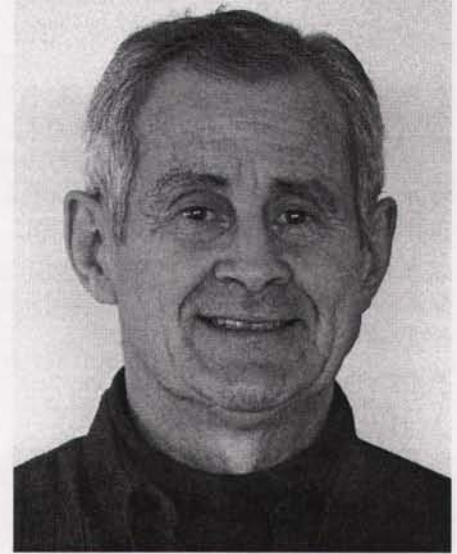
Governments are tired of companies neglecting their obligations under the provincial Occupational Health and Safety legislation to have safety processes in place within their businesses. Firms are tired of paying large premiums to fund accident costs. In Ontario, 10% of companies cause the majority of accidents. Do you realize that the good companies, the ones who have safety policies in place and who train and care about safety, are paying for the bad ones, that couldn't care less about safety and accident prevention? That's why your rates are so high! Recently the Government of Canada passed a federal law, Bill C-45, which makes safety violations from these bad

companies a criminal offence that is prosecutable in a court of law under the Criminal Code. The police can now investigate accidents and lay charges. This can result in large personal fines and years in jail for those convicted.

How can we be better at managing safety? In the landscape industry, Landscape Ontario has been leading the charge in this important area. Landscape firms are not only making themselves safe, but they are making money doing so.


For the last five years, Landscape Ontario has been a safety sponsor for the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) programs, Safety Groups and Safe Communities Incentive Plan (SCIP). Both programs rebate companies 5% annually on their pre-miums for a successful completion. The last two years have seen over 175 firms receive \$1,000 each. This also drives down the industry group rate. Companies are being paid to develop a "safe culture" which is what they need to do to avoid convictions under Bill C-45. It is a win-win for everyone. Statistics show that groups of companies working in these programs are operating more safely than others not in such a safety group.

During the last six years, the landscape industry has reduced their WSIB industry premium rate in rate group 190 from 9.11% to a projected 4.69% in 2005 per \$100 of wages. This is a 50% reduction over seven years which will save the



industry over \$10 million each and every year. The Ministry of Labour has announced that they will add another 200 inspectors to zero in on the 2% of bad firms that cause the large number of accidents. This is good news for those companies who are striving to develop safety cultures and reduce accidents. It is also a very good reason for all companies to consider joining the Landscape Ontario sponsored safety programs. Most of the training takes place in the winter during the off season.

To conclude, safety makes cents! In fact, safety management makes both dollars and sense! Contact Terry Murphy at Landscape Ontario, 1-800-265-5656 x 317 for further information on the landscape industry WSIB programs, any safety issue or about this article. ♦



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# STA Member Profile

Ian Haras • District Parks Manager • City of Guelph • See pp. 12-13 for South End Community Park Facility Profile

## What is your role?

As a Park Manager, I am directly responsible for the day-to-day operations for our parks and open spaces. Along with one other Park Manager, I develop and monitor the annual operation budget, contribute to the long term direction for the department, provide quality customer service when dealing with public inquiries and participate actively as a member of the Director's team in consultation with



Park Planners and Community Development Workers.

## What kind of team do you work with?

Along with the other Park Manager, we directly supervise 5 lead hands with 13 full time staff year round with an additional 5 full time employees that transfer from arenas in the summer and about 60-70 temporary seasonal employees. I report directly to the Director of Parks and often collaborate with the Park Planners and the Community Development Workers. I also serve on several corporate committees and take part in many city-wide corporate initiatives.

## What are you and your team responsible for?

We are responsible for all aspects of operations for the City's parks and open spaces. This includes, but is not always

limited to: turf maintenance on City owned properties, sports fields, play structures, garbage collection in parks, horticulture, special events, Farmer's Market, winter control in parks and facilities, trails, splash pads, amusement rides, washrooms, outdoor natural ice rinks, and greenhouse activities, to name a few.

## What is your biggest challenge?

Trying to balance stakeholders and the public's varied wants and needs with a shrinking budget and increased inventory to manage.

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

Guelph is my hometown. I was born here, raised here, educated here and now work here. It has been interesting to see this City go through growing pains and it's nice to think that in some small way I can contribute to the development of my hometown. One of my first assignments when I came to work for the City was to design and supervise construction of a small park on an old industrial site. The park is now completed and knowing that that park will most likely be there for people to enjoy long after I'm gone is pretty cool! Also, I have always felt what makes a job worthwhile are the people you work with, and I am fortunate to work within a team of dedicated talented professionals who truly take pride in their work and cultivate an enjoyable work environment.

## What is the biggest misconception about your job?

It seems that people think any request they make can be easily accommodated and



that their request is the only one that we have to deal with at the time. They have no idea of the many processes and limitations we have to work within every day to do our job.

**What is your educational/employment background?**

I have an Honours Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of Guelph and I also took the Turf Managers' Short Course through the University of Guelph. Since graduating in 1992, I have worked at a golf course on the maintenance crew, as an irrigation designer for an irrigation distributor, and as a landscape architect in a design office before coming to the City of Guelph. When I first came to the City in 2002, I started in the Park Planning Division of the Parks Department and then moved to the Park Operations Division a year later.

**Tell us about your family.**

I live in Guelph with my wife Jody and a big black Labrador named Jade. We just

welcomed our first child, Colin, into our home in September.

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

I love to golf in the summer whenever I can get out, and play hockey in the winter. I enjoy the outdoors either camping or up at the cottage with my family or on my mountain bike.

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

It is always hard to sell the intangible benefits that parks and open space provide to the public. We need to make the 'decision makers' aware that parks and open spaces are just as important as any other piece of public infrastructure and that the funding should reflect that.

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

I'm a fairly new member, but the

opportunity the association affords to exchange information with other members is invaluable. The more people I talk to the more I realize we all face the same challenges in our jobs and we can always learn from each others mistakes and successes. ♦



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# STA Facility Profile

South End Community Park • City of Guelph

## Name, location of facility.

South End Community Park, 25 Poppy Drive, Guelph, Ontario.

## General information regarding the facility (part of community centre, pool, library, etc.)

The South End Community Park Masterplan was approved by Guelph City Council in July 2001. The plan consists of a 55 acre site that was jointly designed in conjunction with the Wellington Catholic District School Board's Bishop MacDonnell Catholic High School and the City of Guelph's South End Community Park.

The park consists of 40 acres in total, 5 acres of which are non-developable open space greenlands. Within the park setting there

are currently 3 hardball diamonds, 3 temporary soccer fields, an accessible playground, change rooms, washrooms, parking lot, trails and storm water ponds. Future phases will add 1 softball diamond, basketball/multi-court, outdoor natural ice rink, double tennis court, picnic shelter and splash pad.

The ball diamonds were jointly developed with the assistance and donation of \$200,000 from the L.J. Pearson Foundation and are formally named the "Larry J. Pearson Baseball Complex" in July 2002. The first two diamonds opened in June 2003 and the third hardball diamond opened in June 2004. The fields include turf infields with clay base lines and are fully irrigated.

The park has been developed in multiple phases from 2001 to date and is estimated to cost \$5.1 million once complete.

## What types of sports fields are on site?

- Class A hardball fields with clay infields, fully automatic irrigation and lights
- 3 temporary mini soccer fields (future location of Community Centre)
- 2 future tennis courts and 1 future softball diamond
- future basketball/multi-use courts

## How many employees are involved with turf care at this facility?

One temporary seasonal employee (40 hours/week) is assigned permanently to the park for the operating season May to September. Various other full time and temporary seasonal employees assist in the maintenance of the park.

## How many acres of turf are maintained at this facility?

### How many acres of sports turf?

There are approximately 10 acres of turf maintained at the park with 8.2 acres of this being sports fields.

## What percentage of this acreage is irrigated?

Only the three hardball fields are irrigated which accounts for about 60% of the total maintained turf area.

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

- The ball diamonds were sodded with number one grade turfgrass nursery sod 40% Kentucky blue, 40% creeping red fescue and 20% perennial rye.

## Turf Care Agronomics

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- The soccer fields were seeded with a general turfgrass seed mixture.
- We installed the Permaline™ foul line system in one of the hardball diamonds as a trial to see how it performs.

### Is yearly overseeding part of your sports turf maintenance program?

Yes. We usually try to overseed once in the fall at the same time we topdress with a blend 50% Elfkin perennial rye, 25% Esquire perennial rye and 25% Inspire perennial rye.

### How many times do you fertilize?

We try to fertilize at least twice a year and ideally four times a year at a rate and type based on soil samples.

### Do you aerate? Topdress?

We aerate at least twice a year or as many times as labour and equipment will permit; we topdress at least once a year.

### Has your municipality banned the use of pesticides? When? Comments.

There was a Council resolution adopted in 2000 that instructed us to work towards a gradual five-year reduction in pesticide use with 2005 being the last year we can use pesticides on public lands. This may be revisited in the future, especially for pesticide use on sport fields.

### Are community user groups involved or have they been involved in the construction/maintenance of this facility?

### In what manner?

- The park is located adjacent to the new Bishop MacDonell High School and was constructed in cooperation with the School Board.
- We are constantly working together with the user groups to improve the maintenance and functionality of the complex.
- A private interest donated \$200,000 that was used for upgrades to the hardball diamonds. (e.g. irrigation, scoreboard).

### 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?

Like most of our sports fields throughout the City, the fields at this complex are used heavily. Sports groups book the fields through the City's Recreation Department and are generally available from 8 am to 11 pm seven days a week from May until mid-September. Hardball fields are booked for game use only. We do all of our maintenance during the day when the fields are not typically booked.

### Who were the main players involved with the facility?

Prime Consultant - Stantec Consulting  
 Irrigation Consultant - AAA Watermaster Systems  
 Lighting Consultant - Nadalin Electric Company  
 Building Architect - L. Alan Grinham Architect Inc.  
 Site Servicing/Grading - Braun Consulting Engineers  
 General Contractor - Gateman-Milloy Inc.  
 City of Guelph Project Manager - Dan Ritz, OAL ♦



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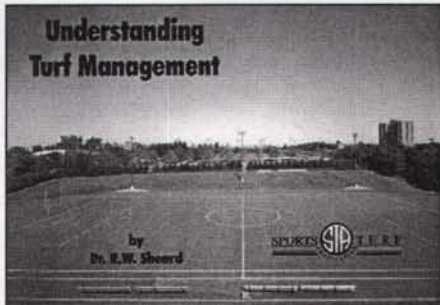
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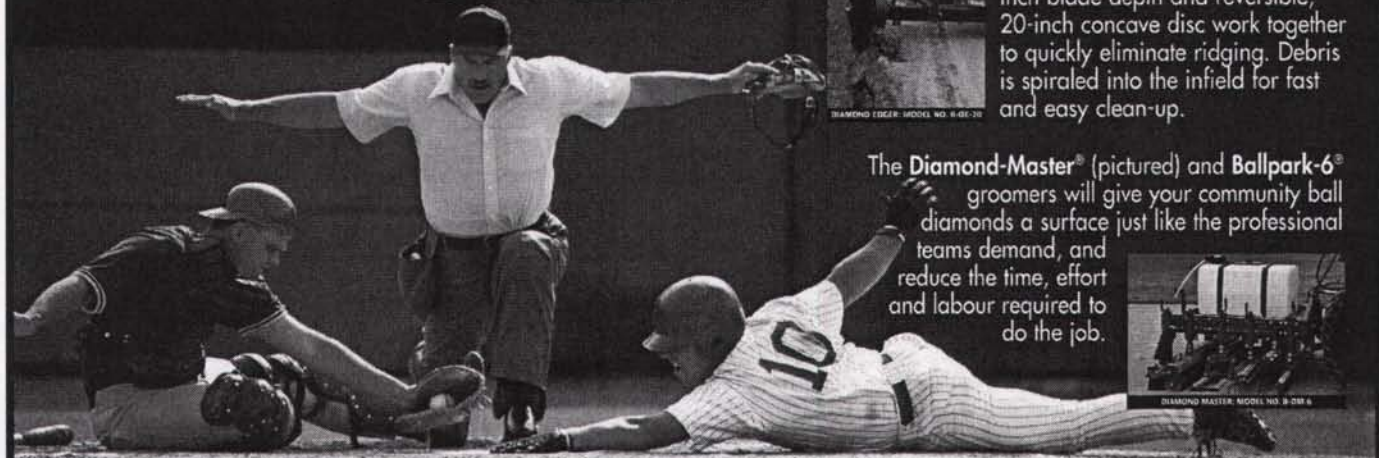
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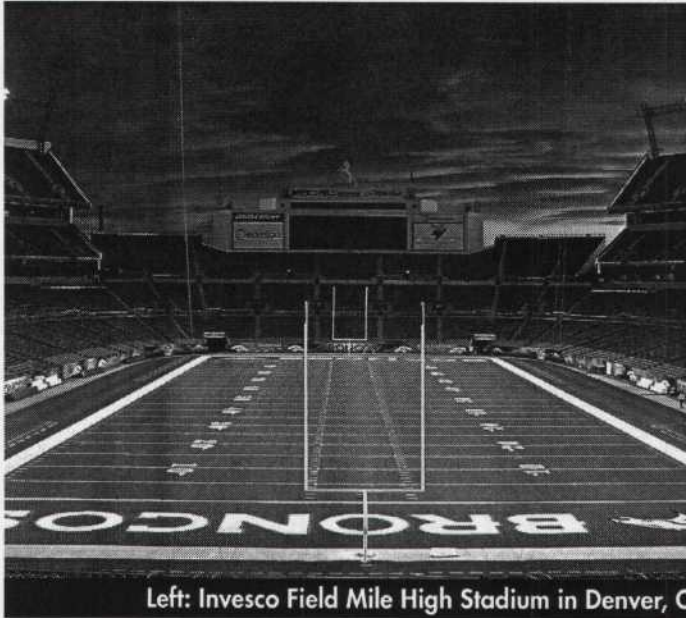
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Left: Invesco Field Mile High Stadium in Denver, Colorado. Right: Reliant Stadium in Houston, Texas.

# Field Marking Tips and Tricks from Athletic Surfaces Canada

## Field Maintenance

Before you think about striping and painting your field, you first have to get the grass and field into shape. As you all are well aware, bright colors and straight lines will only help so much if your field is hard, brown and spotty. Follow proper maintenance procedures.

## Striping Techniques

A green field to play on means nothing if the out-of-bounds lines aren't crisp and straight, the hash marks aren't accurate, or the mascot can't be seen. Striping and painting your field will take time and patience but will be worth it in the end.

- Always string your lines. Accuracy is important because games are officiated according to the lines you stripe. Stringing your lines helps insure accurate markage.
- Paint the sidelines on football fields first so that you know when to start and stop when lining the rest of the field.
- When striping lines the first time, the initial application should be lighter to establish a good base. A second application with high quality paint will make your lines brilliant.

- Apply a base coat of white paint before applying a color. This way you use less colored paint and get better, brighter coloring and your school name or logo will pop off the field.

- Use only the highest quality field marking paint to get the brightest lines and the easiest application.

## Game Fields vs. Practice Fields

On game fields, mix your paint 2 to 1 or 3 to 1. On practice fields, mix your paint 3 to 1 or 4 to 1. One quality paint, less storage.

## Don't Use Too Much Paint!

Don't go by the rule "If a little looks good, a whole lot will look great!" Too much paint in a confined area of the field (even water-based) can be harmful to the turf.

## Don't Throw Out the Leftovers

At the end of marking, don't throw away any unused paint. Pour it back into a bucket and seal it and it will be good the next time you need it.

## Give Your Field a Drink

In dry weather, try not to paint right after cutting the grass without giving the grass

a "drink" of water. This will prevent the grass from sucking up the moisture from the paint and causing a "burning" effect.

## Do the Dew!

To remove dew off a field, simply connect two 100 foot water hoses together and, with one person on each end of the hose, start in the end zone and drag the hose the length of the field several times.

## Make Your Logo Bright

When painting logos, paint a white base first, and allow drying. Then paint your colors on top, for the brightest and sharpest colors.

## Rainy Days and Aerosols

Aerosols work better in damp conditions than bulk paint. It's always a good idea to keep a few cases of aerosol in stock in case of rainy weather.

## Shake, Shake, Shake

When shaking the cans, first turn can upside down and pat against the palm of your hand while rotating the can. The marble will break loose much quicker by doing this. Then turn the can right side up and shake for a minute. How much aerosol does it take to stripe a football field? It

takes approximately 1 case of aerosol (12 cans) to stripe a regulation high school football field. That's all the lines, coach's boxes and the hash stripes. It takes about 1 case to paint the numbers and tick marks on the field.

*Please remember:* Your gait walk determines how far each can goes. The paint is coming out at the same speed whether you are standing still, walking or running with the can. Each can is designed to spray a 4" wide line between 350 feet and 450 feet.

### Overcoming the Big Chill

When painting in cold conditions, fill a 5-gallon pail with hot water. Put your aerosol paint cans in it. This will heat the cans up and make it easier to get paint to mix and spray. ♦

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## OTS 2005: Back to Our Roots

### Summary of Sports Turf Related Sessions...

#### T1 8:30-9:00 Sports Turf for Entertainment

*Chris Hope, Manderley Sod*

The Championship World Soccer Series visited the Toronto Skydome for two high level matches between Celtics vs. A.S. Roma and Liverpool vs. FC Porto in July of 2004. Learn about the process that was required to provide a top-level natural grass-playing surface to the Skydome for the first time. A synopsis of the logistical challenges of having a temporary field installed on the Skydome floor in less than 16 hours will also be discussed.

#### T2 9:00-9:30 Myths and Truths about Infield Specification

*Ron Martin, Mar-Co Clay Products*

The correlation between particle sizing, particle substance, sub-surface materials, drainage and amendments to consider when choosing your infield 'dirt' specification will be explored.

#### T3 9:30-10:00 Community Park and Sports Facility Design

*Jim Melvin, PMA Landscape Architects*

Jim will review the planning and design process involved in the creation of a community sports park. This seminar will include a review of the pre-planning programming, park design, budgeting and maintenance regimes.

#### T4 10:30-11:00 Sports Field Construction Project: Utilizing your Contractor

*Blaire Gateman, Gateman Milloy*

The contractor is an important resource with respect to field construction and tapping into his/her knowledge is invaluable. Learn how to access this experience and information and explore the intermix between owner, designer, consultant and contractor.

#### T5 11:00-11:30 The Challenges in Maintaining Poorly Constructed Fields

*Cam Beneteau, Ridley College*

A history and background of Ridley College and its sports fields will be discussed, highlighting the work done to correct specific problems and cultural practices set into place to eliminate and/or alleviate these problems.

#### T6 11:30-12:00 A System of Sports Field Classification and Construction Guidelines

*Gord Dol and David Smith, Sports Turf Association*

The development of a classification system and subsequent construction guidelines for sports fields as they relate to community needs will be discussed.



**W**hat's the worst question you've ever been asked on a job interview? Have you ever been asked questions such as: "what is the last book you read," "what is your favourite rock band," or "do you realize you are applying for a man's job"? Believe it or not, those are actual questions which people have been asked.

In a seasonal business, hiring is a constant fact of life. It can be time-consuming, often frustrating and usually costly going through the advertising process, sifting through scores of applications and resumes, interviewing potential candidates and making decisions. It is even more frustrating when an applicant who made a good first impression turns out not to have been a good choice after all – which then means we have to start the entire process over again. Even worse, if a candidate feels unfairly treated, there is the potential for a human rights complaint.

There are some steps which those who do hiring can take to minimize the stress of selecting staff, maximize the chances

of making good hiring decisions and ensure that every aspect of the hiring process meets human rights requirements.

## PLAN YOUR APPROACH

### Analyze the job and determine requirements.

Before drawing up questions or putting an ad in the newspaper, think about the job by asking yourself these questions.

1. What will the person be doing in the job? Be specific – don't say something vague such as "outside work." Think of a typical day/week and make a list.
2. In the past, what people have been most successful in the job? What were their qualifications?
3. What level of education is needed to perform effectively in the job? What type of previous experience is relevant? How much training is provided on the job?
4. What specific skills are required: physical strength for lifting or standing for long periods, public relations to deal with customers, ability to operate equipment, math skills to total up bills, etc.?
5. With whom will the person be working and in what type of environment? Will the person be working alone or as part of a team?
6. What behavioural skills are required to perform successfully in the job?

### Define skills/qualities to be assessed.

Once you have analyzed the job, now you can identify which skills and qualities you wish to assess during the hiring process. For example, if the person will be working outside in all types of weather, be doing heavy lifting, working without close supervision and be meeting customers, then you might want to assess

some of the following qualities: physical ability, independence and initiative, decision making, customer service skills, trustworthiness and reliability.

### Determine the best way to gather the information needed to make a hiring decision.

Now comes the hard part – developing ways to gather information about the qualities and skills you wish to assess. Simply asking a question such as "are you reliable" does not usually work. The applicant will just answer "yes" and you will have no idea whether or not that is a true statement.

Be creative. Try to think of appropriate ways to get the information you need to assess applicants' skill levels and aptitude for your job. Here are some examples.

1. An applicant can be asked to demonstrate a skill such as operating a piece of equipment.
2. Ask for examples from previous experience which demonstrate a particular skill.
3. Use role plays to see how the applicant handles a typical situation with a customer.
4. If math skills are important, you can give applicants a math test.
5. Give examples of typical problems which might be encountered on the job and ask applicants how they would deal with them.

The important thing to remember is this. As long as you are assessing qualities and skills which are directly related to the job, then you will probably have no difficulty with human rights. Asking a question such as "what is the last book you read" might be very appropriate for a job working in a library, but it would be difficult to explain how that was relevant



to working for a landscaping company. So don't just make up a list of questions. Make sure that everything you ask is directly related to the job. Not only will you get more relevant information to help you make better hiring decisions, you will also stay clear of any potential for charges of discriminatory hiring practices.

### **Determine the best way to advertise the position and collect information from applicants.**

How do you want people to know about your job openings? Placing an ad in the paper will usually draw a flood of applicants. There will definitely be good ones in the group but there is usually a lot of work involved because of the sheer numbers. Many people rely on word of mouth or simply build up a roster of potential applicants from people who drop off resumes on their own initiative.

Whatever you do, make sure you create a positive image for your business or organization by treating all job applicants with courtesy and respect. Don't say you'll keep a resume on file if you don't intend to, and let people know within a reasonable time of your decisions. Remember, job seekers are probably applying at more than one place and they appreciate knowing where they stand.

You will also have to decide if you want people to complete your own application form or just submit a resume. If you do use an application form, make sure that it complies with all the human rights requirements in your province. Generally, you may not ask questions which would indicate a person's age, sex, race, marital status, family status (i.e. number of children), ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientations. So for example, you should not ask for the year a person completed secondary school since that would tend to indicate their age. Rather than asking for "next of kin" you should ask for "person to contact in an emergency" and so on.

## **CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW**

### **Have a plan before you begin.**

Make sure you allow sufficient time for each interview. It is also a good idea to let the applicants know how long they can expect the interview to take. If they are going to be asked to take a test or go on a

tour, let them know so they can plan their day accordingly.

### **Put the applicants at ease immediately and try to maintain a positive rapport throughout.**

It is only natural for people to be nervous on a job interview. In fact, the more important the job is to the person, the more nervous they might be. The more nervous a person is, the more difficult it will be to get a true picture of what they might be like as an employee. So, try to put applicants at ease. Try not to leave them waiting too long before you begin. Make sure there is a place for coats. Introduce yourself and any others who are participating in the interview. If appropriate, show them around in the area where they might be working. Start the interview with a bit of "chit-chat" about the weather or the hockey game just to get the conversation going.

### **Ask the right questions to get the information you need.**

1. Ask specific questions which are related to the position. If necessary, explain the reason for asking a particular question or how the question is related to the qualifications.

2. Questions may be related to knowledge, situational experience or general qualities which you expect from your employees. A knowledge question might be something such as "what would you use to remove crabgrass?" A situational experience question might be something such as "give me an example from your previous job where you solved a problem for a customer" or "how would you respond to a customer who is demanding a refund?" A question relating to general qualities might be "what transportation arrangements can you make to ensure that you can be here on time each day?"

3. Ask good questions which will give you information. *Open* questions are questions which require more than one word to answer and are generally the best type to ask to gather information. Examples of open questions are: "tell me about your last job," or "what did you like best about your previous job?" *Closed* questions are

questions which can be answered with one word, often "yes" or "no." Examples of closed questions are: "how long did you work there?" or "did you like the job?" Generally, you should try to avoid asking closed questions, except to verify specific facts, since they tend to limit discussion and are usually conversation stoppers.

### **Remember, this is not an exam.**

Ask one question at a time, and give people a chance to think about their answers. Try to use a non-threatening, non-judgmental tone of voice. Also, make sure you give applicants an opportunity to ask questions. Remember, as well, that the job interview not only provides you with an opportunity to assess applicants to determine if they are right for the job, it is also an opportunity for the applicants to determine whether this job sounds right for them.

### **Listen!!**

Probably the most difficult task of all is to ensure that you really listen to what the applicants are saying during the interview. Pay more attention to their answers than thinking about how you are going to ask the next question. Take notes if necessary, but remember to make eye contact to show that you are listening. Make sure there are no distractions such as telephones ringing or interruptions from other staff. This is not only discourteous to the applicants but will also make it much more difficult for you to maintain focus on the interview.

### **Paint a realistic picture of the job.**

Don't oversell the job or the organization. Try to be realistic about working conditions, hours, your expectations, etc. It is much better to give applicants a true sense of the job rather than have them quit after a few days because it is not what they expected. People are much more likely to stay in a job which they really want. Be open about your expectations about quality of work, quantity of work, getting along with others, punctuality, attendance, dress code, etc.

While hiring can be a daunting process, if you follow some basic guidelines, hopefully you will find it easier to do and have more successful results. ♦



# TURF TRADES

Are you advertising a position? Are you searching for a job? Target your audience or refine your search with **Turf Trades**, an online resource for all staffing levels and areas of the sports turf industry.

The Sports Turf Association, based at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute in Guelph, Ontario, has been the leading professional sports turf association in the province since 1987. Our website has been completely redesigned and expanded to better serve both our members and other individuals interested in the sports turf industry. We have made a commitment to frequent updates and registration with all major search engines to ensure the effectiveness of this communications vehicle.

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