

## Question/Answer "Murphy's Law"

Dr. James Murphy is an Associate Extension Specialist in Turfgrass Management for Rutgers, department of Plant science.

Ask Dr. Murphy your questions: E-mail us at [hq@sfmanj.org](mailto:hq@sfmanj.org)

**Question:** The soccer fields in our area are currently dormant, brown and dry as a bone. If these conditions continue can permanent or excessive damage to the turf result from typical play on the fields?

**Answer:** Absolutely!

Dormant turf has very low vigor. Dormant turf has prepared itself to survive without water; but not to withstand intense traffic. Thus, the low vigor of the dormant turfgrass plants will only be able to tolerate a very limited amount of traffic.

Signs of severe damage include thin open turf and bare soil. The lower leaf sheaths and crowns of the turfgrass plants have been and will continue to be damaged once you start to see bare soil in the playing field. This is a serious

problem because regeneration of new healthy shoots and roots come from the crowns. Dead crowns translates into dead grass with no hope for recovery (I can not word it more bluntly)!

If you can still find crowns as a fresh, translucent green appearance, then the turf can recover. Dried up, brown crowns are severely damaged and have a high probability of being dead. Weed invasion is another problem with intense use (traffic) under dormant turf conditions. The dormant turf wears out very quickly with use. Once natural rains return or irrigation is applied, the dormant weed seeds in the soil have ample opportunity to germinate, emerge, and infest the field. Thus, you will likely observe greater weed problem on fields that receive significant play (use) under dormant conditions. ♦

## Field Tip Reality, What A Concept

by Jim Hermann, CSFM\*

- Reality is the difference between a state of the art utility vehicle that gums, carts and dumps and a 1980 pickup truck equipped with a length of chain link fence.

- Reality is the difference between a ten-man grounds crew for one field and a one-man grounds crew for ten fields.

- Reality is the difference between what works on paper and what works in the field.

- Reality is the difference between treating for crabgrass and being thankful the field is green.

In the realm of absolute right and absolute wrong, if your lucky, reality

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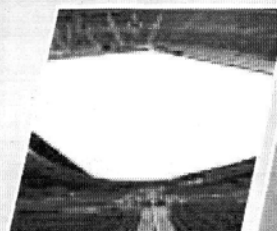
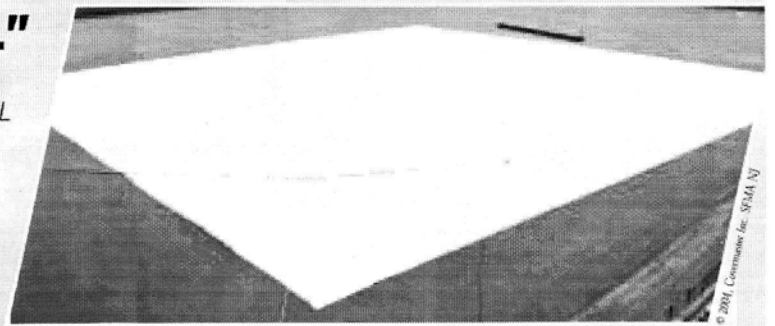
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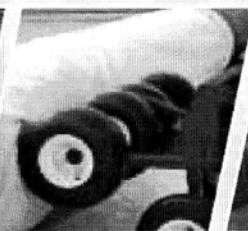
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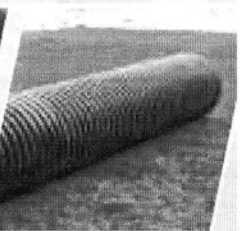
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