

UPDATE

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Sports Field



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Managers Association of New Jersey

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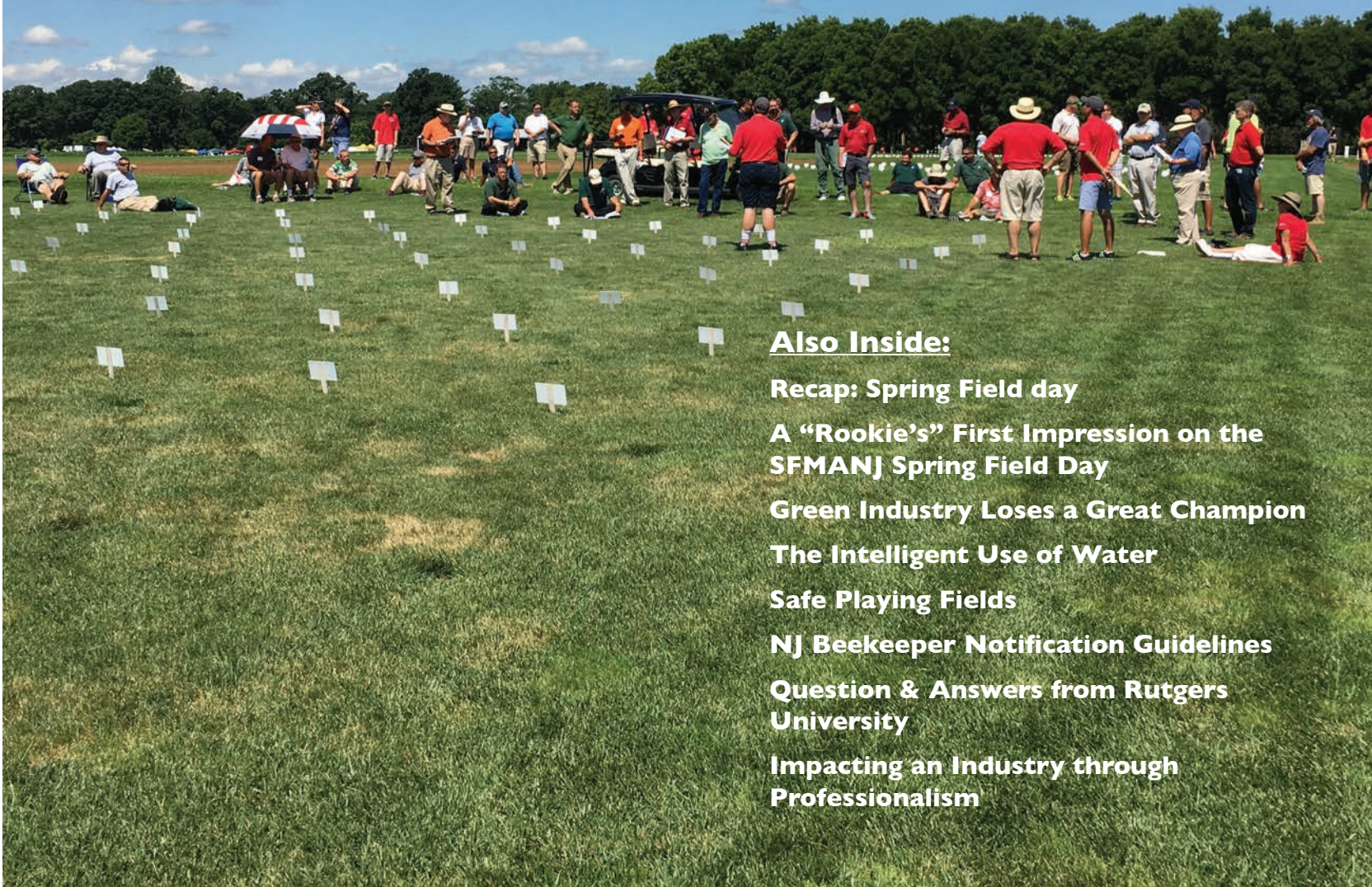
RUTGERS

LAWN, LANDSCAPE AND SPORTS TURF FIELD DAY

SAVE THE DATE!

**Wednesday,
July 26, 2017**

Including SFMANJ-Sponsored
Trade Show & Demos



Also Inside:

Recap: Spring Field day

A "Rookie's" First Impression on the
SFMANJ Spring Field Day

Green Industry Loses a Great Champion

The Intelligent Use of Water

Safe Playing Fields

NJ Beekeeper Notification Guidelines

Question & Answers from Rutgers
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Currently we have 224 new & renewed members. Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey mailed invoices for 2017 membership dues to all current members. If you did not receive an invoice, please contact us at 856.514.3179 or download the membership form available at www.sfmanj.org. Mail membership dues direct to SFMANJ, PO Box 205, Pennsville, NJ 08070.

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This newsletter is the official quarterly publication of the
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A Message from the President

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey's Spring Field Day

By Bernard Luongo



Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey's Spring Field Day was held April 19, 2017 at Harold Docherty Memorial Park in Hillsborough Twp. The weather held and the crowd grew to another record; a testament to the importance of continuing education.

A big thank you, to Host John Crossen, Parks Supervisor for host Spring Field Day. John's great sense of humor, positive attitude and friendliness was refreshing.

The work that goes on behind the scenes to make the event go off seamlessly belongs to Debbie Savard. Thank you, Debbie. All we have to do is show up and man our stations. In addition, Don Savard is the Chef Dejour, always tweaking the process to feed the masses. The menu that he has created is perfect for a field day. Thank you again Don.

Thank you to Storr Tractor and Rain Bird for sponsoring breakfast and lunch.

Thank you to all the commercial vendors that supported the field day with table top displays, demos and door prize donations. Without your support SFMANJ would not exist in its present capacity.

A field day wouldn't be complete without the education portion of the day. This spring SFMANJ had three educators from Rutgers University sharing their knowledge and expertise on a wide range of subjects, Dr. Jim Murphy, Dr. Matt Elmore and Brad Park. Thank you all gentlemen for taking time out of your day to share your knowledge with the attendees and support SFMANJ.

Thank you to Keith Fisher, Toms River BOE and SFMANJ board member, for hands on demonstration on how to get a game in on a wet in field, good stuff to know in a pinch.

Also not to forget the Board members of SFMANJ who volunteer their time to help make a memorable event, not only for the attendees, but for themselves. Also, their timeless effort and dedication throughout the year make the organization special and stronger.

As Monty Python would say: And now for something completely different. I don't know about what anyone else does on a mower for any length of time, but my mind goes adrift (yes, more than usual). So one fine day this early May when temperatures were in the 50's and the grass was juiced and happy, we got behind on our mowing, as I'm sure most do. So what to do when behind on mowing? What any rational grounds person would do - think up a jingle from a master mind drifter, shuffle around a few words and mow with a smile on your face.

Bernard Luongo is Lead Groundsperson, Northern Burlington County Regional School District, Columbus, NJ; and SFMANJ President.



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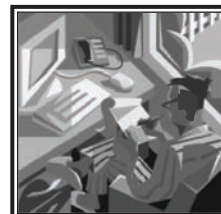
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SFMANJ Update is looking for authors.

Please feel free to send Brad Park, Editor, SFMANJ Update (park@aesop.rutgers.edu) and/or Debbie Savard, SFMANJ Executive Secretary (mail@sfmanj.org) an article regarding your fields, your experiences, your problems and your surprises.

SFMANJ Update can accommodate articles of differing lengths and welcomes pictures. The SFMANJ Membership will benefit from reading your story.

**Feel free to call today:
856-514-3179**

RUTGERS **LAWN, LANDSCAPE AND SPORTS TURF FIELD DAY**

Including

SFMANJ-Sponsored Trade Show and Equipment Demonstrations

by Brad Park

In what has become an annual tradition, the New Jersey Turfgrass Association (NJTA), Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ), and Rutgers University will once again collaborate to hold the Rutgers Lawn, Landscape, and Sports Turf Field Day. This year's event will be held at Rutgers Adelphia Research Farm, Freehold, NJ on Wednesday, July 26, 2017.

A top trade show will be sponsored and administered by SFMANJ and is open to all vendors who sell products and services to the Green Industry. Coffee, bagels, Danish pastries, etc. will be served during the trade show. The trade show provides a great opportunity for attendees to network with other Green Industry professionals and examine the latest product offerings from Industry-supporting vendors.

After opening remarks, the education portion of the program will begin at 9:00 am. Groups will rotate between three 20-minute tour stops per hour. There will be four 3-stop rotations between 9:00 am and 1:00 pm; two of these stops will consist of vendor-sponsored equipment demonstrations administered by SFMANJ.

Turfgrass species/variety, fungicide, and herbicide trials are annually conducted by Rutgers Faculty at the Adelphia Research and will be included as educational tour stops. Stark contrasts between effective

and ineffective varieties and treatments are often visually apparent in these trials providing attendees with useful information on turfgrass selection, product selection, application timings, and application rates.

Following the turfgrass education and equipment demonstrations, a fine lunch will be served to all of those in attendance. The trade show will also be open during this time. Following lunch, New Jersey DEP pesticide recertification credits, and credits from neighboring states per approval, will be available to attendees.

See you at Adelphia on July 26!

Please note the following:

Attendees may register online by visiting the NJTA website: www.njturfgrass.org; (o) 973.812.6467; (email) execdirector@njturfgrass.org

Those vendors interested in reserving trade show space as well as demonstrating turf equipment are encouraged to contact SFMANJ for more information and appropriate paperwork (website) www.sfmanj.org; (o) 856.514.3179; (email) mail@sfmanj.org

Brad Park is Sports Turf Research & Education Coordinator, Rutgers University; Editor, SFMANJ Update newsletter; and a member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors since 2003.

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A "Rookie's" First Impression on the SFMANJ Spring Field Day

by Jessica Phillips

I am going to give my thoughts and reactions to my first SFMANJ Field Day in April 2017.

Sports Field Managers Association of NJ is a great way for people from all different backgrounds and job descriptions in this industry to come together. I knew this going into my first SFMANJ Field Day; however, getting the chance to participate was a great experience.

I am new to the "green" industry and as a vendor I was very excited to be a part of the learning, engaging in new concepts, and networking with other professionals.

Starting the day off, breakfast was great you could go up for as many seconds as you'd like. Thank you, Don Savard!

A lot of good information was provided for sports managers, starting with the overseeding and weed strategy discussion. It is interesting to try to understand some these issues with the limited exposure I have had so far in the industry.



I was approached by customers for personalized demos for our Linemark International line painting system so I did not hear much on the infield moisture management topic. Among the positive feedback I did receive, one had mentioned it was a great informational session.

Finally, I got a background on some of the new fertilizer rules. Although I am not directly responsible since we are not applicators, we are directly affected by the regulations that have been placed on our customer base.

Having watched and talked to people all day it was my turn to get up in front of 60-80 attendees to demo our machine that runs pre-mixed paint. We had Peter Clausen, our Linemark paint distributor from Denmark (yes, the European nation), who had the mic to run through some of the credentials Linemark International has achieved.

Then it was off to the races demonstrating the machine; we even had attendees demonstrate as well. Thank you to John Crossen of

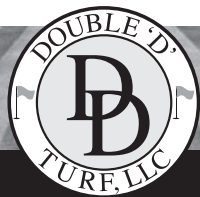
Hillsborough Township for allowing us to paint on his grass. I do believe he would join me in saying the paint looked great on his grass as I did a demo the week after on his soccer field with him.

My overall experience for me was gratifying as I enjoyed meeting new people, learning about the industry and seeing all have a good time. I look forward to the fall field day and hope to see all of you there as well.

Jessica Phillips is a Sales Representative, TurfTrade, Mullica Hill, NJ

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The Intelligent Use of Water

By Heath Traver

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Here's the scenario...

After a long week of work, the grounds supervisor for the local high school is enjoying his afternoon at a family barbeque. His phone rings. It's the school's superintendent calling to notify him that the irrigation in right field has been running all night and has created a mess. Making the situation even worse, there is a state playoff game to be played on the field the following night.

Under normal circumstances, somebody would have to be dispatched to go out to the field and physically turn off the water to the irrigation.

Question: What if the grounds supervisor had the ability to pull out his phone, and shut off the system without leaving the barbeque?



Even better: What if the system had the ability to recognize the issue as soon as it started, automatically shut off the water and send an email notification to anyone who would be interested in knowing?

Not too long ago, a complicated Central

Control system with this type of accessibility would typically cost 10's of thousands of dollars.

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This easy-to-use technology can bring multiple controllers together to one central control platform, watch and record real-time water usage, and compile



reports using this data. Since IQ is a cloud-based platform, it can be accessed anywhere there is internet present. This also means that the user can remotely operate the system with their smart phone, eliminating the need to walk back and forth to the controller.



Rain Bird's IQ platform is rich in features, only a few of which have been mentioned here. For more information about IQ technology please visit Rainbird.com/IQ or reach out via email at HTraver@rainbird.com.

Heath Traver is an Area Specification Manager for Rain Bird in the Northeast US. Before joining the Rain Bird team, Heath was an irrigation contractor in North New Jersey, where he still resides. He is a certified irrigation contractor and auditor, and is licensed to perform irrigation in the state of New Jersey. Please reach out to Heath for more information regarding new technologies in the field of irrigation, including water-efficient products.

Heath Traver, CIC
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SFMANJ AND ENTIRE GREEN INDUSTRY LOSES A GREAT CHAMPION

Editor's Note: MaryLou DesChamps was a longtime supporter of Sports Field Managers Association of NJ. The SFMANJ Board recently approved a donation to the Eastern Amputee Golf Association in her honor. Below is a portion of her Obituary.

MaryLou DesChamps, of Branchburg, NJ, passed away peacefully on Friday, March 31, 2017. She was born in Morristown, NJ, to her late parents Lillian and Cecil Stichweh on May 13, 1935. MaryLou grew up in Boonton, NJ and graduated from Boonton High school in 1953. In 1954, she married Paul L. DesChamps and resided in Boonton Township for many years before moving to Branchburg in 1980.

MaryLou was the President and CEO of Storr Tractor Company in Branchburg and led operations of the company since 1990. Under her leadership, Storr Tractor Company was able to generate partnerships with Yankee Stadium, Citi Field, the Great Lawn at Central Park, The Botanical Gardens in Brooklyn, the Bronx Zoo, Liberty State Park, and MetLife Stadium, to name a few.

MaryLou wore many hats: She was a daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, companion, friend and a successful businesswoman. She was active in community affairs back in Boonton Township, joining the women's Auxiliary Police while her husband served in the Boonton Township Police Department. She was President of the Parent Teachers Association for the elementary school in Boonton Township, had been a member of the New Jersey Irrigation Association of New Jersey for nearly 50 years and was an honorary Eastern Amputee Golf Association Life Member. Her determination and executive decision making at Storr Tractor Company had earned her many awards which included: being named one of the top 500 women-owned businesses in Working Woman Magazine in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001, recipient of the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Irrigation Association of New Jersey, and in her tenure, Storr Tractor was named the top distributor in the United States. Other accolades include being named to the



New Jersey Turfgrass Hall of Fame, Otterbine Company's Hall of Fame, Outstanding Woman's Award in the field of Business/Management in 2002, a 2009 Inductee into the Eastern Amputee Golf Association (EAGA) "Hall of Fame, Spirit of Somerset Award for her donation of a fleet of Toro Utility Vehicles to the World Trade 9/11 Disaster to transport people and food to aid in the rescue and recovery efforts in 2001. MaryLou had donated the Toro equipment that the balloons were tethered to in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade for over 15 years.

In her spare time, she loved to be outdoors, whether it was feeding her koi fish in her backyard pond, driving along the mountainside, or bird watching. She was a seasoned traveler, going to Hawaii, Costa Rica, Mexico, Europe, and Puerto Rico. She loved to play golf and in honor of her late husband, Paul, she held an annual Golf Classic in his name at Copper Hill Country Club to raise proceeds for the Paul DesChamps Scholarship Award with the Eastern Amputee Golf Association. It was set up in 1992 and had helped countless students with their college education. She also loved to spend time with her family, especially her beloved daughter Paulette, and dear granddaughter Danielle. As a family together, they enjoyed their yearly trips to NYC at Christmastime, going to games at Yankee Stadium, taking various summer vacations, and spending all holidays together.

Surviving are her beloved daughter, Paulette and husband Peter Tartaglia of Butler, NJ; her cherished granddaughter, Danielle and husband Michael Centalozza of Randolph, NJ; her loving companion, Paul Strani of Bridgewater, NJ; her brother, Cecil and nephew Brian Stichweh, of Boonton, NJ; and many wonderful family and friends.

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Photo Recap:

Photos by Debbe Savard

SFMANJ Spring Field Day Wednesday, April 19, 2017 Harold Docherty Memorial Park, Hillsborough, NJ



Hope you were able to make it!



More Photos
on page 12

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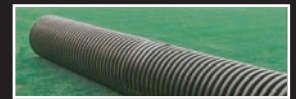
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More From SFMANJ Spring Field Day

Photos by Debbe Savard



Hope you were able to be there!

“SAFE PLAYING FIELDS”:

What does it really mean?

By Rich Watson

Editor's Note: This article was first published in the Summer 2012 Edition of SFMANJ Update. Rich Watson was Sports Field Manager, Pine Hill Public Schools, Pine Hill, NJ at the time of its publication.

Over the course of the past year, anyone involved in New Jersey's turf industry has heard the term "Safe Playing Fields" used by a variety of people in regards to the safety of our children. The sports field manager has been portrayed as someone who is trained only to apply pesticides on a schedule to deal with pests and is not aware about safer alternatives that prevent these problems long term. I have heard terms like careless, uninformed and misguided to describe sports field managers who apply pesticides on athletic fields. These types of statements are what led me to stand up and try to bring some clarity to the conversation about safe playing fields. Lost in this conversation are the dedication, time and energy that sports turf managers put into their craft. Most people don't see the pre-dawn irrigation checks, the weekend visits on site, and the amount of time spent at home researching, plotting and planning updates to their turf plan. The first thing considered at all times is the safety of the athletes that use our facilities. With that being said, let's look at what a safe playing field really is.

I don't know if there is one true definition for a safe playing field. However, turf quality is a good place to start the discussion. If a field has a smooth, well rooted and groomed surface it is more than likely to provide a safe playing surface for just about any sport. The key ingredients for quality sports turf are fertility, proper seeding, good cultural practices and responsible pest management (IPM).

New Jersey's fertilizer law is in full swing these days. After passing the certification test, don't let the law scare you from keeping fertility up on your fields. The law in regards to sports fields is fair and can be adapted to fulfill your field's needs. It will take some thought and close monitoring though. Consistent fertility applications throughout the year are very important to maintain quality turf. Spring turf requirements call for moderate amounts of nitrogen (my choice is ammonium sulfate), while summer stress can be dealt with by introducing an organic or slow release product. Fall should be reserved for higher amounts of nitrogen to ensure your fields will survive the demands of the season and falling soil temperatures. This is a very important point that is often overlooked. Fall fertility serves two purposes. First, nitrogen (again, ammonium sulfate is my choice) availability is crucial to establish new seed and also for recovery from fall sports damage. Secondly, it allows turf growth to extend into the end of the fall sports season. Too often fall fields are allowed to stop growing when temps drop but field use continues. Starting early in the spring and continuing all the way through the fall season will give you maximum results for your fertilizer dollar and provide a dense, consistent turf cover for the entire year.

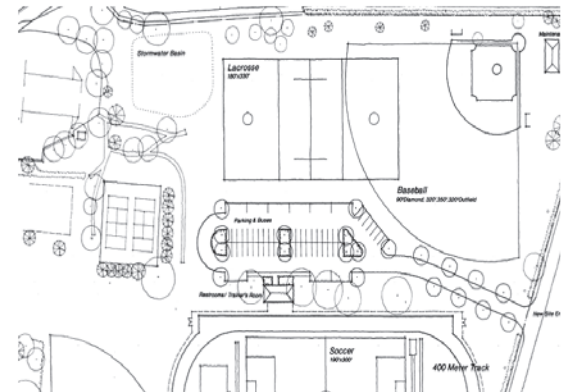
Dr. Dave Minner from Iowa State University and I talk often about how difficult it is to overcome the amount of seedheads produced by crabgrass. Having large amounts of seed introduced into the soil and then worked in by the athletes seems like a tough thing to deal with. Crabgrass technology can be used by the sports field

manager in the same manner. From August through November we live by the motto "If you see brown, throw it down". This means introducing perennial ryegrass seed any time you see bare soil. The broadcasting of seed during the fall sports season is the key to keeping turf coverage all year long. A common perception is that you are wasting money if you seed during field activity. I disagree. Due to unpredictable weather in the spring and hot/humid conditions in the summer, fall is the season of choice for overseeding. Unfortunately, this is when athletic fields absorb the most abuse and wear. I take a nothing ventured, nothing gained approach. If you don't seed during the fall, you will end up with a good deal of bare soil at the end of the season. I believe that it is easier to grow turf from seed during moderate fall weather conditions than any other time of year. Perennial ryegrass is my choice for use during this timeframe due to its wear tolerance even as seedlings. As the season winds down, we start to introduce turf-type tall fescue into the fields. This is done later because tall fescue doesn't hold up to traffic upon emergence as well as perennial ryegrass does. Tall fescue however, has displayed more disease resistance on our fields.

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NJ Beekeeper Notification Guidelines

Editor's Note: This article is courtesy of the New Jersey Green Industry Council

Keith Bennett, CGCS

There have been a lot of questions asked regarding the beekeeper notification legislation.

Below is a set of guidelines that will hopefully help detail some of the responsibilities of the

pesticide applicator and help them to navigate through the requirements of the legislation.

- 1) Read the legislation. It is not long and has information that you should be aware of. Two examples being an exemption for applications less than 3 acres and provisions for emergency applications. It can be found at this link: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/enforcement/pcp/regulations/Subchapter%209.pdf>
- 2) Have a pollinator plan in place and be prepared to share it with beekeepers in your area. This can be as simple as creating a policy to not spray weeds while flowering and not spraying in high winds where spray may drift into nontarget areas. These management practices can greatly decrease the chance that pollinators will be affected and may be practices that are already utilized. Explaining these policies to beekeepers may help to correct the perception that many lay people have regarding the dangers of chemical applications.
- 3) Find your local beekeepers and reach out to them. Look through the state list of registered beekeepers and figure out who is within 3 miles of the application site. If there is doubt whether a beekeeper falls within the range or not, err on the side of caution and add them to your contact list. Sifting through the list and determining who falls within your contact zone will be the most challenging and tedious part of the entire process. A link to the list follows: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/enforcement/pcp/bpo/2017DEPNotificationList.xlsx>

Once you have formulated a list, reach out to each beekeeper individually for an initial introduction. Explain who you are, what you do, and what your plan is to keep their pollinators safe. If the beekeepers choose to not be contacted prior to each regulated application, there is a standard waiver detailed in the beekeeper legislation that stays in effect until withdrawn by the beekeeper.

Inform your beekeepers that they will be notified via email prior to all applications in accordance with the legislation. This is generally the most convenient of approved methods of communication and provides a documented history in case any questions arise later.

- 4) Read your labels! Notification is only needed for products that are labeled to be toxic to bees. In general this includes all your commonly used insecticides. Note that granular insecticides are not labeled as toxic to bees and therefore do not require notification.
- 5) Notify everyone on your list at least 24 hours prior to applications in accordance with the legislation. As mentioned earlier, there are provisions to include emergency applications that may arise. Set up all your apiarists on a group email. This will save time prior to applications, especially if you have a lot of hives around you. Be sure to include all recipient email addresses as a blind carbon copy (BCC). BCC's hide who is on the email list and make it impossible for someone to send a message back to all other recipients.

I hope that clarifies the applicator's responsibilities under the current legislation. If there are any questions, feel free to contact myself or anyone on the New Jersey Green Industry Council for more information.

Keith Bennett is a Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS), Technical Sales Representative, Grass Roots Turf Products, and member of the Board of Directors, New Jersey Green Industry Council

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Question & Answer

with Rutgers University

By Brad Park and Dr. Jim Murphy, Rutgers University

Q: In the spring I manage fields used for baseball and lacrosse; field hockey and soccer in the fall. I have been under the impression that “quick dry” is an agent that should only be used on clay surfaces. I’ve been told that it is not good to use this product on turf because it renders the soil difficult to germinate new grass. The field hockey program practices and plays games in the outfield of the varsity baseball field. After a week of practices, the grass in front of the goal areas is reduced to dirt. I am reluctant to put “quick dry” in those areas when it rains for the aforementioned reason. Is my information on the use of “quick dry” products wrong?

A: You are correct to be cautious about applying “quick dry” products on turf areas. Extensive use of some quick dry products will eventually “seal” the soil in these areas ultimately making the problem worse. Moreover, you should include seed in any topdressing of these areas with drying agents, otherwise the bare areas will not fill-in (recover) with grass. I recommend that you apply (broadcast) 2 pounds of perennial ryegrass seed per goalmouth per week through the remainder of the season. You should observe some emergence within 10-14 days (possibly earlier) after a good rain or irrigation. Emerging plants will get trampled but it is a numbers issue - the more seed you apply the greater the chance some plants will survive and ultimately fill-in the worn out areas. We see a number of facilities that are highly successful with this type of regular overseeding.

There are 2 types of granular materials that would be acceptable to apply to these goalmouths and function to “dry” these areas without adversely affecting soil properties: (1) sand or (2) high-temperature, kiln-fired, clay or diatomaceous earth products. Sand will be the least expensive option but will not “soak-up” as much water as the kiln-fired products. If you choose to use sand, order a medium-coarse or medium sand (size); do not use concrete or mason sands.

The kiln-fired products need to be fired at very high temperatures so that the granules will not slake (breakdown) and form a sticky, clayey mess over time. These granular products are very hard and are roughly sand sized (depending on product and size grade); thus, these materials will behave much like sand except that these materials will soak up more water than sand. The hardness of the granules prevents slaking (breakdown) allowing these materials to work into the soil much like sand and provide similar benefits over time - a coarser and less muddy surface.

If cost is problem, you could consider blending sand with kiln-fired granular product.

Q: We are interested in receiving advice regarding a baseball infield that has been neglected for years. It is a dirt infield and we would like to put down a grass infield. Any suggestions on where to start?

A: Although not as aesthetically pleasing as a turfgrass infield, dirt infields are generally easier to maintain and, in most cases, are the most appropriate for municipal/parks and recreation facilities. Turfgrass infields, while appropriate for higher-maintenance facilities, often develop lips rather quickly due to mismanagement, a lack of management, or both.

Generally, neglected skin surfaces most benefit from lip renovation/removal and a management program that involves the elimination of high and low spots through routine grooming (without moving infield mix into nearby turf areas), attention to the pitcher’s mound and home plate areas, and the avoidance of adding infield mix on an annual basis - which gradually raises the infield elevation relative to the surrounding areas.

Dr. James Murphy is Extension Specialist in Turfgrass Management, Rutgers University; and SFMANJ Advisor.

Brad Park is Sports Turf Res. & Ed. Coord., Rutgers University; and Editor, SFMANJ Update.

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Impacting an Industry through Professionalism

Sports Turf Managers Association Editorial Staff

Demands on the profession continue to rise. Environmental regulations, personnel management, changing technology, resource utilization, athlete and fan safety ... the list of areas for which a sports turf manager has responsibility continues to expand in complexity. Obviously, doing a great job at your sports facility is paramount to your career success, but it takes more than doing a great job to garner respect and recognition.

Your abilities as a sports turf manager will form other's opinions of the profession, but your personal professionalism speaks volumes to your staff, your employer, your colleagues, the athletes who use your fields and the fans. Sports turf managers should view the non-technical aspects of their work as a critical aspect of their jobs.

Here are 10 ideas to help you gain recognition and bring respect to you personally, professionally and ultimately to the entire profession.

- 1. Do a great job. No amount of publicity, communication or civic goodwill will overcome poor job performance.
- 2. Be visible and talk daily with other managers. Make a point of talking with other departments' staff. Your interest and sincerity will make them want to be a supporter and promoter of you.



- 3. Control your reactions and watch your non-verbal communication. The champions in business are able to shrug off distressing situations and regroup emotionally – that's one reason they are successful. They also keep in check their non-verbal body language and facial expressions.
- 4. Promote your education and training. Put your diploma, STMA membership certificate and plaques in visible areas. Talk about concepts and ideas you learned at the STMA conference and at other educational events when you are in meetings with peers and with your employer.



- 5. Take responsibility for your own mistakes and for those of your subordinates. Blaming others, even if justifiable, makes you look small-minded and weak. Earn a reputation as a "fixer" of errors, someone who can snap back from setbacks and learn from mistakes.
- 6. Always answer criticism in a professional and courteous manner. Explain why there is a problem and what you plan to do about it. Never let it be assumed that you do not care. Take immediate action on complaints.
- 7. Adopt a "no surprises" philosophy. If there is a problem with the field, communicate the issue immediately and honestly to those who need to know, along with how you are addressing the problem. Proactive communication, even when it is bad news, contributes to your stature as a professional.
- 8. Hire a top flight team and support continuing education for them. Your image is affected by the image of your staff. Make them aware of their important role in promoting professionalism in the field of sports turf management. This includes their attitudes, care of equipment and courtesy to all with whom they come in contact with while on the job.

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- 9. Be responsive and on-time. Return telephone calls and answer requests promptly, no matter how trivial they seem. Be on time for meetings. A reputation for always being late can influence people's opinion of your performance.
- 10. Pay attention to the details. It's the little things that can make or break you. For example, what does your work space say about you? A cluttered and dirty desk may make others think you don't care or that you lack organization in all areas of your work.



Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA), Lawrence, KS

“SAFE PLAYING FIELDS”:

Continued from page 13

What does it really mean?

It is not a common mix, but it has been working for us. My friend Scott Bills who is a Certified Sports Field Manager also points out that overseeding regularly allows for the introduction of multiple generations of seeds, including newer varieties. The amount of seed planted in the fall allows our fields to emerge from winter with almost full turf cover. This gives us a better chance of fighting off pests and stress as we enter the height of the growing season.

Speaking of pests, sometimes even with your custom fertility plan in place and an overseeding program enacted things can still go wrong. The School IPM Act is the law that schools in NJ abide by when it comes to dealing with pests. Integrated Pest Management is often a misunderstood term. The EPA has a great definition for IPM. It is an approach to pest management that blends all available management techniques- nonchemical and chemical- into one strategy: Monitor pest problems, use nonchemical pest control and resort to pesticides when pest damage exceeds an economic or aesthetic threshold. The NJ school IPM law is a little more restrictive than that. If pest problems persist with non-chemical options (proper mowing/irrigation, aeration, seeding with appropriate varieties and soil monitoring/testing) being implemented, the law requires that you consider a low-impact pesticide from a predetermined list of products before making a restricted pesticide application. In my mind it is a very simple process. By performing good cultural practices

in conjunction with proper fertility and a good seeding program, you can do some impressive things with your turf. However, it is the sports turf manager's job to take responsible action when pest stresses start exceeding thresholds and put field safety at risk.

Gaining an understanding of pest problems through education and knowing where to set your thresholds are the keys to a good IPM program. We live with a lot of things on our fields and choose to treat only after thresholds are exceeded and field quality as related to safety is in question. We have considered the limited list of low-impact pesticides provided in the law. Reading the Rutgers report: "Managing Turf using Low Impact Pesticides" was very helpful in shaping our decision.

Last year the cost and efficacy of these products did not allow us to use them in our turf program. We are currently evaluating this decision for the upcoming year. Hopefully some day there will be an expanded list of products to choose from. When the decision is made to apply a pesticide, we give consideration to reduced risk products first if they are available. After a product is selected, we look at the field's history to decide what part of the field needs to be sprayed. A spot application may be in order or maybe just the middle of the field is compromised. Sometimes it may be

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“SAFEPLAYINGFIELDS”: What does it really mean?

necessary to spray the entire playing surface, but not the buffer areas surrounding the field.

The educated field manager is moving away from blanket spray applications and beginning to treat the field within the field. Every field is different with its own needs and requirements. They need to be treated accordingly. Having a field history report for each field is a great help. In fact it is part of the law for schools. Having a hard copy pest sighting log is too. This is a portion of the law where I have fallen short in the past. Having a field's history in my head or in a notebook does not fulfill the requirements of the School IPM Law.

Moving forward, I have created field log binders for all of our sports fields. It will allow me to track problems and make decisions with all of the information right in front of me. It has taken a long time to get to this point and it wasn't always easy. IPM is a twelve month process that may take some time to implement. A large part of our turf management plan for this year is based on what took place last year. Sometime you need to look back to move forward. This process may seem like a lot of work to some, but the truth of the matter is Integrated Pest Management is here to stay. For some of us it is the law.

As I see it, the most important product or tool in providing quality turf isn't something you can buy. It rides on a mower, monitors pests, checks soil conditions and usually is the first one in and the last one done every day. Sports turf managers around the state and the country are getting educated and doing whatever it takes to provide truly SAFE PLAYING FIELDS.

Rich Watson is Sales Representative, Laurel Lawn Equipment, Blackwood, NJ



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Past issues of Update, dating from 2001 to the present can be accessed through the Michigan State University Libraries.

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