

# UPDATE Sports Field

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**Managers Association** of New Jersey

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## SFMANJ FALL FIELD DAY

**Daniel P. Ryan Football Field, Monroe Twp., NJ**  
**Wednesday, October 25, 2023**

### See Inside For:

Recaps of SFMANJ Trade Show at the  
Rutgers Lawn, Landscape and Sports  
Turf Field Day

Information on EXPO 2023

Winterizing an Irrigation System

Preparing Your Equipment for Winter

SFMA Grants and Scholarships

Information and Registration for  
SFMANJ Fall Field Day





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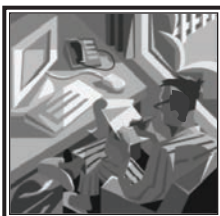
# Welcome! New and Renewed SFMANJ Members for 2023

We have 221 new & renewed members for 2023. Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey has generated invoices for 2023 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](http://www.sfmanj.org). Mail membership dues direct to SFMANJ, PO Box 205, Pennsville, NJ 08070.

Martin Ariemma  
Chris Fox  
Brian Giunta  
Brandon Gobel  
Ryan Mason  
Natale Nuovo

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The Landtek Group, Inc.  
Central Turf & Irrigation Suppl  
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## ATTENTION MEMBERS!



## SFMANJ Update is looking for authors.

Please feel free to send Brad Park, Editor, SFMANJ Update ([bradley.s.park@rutgers.edu](mailto:bradley.s.park@rutgers.edu)) and/or Debbie Savard, SFMANJ Executive Secretary ([mail@sfmanj.org](mailto: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**

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### MISSION STATEMENT

Committed to enhancing the professionalism of athletic field managers by improving the safety, playability and appearance of athletic fields at all levels through seminars, field days, publications and networking with those in the sports turf industry.

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### National Organization

Sports Turf Managers Association  
[www.stma.org](http://www.stma.org)

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*This newsletter is the official quarterly publication of the  
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For information regarding this newsletter, contact:  
SFMANJ at (856) 514-3179 or Brad Park at (848) 932-6327  
Editor: Brad Park, Rutgers University, email: [bradley.s.park@rutgers.edu](mailto:bradley.s.park@rutgers.edu)  
Layout and Design: Debra Savard, email: [mail@sfmanj.org](mailto:mail@sfmanj.org)

*SFMANJ does not necessarily support the opinions of those reflected in the following articles.*

**You can always reach  
us at  
[mail@sfmanj.org](mailto:mail@sfmanj.org)**



# Recap of SFMANJ Sponsored Trade Show at the Rutgers Lawn, Landscape and Sports Turf Field Day

By Debbie Savard

Once again, Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) sponsored the trade show at the Rutgers Lawn, Landscape and Sports Turf Field Day on Wednesday, July 26, 2023.

The show included vendor booths as well as equipment demonstrations. This year proved to be very exciting as some new and innovative equipment was showcased.

Everyone seemed to be going electric, and we had several vendors demonstrating their new equipment such as Storr Tractor with their Electric Revolution Ride on Mower and Laurel Lawnmower with the Mean Green Electric Mower. Turf Trade also showcased their new Steel Green Zero Turn Sprayer/Spreader

For those looking to simplify their workload, we had robotics. Tiny Mobile Robots did a field painting demo for us and Turf Robotic/

SWOZIE demonstrated the SWOZIE Robotic Sports Field Line Painter. And as for power and versatility, we had GT Mid Atlantic with their Takeuchi Excavator.

Finally, Synatek Solutions with Native Greens LLC, demonstrated a Satusteam Weed Steamer marketed as an "eco-friendly" nonselective vegetation control management option.

In addition to the above, our booths also included Husqvarna, Plant Food Company, Arborjet/Ecologel, Turf Equipment and Supply, Fisher and Son, Steel Green and Lawn and Golf.

I hope you were able to attend and spend some time with our vendors to learn the about future of our industry.

Debbie Savard is SFMANJ Executive Secretary

Mark Your  
Calendar!

## SFMANJ Fall Field Day

Wednesday, October 25, 2023 • Daniel P. Ryan Football Complex

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# Begin Your Planning to Attend EXPO 2023 December 5-7, 2023



By Brad Park

*Editor's Note: This article was adapted from materials developed by Chris Carson, Expo Education Chair; and Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA)*

It's time to begin planning your trip to Expo 2023. The New Jersey Green Expo will return to The Borgata in Atlantic City, NJ during December 5-7, 2023.

## **A few highlights of what's planned for Expo 2023:**

**Credits, Credits, Credits...** New Jersey DEP Pesticide Credits (and other states) are anticipated as well as New Jersey ProFACT Fertilizer Credits.

**Education...** A comprehensive Educational Program will focus on Sports Fields, Lawn and Landscapes, and Golf disciplines. Local, national, and internationally known industry and university leaders will be presenting important information that you can use to make your operation better.

**Trade Show...** One of the largest trade show events in the region, Expo proudly presents many of the best vendors and suppliers of services. Discuss your specific management issues with the best companies our industry has to offer.

**Fellowship...** Many opportunities exist to meet old friends and to make new ones. Whether on the trade show floor, or in the hallways

between sessions, or in the many formal social opportunities, or in the informal social get-togethers, the three days at Expo offer you a great opportunity to learn what others are doing in our business in a relaxed atmosphere. Many attendees have told us that these informal discussions are highlights of the conference!

**One-on-one discussion opportunities with industry leaders...** Including the many Faculty at Rutgers University and at other top-notch Universities. Rutgers Professors and more will be there to answer your management questions.

**Another year at The Borgata ...** The Borgata is the premier Hotel/Casino in Atlantic City and Expo will be returning to The Borgata for 2023!

**The Expo mission statement:** The NJ Green Expo is a science based conference and trade show that provides education, business, fellowship, and environmental stewardship opportunities in partnership with the Center for Turfgrass Science at Rutgers University.

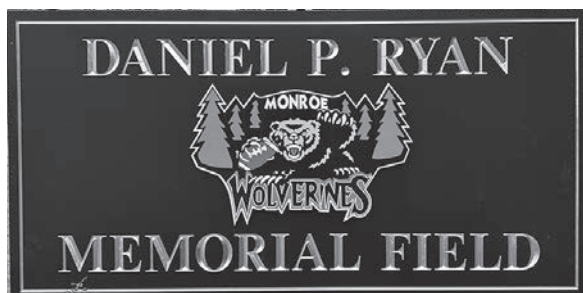
*Continued on page 15*

## BE SURE TO ATTEND THE SFMANJ FALL FIELD DAY

Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at the beautiful

# DANIEL P. RYAN

**Football Complex**  
with a  
**Cricket Pitch**



Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the Fall 2020 issue of SFMANJ Update

By Heath Traver

This article offers tips, tricks and other information that will come in handy when winterizing an irrigation system. However, I'd like to begin by talking about water at the molecular level. Typically, when a substance gets colder, the molecules pull in tighter to one another, thereby shrinking and increasing in density, which explains why substances turn into a solid when they reach their freezing point. Water, however, is one of the only substances in the known universe that expands when it freezes, becoming less dense. This rare characteristic explains why ice floats. If ice were to sink, bodies of water would freeze solid. Rather, it floats and insulates the water beneath the ice. This behavior makes life on earth possible.

This fascinating trait is also the reason that we must winterize irrigation systems in cold climates. If water were allowed to freeze within the system, it would expand and probably do damage to the components. When located outside, the backflow device is usually the most susceptible component on the system. It is typically installed above ground, and is mostly made of brass, which is an excellent conductor. Therefore, every year right around Thanksgiving, backflows on systems that haven't been winterized will rupture and water will flood the respective areas. Often times, the backflow is the most expensive component on the system. A

2" RPZ, which is very common on a sports field can cost around \$1,000 to replace. Of course, the backflow doesn't explode the second the temperature drops below 32 degrees. It usually takes about 2 days of the temperature being below freezing. Obviously, this timeline will change depending on the actual temperature and the size of the backflow.

There are 3 methods for winterizing an irrigation system: manual bleeding, automatic drain valves and forced air. Since more than 99% of the systems in our region require the forced air method, this is the one we will talk about here. This method involves running a hose from an air compressor to a blow-out point on the system, and blowing air through the lines until the water has been evacuated.

Before we get into the actual process of winterizing the system, it should be mentioned that if you are not 100% sure that you can effectively and safely winterize the system, an irrigation contractor should be hired to perform the service. If you decide to winterize your system, eye protection should be worn because we are working with compressed air.

*Continued on page 18*

## **Student members of SFMANJ are welcome to enter this year's scholarship contest.**

All you have to do is to send us a 500-word  
essay entitled

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mail to PO Box 205, Pennsville NJ 08070  
by October 30, 2023

#### **Please be sure to include:**

- Name, address, and e-mail
- Your declared major and grade point average
- Classes, seminars or field days you have attended concerning sports field management
- Accomplishments concerning the turf industry
- Internships
- Plans for the future

*Good Luck Students!*

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# SFMANJ Photo Recap:

Photos by Debbie Savard

# RUTGERS LAWN, LANDSCAPE AND SPORTS TURF FIELD DAY Including SFMANJ-Sponsored Trade Show

Wednesday, July 26, 2023



Attend the SFMANJ Fall Field Day  
Wed, October 25, 2023



# NEW JERSEY GREEN EXPO Turf & Landscape Conference

December 5-7, 2023 • The Borgata, Atlantic City, NJ



## 2023 Sports Field Managers Expo Program

### **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2023**

#### **Afternoon session**

- 1:00 - 1:30 PM New Jersey School IPM Update  
*Steven Bross, NJ DEP*
- 1:30 - 2:00 PM Best mowing practices to reduce weed competition  
*Dr. Roch Gaussoin, University of Nebraska*
- 2:00 - 2:30 PM Sports Field Managers Association (SFMA) HQ Update  
*Laura Simmons, CEO, Sports Field Management Association*
- 2:30 - 3:00 PM SFMANJ Annual Business Meeting
- 3:00 - 4:00 PM Chemical and cultural strategies for weed management on school grounds  
*Dr. Matt Elmore, Rutgers University and Dr. Shawn Askew, Virginia Tech University*
- 4:00 - 8:00 PM Trade Show

### **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023**

#### **Morning session**

- 7:30 - 8:30 AM Early bird sports field managers: Precision pesticide use and operating in compliance with NJ School IPM  
*Zack Holm, Central Park Conservancy*

- 8:30 - 9:00 AM Sports field and grounds IPM: The year in review  
*Brad Park, Rutgers University*
- 9:00 - 9:30 AM Mowing: Getting beyond the 1/3rd Rule  
*Troy Von Holdt, The Toro Company*
- 9:30 - 10:30 AM Major League Infield Management for High School Sports Fields  
*Keith Fisher, Central Regional School District*
- 10:30 - 11:30 AM The Rutgers athletic turf management program  
*Chris Fox, Rutgers Athletics*
- 11:30 - 2:30 PM Trade Show

#### **Afternoon session**

- 2:30 - 3:00 PM Minimal-mow/minimal pesticide areas for schools and municipalities: What we've learned from golf  
*Steve MacDonald, Turfgrass Disease Solutions*
- 3:00 - 4:00 PM Fertilization and other cultural strategies to manage weeds in Central Park  
*Zack Holm, Central Park Conservancy*
- 4:00 - 4:30 PM Communication with end users at Municipalities: Skin surface maintenance strategies  
*Tim Hamfeldt, Morris Township*
- 4:30 - 5:00 PM Bermudagrass: A species option to reduce inputs?  
*Dr. Wendell Hutchins, University of Arkansas*

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Continued from page 2



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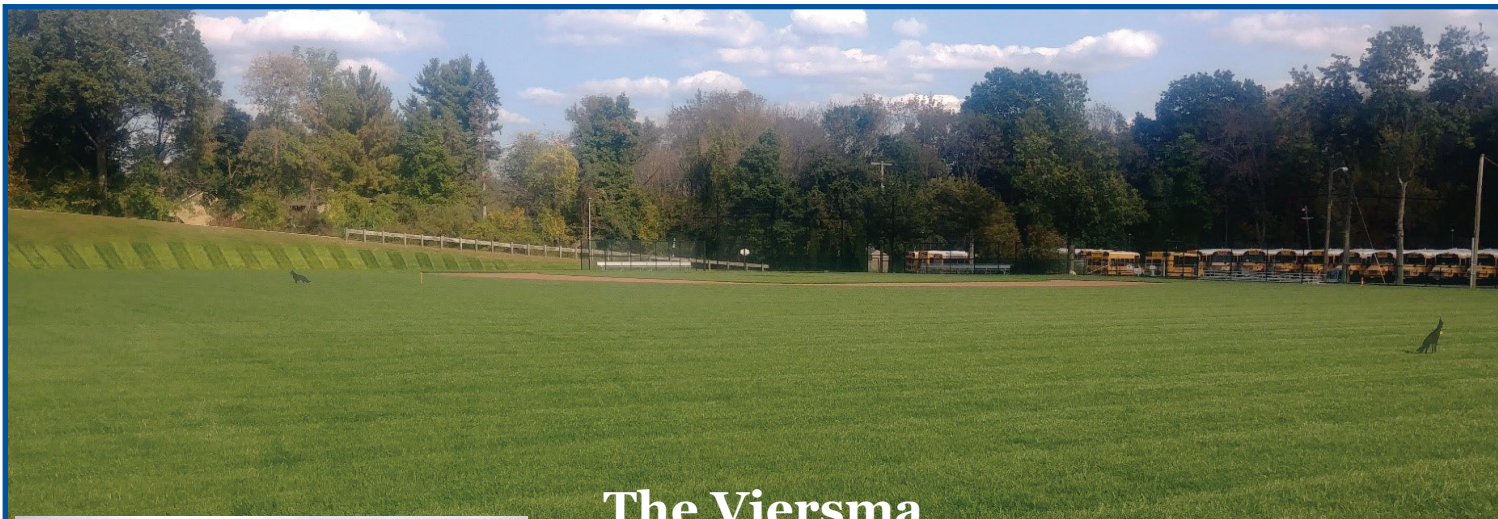
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Before



After

## *It's Time to Get Back to It!*

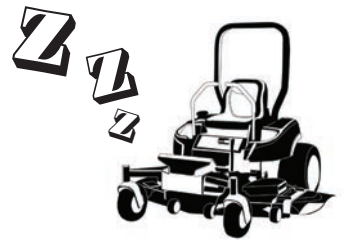
The Viersma Companies is dedicated to servicing athletic fields from offering simple tune-ups to full field reconstruction. Although last year presented additional challenges, we were able to complete projects for both existing and new clients. These tune-ups, renovations and reconstruction projects included amending existing topsoil, drainage installation, built-up lip removal, laser grading and installing infield mix, as well as, sodding renovation projects and entire athletic fields. As we look forward to a great 2021 season, let us know if we can assist you in any way.





# Time to Hibernate?

By Fred Castenschiold



Through my travels over the years while visiting municipalities, schools and other commercial accounts I couldn't help but notice the amount of grounds maintenance equipment stored for the winter outside or in unheated pole barns and sheds.

While most users are diligent in keeping up with proper maintenance of their grounds equipment throughout the growing season, care must be taken in equal measure during the much colder off seasons. Having the proper equipment to maintain parks and athletic fields is often a department's biggest investment. To get the maximum return for these investments, proper maintenance is needed to protect your equipment from the elements. Is your equipment used year-round? If so, then you must prepare it for cold weather operations. Is it going to sit until spring? If so, prepare it for a storage.

The owner's manual is a great resource for this necessary information regarding maintenance and preventative maintenance. If your owner's manual has been misplaced, contact the manufacturer for a new one or download one online.

The following are few areas of consideration for equipment hibernation:

## Fuel.

Consider the age of your equipment in that it may need different fuel requirements. Over time and with colder temperatures diesel fuel can gel as waxes in the fuel solidify. Ultra-low sulfur diesel is worse about gelling. At 32 degrees #2 diesel fuel will start to get cloudy. As it gets colder paraffin wax will start to solidify. Before you know it, the fuel filter is clogged. Consider #1 diesel fuel which has a lower gel point and can more reliably be used in colder climates. Unlike gasoline tanks, which should be stored empty, diesel fuel tanks should be stored full. Less condensation will occur as temperatures fluctuate.

We all know the negative aspects of ethanol in gasoline and how it can play havoc, especially with small engines. Ethanol absorbs

water, draws in moisture from the air and causes erosion of metal parts. Overtime it can also dissolve rubber lines and plastic fuel tanks. If you can obtain it, consider non-ethanol fuel when storing equipment.

## Batteries.

Batteries at 32 degrees will lose 65% of cranking capacity. An inexpensive trickle charger in will help maintain the machine's battery during the winter months. Be sure to maintain water levels and disconnect the battery when stored to prevent drain down. This is a good time to check and clean the battery posts and cable ends.

## Tires.

As cold weather temperatures can mean less pressure in the tires, regular inspection over the winter months when stored is recommended to maintain pressure and minimize tire sidewall damage.

## Sprayers.

Any piece of your equipment that uses water needs to be winterized. This prevents ruptures due to freezing. Drain the tank, blow out the lines with a compressed air and add RV fluid throughout the system.

## Cleaning.

Grass left on equipment makes terrific nesting material for mice. These pesky rodents can chew through wires potentially causing a fire! Always clean off the underside of a mower deck for any buildup of grass residue which could cause rusting of the mower. The underside should be scraped, primed, and painted.

*Fred Castenschiold is a retired salesperson, Storr Tractor Company; and was the recipient of the Dr. Henry Indyk Memorial Award in 2016 (awarded by SFMANJ)*



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# SFMANJ Fall Field Day

No Charge to Attendees

**WEDNESDAY, October 25, 2023**

RAIN OR SHINE

**Daniel P. Ryan Football Complex – Monroe Twp, NJ 08831**

34 North State Home Road, Monroe Twp, NJ 08831

Host: Virgil Caputo, Sports Field Manager

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

7:00	AM	Vendors May Arrive and Set-Up
7:30	- 9:00	Attendee Registration and Trade Show
9:00	- 9:30	Pass-the-Mic, Introductions and Natural Turf Demos
9:30	- 10:30	Cricket Pitch Management and Equipment Demos <i>Virgil Caputo, Monroe Township Parks &amp; Recreation and Larry Mayerowitz, Middlesex County Parks</i>
10:30	- 11:15	Irrigation Management and Maintenance Strategies <i>Frank Botti, Parks Foreman, Monroe Township Parks and Recreation</i>
11:15	- 11:30	Turf Management on Daniel P. Ryan Football Field <i>Will Kraemer, Turf Manager, Monroe Township Parks and Recreation</i>
11:30	- 12:00	Line Painting Demos
12:00	- 12:30	Turfgrass Disease Management for Sports Fields and Grounds <i>Ming-Yi Chou, Rutgers University</i>
12:30	- 1:00 PM	Liquid Sprayer Calibration Demo <i>Brad Park, Rutgers University and Virgil Caputo, Monroe Township Parks &amp; Recreation</i>
1:00 PM		Door Prizes, Credits, Adjourn

**See Registration Form on Page 17**

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# Begin Your Planning to Attend EXPO 2023

*Continued from page 5*



## How can you convince your employer to send you?

Continuing education and industry connections are crucial to your success and the success of your sports fields. Here are some suggestions to help your employer understand how your attendance at Expo 2023 can add value to the overall operation of your facility.

## Educate yourself on the Conference and Exhibition

Provide your employer an overview of the size and scope of Expo 2023 and a copy of the education agenda. This edition of SFMANJ Update provides the Sports Field Managers Program for Expo 2023.

Pinpoint specific sessions you plan to attend, and tie their relevance to your sports facility. It is anticipated that tough-to-acquire New Jersey DEP Category 13 credits will be awarded for attendance during Sports Field Managers sessions in 2023.

Highlight the trade show and cite suppliers and equipment manufacturers you plan to meet. Discuss the networking opportunities you will have with peers who share challenges similar to the ones you have.

Explain how innovations in products, new research, and cutting edge management techniques continually change, and why it is important to stay abreast of those changes.

Reinforce how the success of your sports fields ultimately depends upon the continued professional development of you and your staff.

## Know the Cost

Make a case for efficient and effective use of your facility's training dollars. By attending Expo 2023, you will be exposed to the most

relevant education and technology in one place, making it the most effective use of training dollars.

Research travel times and hotel costs. While Atlantic City is feasible day trip from almost anywhere in New Jersey, the New Jersey Turfgrass Association does its part to negotiate reasonable room rates at The Borgata to make staying a night reasonable. Expo 2023 will feature online registration at [www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org)

## Have an Action Plan

Develop a plan for how operations will continue in your absence. Make sure you

are accessible by phone (please turn off or set on vibrate during sessions!!!!) to address any concerns that might arise in your absence.

Consider preparing and presenting a report on the information you learned and how

you plan to put it into practice at your facility. Demonstrate how you will share the technical information learned with your staff for their continuing educational development.

## See you in Atlantic City!

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

## SFMANJ BOARD MEETINGS are usually held on the FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH and are open to all members!

To cut down on travel and make it easier to attend, meetings are held via ZOOM and usually last between one and one and a half hours.

If you would like to attend, call the office at

**856-514-3179**

or  
**email: [mail@sfmanj.org](mailto:mail@sfmanj.org)**  
*and we will send the link to you.*

## SAFE Foundation Grants and Scholarships

All programs have an Oct. 15 deadline.

**TERRY MELLOR CONT. ED GRANT** - \$1,000 grant to help fund attendance at the SFMA Conference in January.

- All members of an SFMA affiliated chapter are eligible to win
- Must be nominated through a letter of recommendation by a National SFMA Member.

*Go to [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org), resources tab and download original form to use the link to open Scholarship information*

Thank you to Turface Athletics for their support of the Terry Mellor Continuing Education Grant.

**LEO GOERTZ MEMBERSHIP GRANT** - Awards new, two-year National SFMA memberships.

- Nominee must be a Sports Field Manager or crew member managing sports fields and cannot have been an SFMA member for at least 5 years.
- SFMA national or chapter members can nominate an individual. The grant also allows for self-nomination.

*Go to [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org), resources tab and download original form and use the link to nominate someone or apply, fill out this simple, one-page form.*

Thank you to Pioneer Athletics for their support of the Leo Goertz Membership Grant.

**GARY VANDEN BERG INTERNSHIP GRANT** - \$1,000 grant intended to offset costs incurred while interning.

SFMA Student Members currently enrolled in a min. of 6 credit hours or were enrolled in a min. of 6 credit hours the semester just prior to the internship are eligible to submit for the grant. To apply, click here

**SAFE SCHOLARSHIPS** - Awarded annually to SFMA students planning a career in the sports field management industry. SAFE awards several named scholarships: the Dr. James Watson Graduate, Undergraduate and two-year Scholarships, and the Dr. Fred Grau Scholarship. The minimum scholarship amount awarded is \$1,250.

Thank you to the Toro Giving Program for their support of the Watson scholarships.

*Go to [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org), resources tab and download original form to use the link to open Scholarship information*

**\*\*NEW IN 2022\*\* – PAUL ZWASKA SCHOLARSHIP**, presented by Beacon Athletics - \$2,500 scholarship.

- Promotes diversity within the profession through an annual scholarship program for students from groups underrepresented in SFMA.
- Recognizes and encourages full-time students pursuing a career in Sports Field Management.
- Must be enrolled or enrolling as a full-time student and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 (on a 4.0 scale).

*Go to [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org), resources tab and download original form to use the link to open Scholarship information*

Thank you to Beacon Athletics for their support of the Paul Zwaska Scholarship.

**DARIAN DAILY LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP** - \$2,500 each to two qualified individuals.

- Parent/Guardian of recipient must be a current SFMA member for the past three years.
- Recipients must be currently enrolled or enrolling into a recognized college or university within a field of study NOT related to the turfgrass industry.
- Application must be submitted by SFMA member on behalf of their dependent.

*Go to [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org), resources tab and download original form to use the link to open Scholarship information*

If you have questions, contact SFMA HQ at 800-323-3875 or visit <http://www.sportsfieldmanagement.org/programs/>.

**Online form can be found at [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org) > Resources tab > Scholarship information**



# 2023 - 2024 Calendar of Events

## SFMANJ Fall Field Day

October 25, 2023

Daniel P. Ryan Football Field, Monroe Township, NJ

Host: Virgil Caputo

856.514.3179

[www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org)

## New Jersey Green Expo Turf & Landscape Conference

December 5-7, 2023

Borgata Hotel & Casino

Atlantic City, NJ

973.812.6467

[www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org)

## 2024 Sports Field Management Association Conference & Exhibition

January 22 - 25, 2024

Daytona Beach, FL

800.323.3875

[www.sportsfieldmanagement.org](http://www.sportsfieldmanagement.org)

## 2024 Rutgers-NJAES OCPE Courses (VIRTUAL)

### Two-Day Athletic Field Maintenance

February 13-14, 2024

### ½-Day Baseball & Softball Skin Surface Selection & Management

February 22, 2024

848-932-9271

[www.cpe.rutgers.edu](http://www.cpe.rutgers.edu)

# SFMANJ FALL FIELD DAY

## REGISTRATION FORM

October 25, 2023 • 7:30 a.m.

## Daniel P. Ryan Football Complex

34 North State Home Road, Monroe Twp, NJ 08831

**Pesticide and Fertilizer Credits Awarded**

**NO CHARGE TO ATTENDEES**

**Please do not mail.**

Register by email to [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org) by

**October 20, 2023**

Name

Title

Employer

Address

City

County

State

ZIP Code

Daytime Phone

Fax

E-mail Address (Please include either work or home e-mail address)

**You may copy form for other attendees**

You may also register on line at  
**[www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org)**



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change.**

**If you are a Vendor**

and would like to participate in the  
trade show, please call

**856-514-3179**

for more information and registration form.

Or go to  
**[www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org)**

## *Winterizing an Irrigation System*

When selecting an air compressor, high volume and low pressure is important. The compressor should be able to supply 10-25 cubic feet per minute at 50 PSI. Often times, shop compressors with small holding tanks are utilized by allowing the tank to fill and then rapidly opening the valve to send bursts of air into the system. This creates high pressure within the system which could damage the components. It is also not as effective.

The first thing that must happen when winterizing the irrigation system, is that the main shut off valve for the system must be closed, cutting off the water source. If there is a pump of any kind, the power should be shut off. If a pump tries to run with no water going through it, the pump could sustain catastrophic damage. If there is a pump relay on the system, it is recommended that the wire should be removed from the MasterValve terminal in the controller. This is an extra precaution in the event that somebody inadvertently turns the power back on to the pump. Next, an air hose must be run from the compressor to the blow-out connection, which is typically located near the main shut off valve.

This next point is very important. Before blowing air into the system, it must be verified that there is somewhere for the air to go. If compressed air into is blown into the main line, and none of the zone valves are open, the air pressure in the main line will build up and will most likely rupture the pipe at its weakest point. Typically, a zone is turned on at the controller which will hold the zone valve open. The air valve on the running compressor should be opened slowly. It is important to observe anytime air is being pumped into the system. This gives us the opportunity to react if anything goes wrong in order to minimize any potential damage. Once the water has finished coming out of all of the heads, we can continue to the next zone. It's important to note that most gear-driven heads are lubricated by water. Therefore, air shouldn't continue to be forced through them after the water has been evacuated from the pipes. This could potentially heat up and damage the heads. Continue blowing out all of the zones. Once complete, the zones should be blown out one more time (about 15 seconds each) to evacuate any water which has settled after the initial blow out.

As the final zone is blowing out, turn off the compressor. Once again, the zone valve should still be open until the compressor is shut down, because air pressure will build up in the system if it has nowhere to go. Unhook the hose, and winterize the backflow. The manufacturer's instructions on how to winterize the unit should be followed. Typically, all of the test ports should be left open, allowing the system to "breathe", and the ball valves should be left at 45 degrees to keep water out of the seals.

The controller should be left in the "off" position. Leaving it plugged in will keep a little heat within the unit, evaporating any moisture away from the electronics.

If there is a pump on the system, the manufacturer's instructions for winterizing the unit should be followed. Typically, there are drain plugs at the base of the unit, which will allow gravity to drain the water out of the pump. If you aren't 100% sure about winterizing a pump, a contractor should be hired to perform this service, as pumps tend to be very expensive.

Each system is different, and will require different methods for an effective winterization, but one thing tends to be universal: All of the potential issues that go hand-in-hand with managing an irrigation system disappear once it has been put to bed for the winter.

*Heath Traver, CIC, CLIA was a Specification Manager for Rain Bird in the Northeast US and was licensed to practice irrigation in the state of New Jersey when this article first appeared in the Fall 2020 issue of SFMANJ Update.*

### **MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW**

#### **to attend the NEW JERSEY GREEN EXPO TURF & LANDSCAPE CONFERENCE**

December 5-7, 2023  
Borgata Hotel & Casino  
Atlantic City, NJ

go to  
[www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org)  
or call 973-812-6467

***Don't miss the***  
**SFMANJ**  
**Annual Business Meeting**  
**Tuesday, Dec. 5 at 2:30 - 3:00 PM**

*See you there!*





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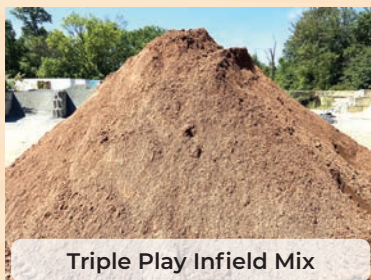


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