

## Good planning can make budget fight easier

■ The problem with many athletic turf managers is they don't do a good enough job selling themselves and, consequently, they aren't taken seriously when they place their supply orders on their superior's desk.

The reason they aren't taken seriously? Poor planning, according to Bill Bedrossian of Servicemaster Industries in Downers Grove, Ill. Bedrossian told his audience of athletic turf managers at the Midwest Sports Turf Institute they must "plan, execute, and review."

An athletic turf manager must document items such as manpower (total hours available versus total hours needed, scheduling, seasonal fluctuations), equipment (purchase date, condition, scheduled replacement, replacement cost), supplies (on hand, annual needs, cost effectiveness), and grounds (turf areas, paved surfaces, irrigation systems, trees and shrubs, bleachers).

An effective sports turf manager, says Bedrossian, has a planning calendar that includes items such as routine seasonal requirements, and regular annual events such as graduations, town fairs, and special sporting events. He also keeps a long-term calendar, perhaps a year in advance, of projects in the works.

Credibility is most important, he says, noting that written and photographed documentation is a must. "Show the superiors the condition of the fields when you started versus the condition they are in today," Bedrossian says.

And finally he says you must follow through by establishing expectations, providing inspections and documentations, making revisions when necessary, being flexible, and promoting yourself. Bedrossian says if you don't let anyone know you're doing a good job, your work will go unnoticed. And your budgeting battles will be losing ones.

## Low-maintenance California grass on horizon

■ El Toro—not the tequila, but a low maintenance zoysiagrass expected to prosper in the warm California climate—should be available for home lawn, park, and other uses within two years, according to Dr. Vic Gibeault, cooperative extension turfgrass specialist at the University of California-Riverside.

El Toro, says Gibeault, is heat and salt tolerant, requires less water and nitrogen fertilizer than other turfgrasses, has few insect or disease problems, has good density and resistance to foot traffic, and grows in light to moderate shade.

It shows good cool season color but goes dormant during the cooler winter months, says Gibeault. He notes it produces less thatch than other zoysiagrasses.

El Toro is a UC-patented selection developed from the breeding program of the late UC-R professor Dr. Victor B. Younger.

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