

Make the most of shop space

by ABBY McNEAL / Pleasant View Fields

Whatever sort of turf facility you maintain, you need a place for the equipment. Too often, the group that plans the athletic facility, golf course or commercial site forgets to provide

ample room for equipment storage and maintenance.

A more efficient and economical approach would be to determine:

1) What equipment do we need to keep this facility in top condition?

2) How much space is needed to store it properly?

For crews that work out of shops with limited space, however, the motto must be, "make the most of what you have."

Storage, transport tips

Pleasant View Fields is a seven-field soccer complex, in its first full year of play. Two fields are to be built at a later date. The city of Boulder, Colo., has three athletic turf departments: parks, recreation and a golf course. Initially, the three departments had no on-site equipment storage. Everything was transported on an 18-foot trailer from the golf course, which is four miles away.

We now have a 25x25-foot rock-base storage area surrounded by a wire fence and locked gate. There is limited covered storage in one section of the restroom building. We've also acquired a 28-foot trailer which we use to haul two large mowers—or one mower and one other large piece of equipment—in one trip.

The paint machine, walk-behind mower, shovels and other assorted small tools are kept in the covered storage. The paint machine is kept there because it's used most often, and has to be kept in a dust-free

area. The smaller tools are kept there to prevent theft.

The complex has two Toro 325D tractors with 72-inch recycling-deck Groundsmaster mowers, a Ransomes 72-inch mower and a Toro 216 Reelmaster Triplex mower. We also



◀ **Mowers: have them cleaned and stored right every night.**

have a large topdresser and tractor, a small seeder and aerifier and a utility cart.

Assigned equipment space needs to be allocated to avoid shuffling equipment. Mowers earn more or less permanent spots based on frequency of use. The mower that is used three times per week is easier to get to than the mower used once a week or for special field grooming before a game. Equipment that's needed for the next day's maintenance chores is moved to the front, while the current

day's equipment is put into overnight storage.

A tarping system is being developed to protect equipment from the weather during our active months.

Share the space

Some equipment is shared with the golf course and parks department, so we take advantage of their covered storage space whenever possible. For example, if the golf course crew needs the topdresser, it is left there until needed at the complex. During winter, covered storage is available at the golf course.

► Keep entrances to garage area clean and clear.

As the person responsible for equipment maintenance, I am in charge of blade sharpening. With no assigned work space, the blades must be changed in the parking lot or on the small, paved area behind the restroom building. The golf course technician allows me to use one of the service bays there when necessary. This does have advantages. I call him my "on-site mentor," thanks to his expertise and years of experience.



The storage/maintenance shop at Collier's Reserve golf course, Naples, Fla. is a model of what every facility should be—or at least come close to—in terms of order and cleanliness.

A place for everything...

A neat, organized shop shows professionalism, and will help to instill confidence in others that you can do the job as an equipment manager, says Fred Peck, equipment manager at Fox Hollow at Lake-wood (Colo.) Golf Course and director of the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Equipment Managers Association.

Peck advocates regular shop cleaning.

"Establish daily, weekly, monthly and annual cleaning schedules," says Peck, "and your shop will become a place you can be proud of, not a place to be avoided.

"Ongoing repair projects should be neat and organized," which will eliminate lost parts and lost time, says Peck.

Peck has learned that people who use equipment take better

The disadvantage is getting the equipment there and back, and planning for my own off-site time. Generally, I'll take the unit to the course at the end of the day and start there the next morning.

Besides the good communication and cooperative relationship between our complex and the golf course, we both have good working relationships with our equipment distributors. This allows me to call on either of them if we experience a major equipment breakdown.

Equipment out of sight

The security of our outside storage is helped by limited visibility from the main road. The fenced area is located off a side street that is used mostly by those coming to the soccer complex. Though relatively close to the parking lot, it's par-

tially hidden from view on one side by a wooden shed used by the soccer associations.

The fenced area is about 1500 feet from a day-care school which has frequent outdoor activity at various times during the day.

I'd like a small maintenance building, if the budget permits, even if it's only a three-sided barn. At least, I'd like a covered area for equipment storage, a wash bay, and a covered area for materials storage. With a little higher budget, I'd move up to a totally enclosed building for better protection and add working space for routine maintenance procedures. **LM**

—The author is turfgrass manager for Pleasant View Fields, Boulder, Colo.

care of equipment that clearly shows a history of proper use and care. Ask your crews to rate equipment on ease of use and how well it does the job it is intended to do.

And *do not*, insists Peck, let crew persons have a "favorite" mower that they all prefer to ride. This causes one piece of equipment to be over-used, which leads to uneven wear within the fleet.

The equipment manager needs a designated work station and office, with all manuals in one place and file cabinets for paperwork. Use equipment logs to hold all information about equipment: make, model, manuals, what you paid for it, and all maintenance receipts.

Take pride in calling yourself an equipment manager, says Peck.

"What better term for someone in charge of \$350,000 worth of equipment, who sets up training, cleaning and record-keeping methods?"

—Terry McIver