

STMA MESSAGE



Networking Pays Dividends

By
Mike Schiller

Have you ever found yourself in a social setting trying to explain to a group of casual acquaintances just what it is you actually "do" as a sports turf manager? If, like me, you've been there, done that, you've likely seen a glazed look of total incomprehension come into their eyes. The more you try to clarify, the less they seem to understand.

Contrast that experience to one of your recent conversations with a group of your peers. The idea exchange is fast and furious, with technical terms dropped into the conversation and comprehended as easily as those secret codes you probably shared with friends as a kid. You focus on key bits of information that have a direct bearing on the maintenance practices you've

programmed for your field, on equipment or supplies you're thinking about purchasing, on personnel management issues, or on suggestions that will help make your tasks more efficient.

A few minutes of this kind of conversation can become a "mini-seminar" giving you ideas you can put to work.

Another key educational experience comes in visiting other sports turf managers at their facilities. This may be part of a national or chapter workshop or seminar-on-wheels tour, or a one-on-one session you've arranged as part of a business or family trip.

Welcoming another sports turf manager to your facility can be as much a learning experience for you as for the visitor. A question about how you handle a certain problem or perform a specific procedure may help put some of your "standard" practices in better focus for both of you. Or, it may raise an issue or bring up a solution you hadn't previously considered.

If nothing else, you'll gather information on your facility from the viewpoint of a knowledgeable "outsider,"

and probably gain a better perspective on how others — including field users and spectators — view it.

I'm sure you'll be fortunate enough to discover, as I have, that some of those "networking" contacts develop into long-term friendships. You'll find yourself picking up the phone to ask some of these networking friends for their perspective on a tough problem you're facing (and they may have already solved); or to share a success story with someone who understands the reason it's a success; or to garner some sympathy and encouragement after a failure. And you'll be on the giving end of those conversations as well.

So — what does all this have to do with STMA? Everything! STMA can be your conduit to these networking opportunities, as current members already know.

If you're not yet a member and want to find out more about how this networking works, just call our headquarters at 800/323-3875. We'd love to share the good news with you.



Get Serious With STMA

Application for Membership

The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) is an organization of professionals representing all segments of the sports turf industry. Our members work to combine the science of growing grass and the art of maintaining sports turf to produce playing fields that are both safe and aesthetically pleasing.

STMA provides members with a variety of benefits, including: education through regional institutes and conferences; support for sports turf research; facilities tours; a national awards program; access to the STMA National Conference and Exhibition; complimentary subscriptions to Sports Turf Manager and sportsTURF Magazine; and much more.

If you're serious about the sports turf industry, then it's time to become a member of STMA. Join today!

Member Information

Name _____
Title _____
Employer _____
Type of Business _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
E-mail Address _____
Signature _____
Referred by _____

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Membership Category (please check one)

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional sports turf facility manager | \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Four-year colleges and universities sports turf facility manager | \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other schools, research, ext. agents, teaching | \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parks and recreational sports turf facilities | \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial (US or International) | \$175 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional members from same company | \$45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student (non-voting) | \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International (other than commercial)
(must be in US dollars) | \$75 |

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

Please enclose payment (check, money order, Master Card, Visa, Discover or American Express) and send to:

Sports Turf Managers Association, PO Box 3480, Omaha, NE 68103-0480

For more information, contact STMA Headquarters at 800/323-3875

"Promoting Better and Safer Sports Turf Areas"