



**October 28**

Sixth annual Southeast Texas Grounds Maintenance Conference, Montgomery County Fairgrounds, Conroe, TX. Contact Patti Jones: (409) 539-7822.

**November 9-11**

Turf and Grounds Exposition: "Committed to Excellence: Plants, People, the Environment, and You," OnCenter, Syracuse, NY. Contact New York State Turfgrass Association: (800) 873-8873 or (518) 783-1229.

**November 13-16**

Green Industry Expo, Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD. Contact Eleanor Ellison: (770) 973-2019.

**November 13-16**

Professional Grounds Management Society's (PGMS) Annual Conference (in conjunction with Green Industry Expo), Marriott Inner Harbor Hotel and Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD. Contact PGMS: (800) 609-7467.

**November 30-December 2**

North Central Turfgrass Exposition, Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, IL. Contact Illinois Turfgrass Foundation: (312) 201-0101.

**December 6-9**

Ohio Turfgrass Foundation's 33rd annual Conference and Show, Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, OH. Contact Kevin Thompson: (888) 683-3445, ext. 3151.

**December 7-9**

Georgia Turfgrass Association's 30th annual Conference and Trade Show, Cobb Galleria Centre, Atlanta, GA. Contact Sherry Loudermilk: (770) 975-4123.

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**January 12-16**

Sports Turf Managers Association's (STMA) 11th annual Conference & Exhibition, St. Louis, MO. Contact STMA: (800) 323-3875 or (712) 366-2669.

**STMA MESSAGE**



**Who Cares?**

**I** do! I am and have been very concerned with injuries to players and athletes on our fields.

I am especially concerned about players being injured or killed on fields that are too

hard for contact sports. In these instances, fields that are constructed over asphalt, concrete, or soil profiles as hard as asphalt or concrete are usually at fault or are at least a contributing factor.

I read in the newspaper the other day that a college football player died from injuries sustained when his head hit the surface of an artificial-turf field. The article did not say whether this athlete was wearing a helmet, and it did not explain how he hit the surface. However, in another recent incident, a driving tackle caused a football player's helmet to fly off before he hit the surface of the field. The resulting impact to the player's unprotected head was noted in the press as the key factor in his death.

The NFL Players Association has conducted a crusade over the past four or five years to rid football of all artificial fields. It has been stated that artificial fields are too hard and abrasive, and that the surfaces cause physical damage that shortens players' careers.

I'm not so sure I agree that all artificial fields are more apt to be a factor in injuries than all natural-turf fields. I've measured hundreds of fields around the country with Clegg Impact Hammers, and I can tell you that some artificial fields are less hard than some natural fields.

Hard, compacted natural fields and natural fields with poor traction can also factor into injuries as severe as those associated with artificial fields. It's important to measure your fields periodically to know their hardness and compaction so you know when to fix them — and then do it.

Proper natural and synthetic field maintenance can reduce many injuries that plague our players today. It's important to monitor padding below artificial turf for compaction, and to know when the height of artificial turf is worn down to unsafe conditions. As long as we play outdoor football in cold-weather areas, artificial fields may provide more logical solutions than frozen or semifrozen natural fields.

Know what causes compaction in soils so that you can prevent construction methodology that creates the problems. Measure each field periodically, document your findings, and provide maintenance to eliminate or correct compacted soils and reduce potential for injuries.

I'm sure that you DO CARE about player injuries, and that you work daily to protect all of your field users. Don't let budget politics stand in the way of providing better and safer sports fields. The STMA is a professional organization that cares!

**Stephen Guise, STMA President  
(714) 704-0403**