



Help Make the World a Greener Place

I recently received a note from Den Gardner, executive director of the Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association. In addition to his duties with TOCA, Gardner is the development director for the Evergreen Foundation, a non-profit foundation dedicated to promoting and funding the creation of a national greenway system.

The foundation was originally formed in 1998 to marshal the resources of the Green Industry in bringing the healing power of growing things to communities across the country. The foundation fosters greenways, trails, neighborhood parks and other green spaces for public use in order to help improve the quality of life in America.

The foundation intends to select greenway projects around the country, fund those community projects with cash or in-kind support of work, machinery or materials, and foster a greater appreciation for green spaces in our nation's cities and towns.

To help raise funds for these projects, the Evergreen Foundation is holding a fund-raiser to give away, courtesy of John Deere Worldwide Commercial and Consumer Equipment Division, a Trail Gator utility vehicle. Only 400 tickets will be sold, at a price of \$50 per ticket, giving each entry a 1 in 400 chance of winning the Gator. The money raised through the ticket sales will be used to fund grants to communities and organizations seeking to build greenways.

To participate, send a \$50 check paid to the order of the Evergreen Foundation and send it to Den Gardner at the following address:

Evergreen Foundation
c/o Den Gardner
120 W. Main St.
P.O. Box 156
New Prague, MN 56071

Because the Evergreen Foundation is a non-profit organization, your contribution is tax-deductible.

When your check is received, you will be sent a ticket with your raffle number clearly indicated. The drawing will be held at the Green Industry Expo in Indianapolis on Nov. 7. Don't fret if you will not be in Indianapolis that weekend-participants need not be present to win.

For more information, call Den Gardner at 877-758-4835 or e-mail your inquiries to evergreenfound@aol.com. For additional information about the Evergreen Foundation check the Web site at www.evergreenfoundation.com

Michael SanFilippo

Michael SanFilippo
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Tip of the Month

Causes for Poor Turf

by Art Wick, Lesco Inc.

Taken from "Athletic Field Turf Maintenance Handbook."

Much of the poor turf in recreation areas and on athletic fields results from poor planning or management. The following are the principal causes for poor turf:

Improper design or construction: Many fields have been laid out almost table-top flat and poor soils have been used. Such conditions provide neither surface nor internal drainage of excess water from the field. As a result, a saturated condition may persist for several days. If play is permitted on the field when it is wet, the result is severe compaction and loss of soil structure, both of which interfere with air, water and nutrient movement in the soil.

Overuse of fields: Wherever possible, an extra practice field should be provided. Not more than about 10 football or soccer games or their equivalent should be played on a field during one playing season. Marching band practice can also be detrimental to good quality turf on playing fields. Baseball fields can tolerate more frequent use, however, practice sessions should be held on practice fields.

Mowing too close: Enough green leaf area should be left on the grass plants to support the plant and provide food for a well developed root system. The actual height varies with the type of grass being used.

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The key to success...

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The pendulum is swinging. Some institutions and recreation boards are creating safety committees of peers to help solve this 21st Century dilemma of not having sufficient quality turf for the young men and women to play on. Some colleges, high schools and recreation boards have set aside funding for annual capital monies to be spent on equipment, which aids in turf protection and re-establishment. I take my groundskeeping hat off to those groups.

Capsular Analysis

More and more attention has been directed to athletes (men and women, boys and girls) on all levels. Part of that explosion has been the creation of intensified effort on the part of the maintenance staff.

More effort needs to be directed to the fact that turf is a growing plant and takes a certain amount of care to continue to grow properly.

What do you know of that can be baked, frozen, trampled, starved, overfed, dehydrated, saturated, compacted, cut too short, not cut at all, sliced, probed, smothered, painted and kicked, but still survive? It's athletic turf. But it can't take too much of any of those conditions without some help from the institution and their coaches.

Causes for poor turf

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Improper fertilization and liming: Too little fertilizer, inadequate lime and poor timing of fertilizer applications are the causes of many turf problems. You should always have your soil tested to determine the fertilizer and lime needs.

Lack of water: Most athletic fields and recreation areas are at the mercy of the weather to provide water. Supplemental irrigation, especially during the summer months, often makes the difference between dense, high quality turf and sparse, clumpy cover.

Poor judgement as to the time to use the field: This is especially true of practice sessions on a wet, soggy field. Scheduled events, however, often must proceed regardless of the condition of the playing field. The most important factor is the soil condition. Soils will "puddle" and lose their physical structure if disturbed while wet. This packs the surface and prevents normal air, water and nutrient movement.

For more information on Lesco or the "Athletic Field Turf Maintenance Handbook," contact Lesco: 20005 Lake Rd., Rocky River, OH 44116-1545; 800-321-5325.

Floyd Perry is author of three books: *The Pictorial Guides to Quality Groundskeeping: I—Covering the Bases; II—There Ain't No Rules; and III—Maintain it Easy, Keep It Safe.* He has also produced three videos: *The ABC's of Grounds Maintenance: Vol. 1, Softball; Vol. 2, Baseball; and Vol. 3, Soccer/Football Field Refurbishment.* He travels throughout the United States conducting workshops for men and women who maintain athletic fields. For more information about Perry's tips or other field maintenance questions, call: (800) 227-9381, or e-mail grounds@digital.net.

Corrections

In last month's editorial, Mike San Filippo incorrectly listed Steve Erickson's position with the Pittsburgh Pirates as head groundskeeper. Erickson's position in Pittsburgh is supervisor of field maintenance (assistant groundskeeper). The head groundskeeper for the Pirates' new stadium is Luke Yoder.

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Grounds Foreman
City of Brentwood, MO



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