Around the Grounds

Checklists: important field maintenance & safety program tools

BY SUZ TRUSTY

n ounce of prevention really is worth a pound of cure. The most important aspect of athletic field maintenance within today's litigious environment is safety-of both the field users and the facility. A comprehensive field management program focuses on preventive measures to reduce safety risks and protect the facility in areas of liability.

Three basic principles apply to both establishing the maintenance and safety program and to its execution: reasonable, prudent and consistent. A reasonable program is sensible and based on sound judgment. A prudent program exercises that sound judgment in practical matters, including as it concerns ones' own interests. A consistent program always holds to the same principles or practices.

This applies even if the facility has a limited budget for equipment, supplies, and personnel-if the program is conducted in the best possible manner with what is available-and the execution of the program is consistent with the established principles and practices.

Staff members must not only be able to observe overall field conditions, but also the multiple small details that are involved. These individuals must be equipped to handle the assigned maintenance and to recognize hazards and potentially unsafe conditions. A daily field inspection form (Figure 1) helps guide personnel in completing maintenance tasks, serves as a reminder to conduct all safety inspections, and provides a record that both have been done.

Problems that can be easily rectified should be corrected immediately. If a problem can't be fixed immediately by the crew, the crew leader should be instructed to note all the information on the form and report the problem to his or her supervisor. The supervisor would then be required to assign personnel to correct the situation and to document that the problem was rectified on a specific date and time, and by whom.

Checking it twice

Problems, and changes that may lead to problems, can be more difficult to recognize when personnel see the same facility on a daily or nearly daily basis. It's important to augment crew members' regular daily inspections with periodic inspections by a supervisor or non-staff safety auditor.

A checklist helps guide this inspection and record that it has been conducted (Figure 2). The inspector would use the form to record both areas that meet facility standards and areas that don't. Any problems noted on the form would be assigned for correction. Again, all details would be recorded, including the date and time the problem was rectified and by whom.

These procedures are important elements of a reasonable, prudent and consistent field maintenance and safety program. If necessary, the checklists provide documentation that will state the facility's case during legal action. ST

Suz Trusty is communications director for the Sports Turf Managers Association, 800-323-3875 or www.sportsturfmanager.com.

Figure 1

City of Carrollton Parks & Recreation WEEKLY FIELD MAINTENA

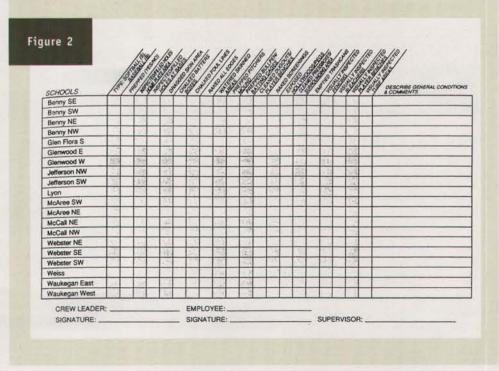
COM

COMPLEX DATE INSPECTOR Check each box "NO" if I

ch problem in the "COMMENTS" spa All boxes checked "YES" should be s pair is made. This form should only be

-YES	NO SKINNED AREAS	number to be repai
	Soil - too loose to provide good running traction.	
	Soil - surface is not loose enough around sliding zones for safe sliding, too abrasive.	
	Soil - too compacted to provide good drainage.	
	Running Paths/ Sliding Zones - have become worn near bases	
	Batters Box/ Home Plate Area - have become worn and needs to be reconditioned.	
	Pitcher's Mound - has become worn and needs to be reconditioned.	
	Bases – do not seat properly with ground elevation or are seated loosely.	
	Infield Area - has low spots, holes or is not level and should be regraded.	
	Soil Buildup - there is a hazardous lip between the skinned area and the turf.	
	Skinned Areas - have unsafe wets spots and/or puddles.	
COMMEN	TX.	

	NO	PLAVING SURFACES	Repair date and fic number to be repair
T		Litter and Unsafe debris - is scattered around	
		the field and player spectator areas.	
		Waste Containers - supply and location is	
Ŀ		inadequate.	
Ī		Sprinkler Heads - in the field are below grade	
l	_	or have sharp edges or protrusions.	
ŀ		Accidents - there have been reports about	
Ŀ	-	players running into surrounding objects.	
		Field Design - our facility does not comply	Last Checked /
l		with industry recommended specifications.	C. Statistics
		Bare Spots - hand soil surface exposed	
t		Soil Sub Surface - is roughly graded or drains too poorly.	
ŧ		Turf texture, density, or height is not	
ī		uniform making an unsafe running surface.	
ŧ		Thatch - excessive thatch is causing turf to be	
ł		lumpy and unsafe to run on.	
ł	-	Vegetation - there are weeds with thurns.	
l	_	bristles, or burs in the tarf.	
	-	Gopher, Woodchucks, Armadillos - there are animal mounds and holes in the area	
Ī		Tire Ruts - there are hazardous tire ruts in	
	-		
1			
-	_		



HEARING PROTECTION

AOSafety's new hearing protector has a built-in AM/FM stereo radio to protect hearing while tuning out irritation and destructive noises. The lightweight and adjustable earmuffs can be worn comfortably for long periods. "WorkTunes" have a volume control limit of 82 dB and feature padded headband, easy adjustment, broad sealing rings and an antenna with good reception.

> ADSafety, Inc/317-692-6542 For information, circle 183



COMPACT HOT H20 WASHERS

Landa has updated its line of compact, natural gas (or liquid propane)-heated hot water pressure washers. The nine stationary VHG models range from 3.5 to 4.8 gpm in volume and 2000 to 3000 psi. All models fit within a footprint of 24 in, wide by 53 in, long, and stand 49 in, tall.

The series is more accessible for servicing with new hinged doors on the side and a removable panel on top of the units' steel cabinets. Also, the gas valve is elevated for better access.

Landa/800-547-8672 For information, circle 184

PADLOCKS

Fast delivery and all-climate endurance make Herculock solid brass padlocks a good security risk. The tumbler-pin padlocks can be keyed alike, differently, or matched to your existing padlocks and shipped in only 2 weeks, says the manufacturer.

Padlocks are available in widths from 1 1/8 to 2 1/16 in., with shackle clearances from 7/8 to 8 in. and shackle diameters from 3/16 to 5/16 in. Lock bodies have drip hole to prevent trapping moisture.

Herculock/740-494-2620 For information, circle 188

COLLAPSIBLE CATERING

EZ-Cater Cart, a collapsible catering system, has new accessories available, including tray rails, multi-position sneeze

guards, four types of insulated drop-in boxes, two layers of speed racks, and extra fourth panels for stand-alone service.

When collapsed the cart is smaller than a folding banquet table, says the manufacturer.

E-Z Cater Cart/800-654-5819 For information, circle 187



Around the Grounds

TRAILER-MOUNTED WASHER

A new custom-built, trailer-mounted pressure washer is available. Mi-T-M Corp. will custom build unit with washer of your choice, hot or cold, belt or direct drive. Trailer-mounted units feature 14 in. tires, surge brakes, a 5 x 8-ft. wood deck, and a tandem axle. Gross weight limit is 6,000 lbs.

Mi-T-M Corp/800-553-9053 For information, circle 186

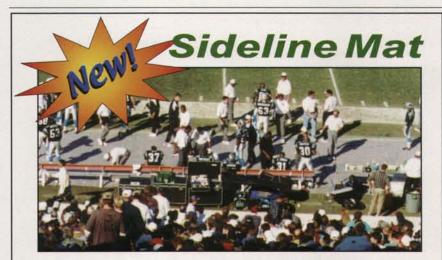




STAIN REMOVER

Compliance Safety, Inc., has added the hand cleaner Reduran to its product line. Specifically formulated to remove stains caused by pattern indicators, pond dyes, and pesticides, the formula is available in 3-oz. squeeze tubes.

Compliance Safety/800-340-3413 For information, circle 177



How many times will you replace sideline turf before investing in EnkamatPlus?

★ Football, soccer & other sports ★ Tough polyester fabric teamed with strong and durable Enkamat ★ Reusable season after season
★ Easy to store ★ 95% open structure of mat provides air space for field to breathe and liquids to flow through ★ 16' x 150' ★ One time investment for a lifetime of turf protection.

Call our distributor Covermaster for product information and pricing.



info@colbond-usa.com 1-800-365-7391 www.colbond-usa.com



info@covermaster.net 1-800-387-5808 www.covermaster.net

Circle 116 on card or www.OneRS.net/207sp-116



PROFESSIONAL EQUIPMENT & SUPPLY

Northern Tool & Equipment's catalog says you can order anytime and fast shipping directly to you is available. The company has a lowest price guarantee that refunds 110% of the difference if you find a nationally advertised product at a lower price than they offer.

Products range from mowers to generators to toolboxes to fans to pressure washers, power tools and more.

Northern Tool & Equipment/800-556-7885 For information, circle 180