Checklists:

important field maintenance & safety program tools

Figure 2

Benny SE Benny SW

CREW LEADER:

EMPLOYEE

A nounce 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.

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

	W Elekter I	LIELD MAIN	ENANG	E S	AFETY AUDIT	
COMPL	EV		YES	NO	PLAYING SURFACES	Repair date an number to be re
COMPL	na.				Litter and Unsafe debris - is scattered around the field and player spectator areas.	
DATE					Waste Containers - supply and location is	
NA SECRETARIO	INSPECTOR				inadequate. Sprinkler Heads - in the field are below grade	
INSPEC					or have sharp edges or protrusions.	
538	o mail o mail	No. of the			Accidents - there have been reports about	
	h box "NO" if repairs are not necessary. If the				players running into nurrounding objects. Field Design - our facility does not comply	Last Checked
	write a coment about each problem in the "COMMENTS" space provided at the end of each section. All boxes checked "YES" should be scheduled for				with industry ecommended specifications.	Lass Checked
	dated after repair is made. This form should o				Bare Spots - hard soil surface exposed	
	sted at the top.				Soil Sub Surface - is roughly graded or	
	V 8-1 8 V 19	Repair date and field			drains too poorly.	
VES		number to be repaired.			Turf texture, density, or height is not	
	Soil - too loose to provide good running traction.				uniform making an unsafe running surface. Thatch – excessive thatch is causing turf to be	
	Soil - surface is not loose enough around				lumpy and unsafe to run on.	
	stiding zones for safe sliding, too abrasive.				Vegetation - there are weeds with thurses.	
	Soil - too compacted to provide good drainage.				bristles, or hurs in the turf. Gopher, Woodchucks, Armadillos - there are	
	Running Paths/ Sliding Zones - have become				animal mounds and holes in the area.	
	worn near hases				Tire Ruts - there are hazardous tire ruts in -	
	Batters Box/ Home Plate Area - have become worn and needs to be reconditioned.		COMM	ENTS:	Jenry.	_
	Pitcher's Mound - has become worn and		200000	20000		
	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					
	Soil Buildup - there is a hazardous lip					
	between the skinned area and the turf					
	Skinned Areas - have unsafe wets spots					
COMPANY	and/or puddles.					
COMMEN	131					