

president's message

Too little or too much, it's a challenge!

STMA members across the country have experienced abnormal winters and, in large blocks of the US, too little moisture this spring that is affecting the spring sports and will be a factor in summer wear and tear of their sports fields. Mother Nature has been into extremes this spring. April showers are supposed to bring May flowers, but those still waiting for the showers face real challenges. Water restrictions have been imposed in many areas that will have an impact on the playing conditions of our fields. Now is a good time to communicate with your fellow members and see how they are planning to cope with this issue.

Living in Florida for many years, we had to deal with this issue on several occasions. Watering the infield before the games during drought conditions was really tough to explain to fans whose yards were dead. Communication is key. I promised them my yard looked a lot like theirs and that watering the infield was required for player safety.

It's also important to explore all your options. A proactive approach will enable you to act rather than react. I can already tell you wetting agents are in high demand now, so contact your local vendor (who I am sure will be an STMA member) about products. They can make a little water go a long way!

While all the media coverage is focused on the drought situation, in other areas of the US, April showers brought wet field conditions extreme enough to force cancellations of practices and games. Because every field user group wants to get in all the games on the original schedule, that means working those missed games back into slots on fields already heavily scheduled. That so many fields at so many different levels of play are able to support these packed schedules is a tribute to the expertise and dedication of sports turf managers.



Murray Cook.
STMA President

Professional & patient

Whether Mother Nature brings you too little or too much precipitation, do be patient and be professional in how you handle your water management issues.

Now, while those spring sports are in full swing, is a great time to start taking photos of your fields to enter for the STMA Field of the Year awards consideration. The best time to begin planning your awards presentation is now. Take a series of photos, to show the before, during, and after views to demonstrate how your field changes throughout the season. You will reap other benefits besides using the photos to develop a great presentation package illustrating your field operations for awards consideration.

I have found that taking photos on a weekly basis helps in detecting problems on your fields. Since you are on the fields daily, it's tough to see the turf changes/problems in their early stages. Comparison of the weekly photos can make those differences stand out so it's easier for you to catch them.

You can also use photos to document on-field events, especially those where play takes place in poor weather conditions. Those too wet and too dry situations are prime examples. A before, during, and after photo series for such events may help you explain to field user groups, coaches, and supervisors why it may be necessary to limit or cancel play in bad weather.

Keep an eye on the STMA website as well (www.sportsturfmanager.com). It's a great place to catch up on industry news, connect with others on key issues of the day, or post a question for quick networking feedback. You can also contact any of the STMA Board members or STMA Headquarters with ideas to share or for additional resources. Your input is always welcome. You can contact me directly via email at murrayc@brickmangroup.com.

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