

# Turf managers face money, manpower issues

In a recent email survey of 31 properties representing more than 4,000 acres, the Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) found money and manpower issues to be the two biggest challenges facing its members.

"The survey was primarily conducted in order to assist one of our members who needed to make a costs/salary presentation to management," said Thomas Shaner, PGMS Executive Director.

Comments received included: "Working with less endowment monies. Managing new buildings and landscapes while maintenance budgets are cut," "Low wages for permanent staff leading to high turnover," "General budget and maintenance," "Keeping good staff," "Motivating employees to care about more than a paycheck," "Achieving desired results with time constraints due to other duties," "Finding conscientious, qualified manpower," "Lack of sufficient summer maintenance crews," and "Not enough staff to get it all done."

Reflecting a current trend in the green industry as a whole, several respondents also recognized the need to be able to better communicate with Hispanic workers, and meeting deadlines with fewer

workers and less money.

On average, survey respondents managed 129-acre properties, the largest being 650 acres and the smallest five acres. Excluding one private estate which represented more than 2 million square feet of gardens, the respondents manage an average 38,500 square feet of ornamental flower beds and use, on average, 506 cubic yards of mulch each year. They also oversee an average 75,240 square feet of sidewalks, patios and terraces.

On average, each property has 1.5 supervisors who earn \$19.33 an hour (range \$10.40 - \$36.46). They have 2.5 foremen earning \$13.39 (range \$9.00 - \$23.07) and 11.07 full time employees earning \$11.22 (range \$7.00 - \$14.35). They also hire an average 5.89 seasonal employees who are paid \$8.28 (range \$6.00 - \$12.15).

Among the other challenges noted by the PGMS survey respondents were: time to deadhead and care for annuals, weeds and water, using less pre-emergence chemicals leads to more weeds, keeping nice turf around campus, equipment maintenance, issues of winter, and droughts and water rationing. **ST**



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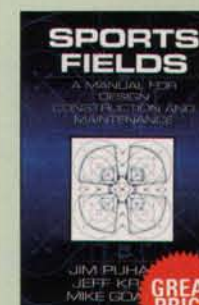
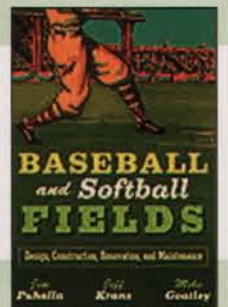
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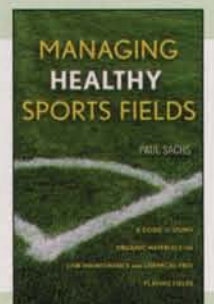
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