

The Ethical Side of STMA Membership

Do you know that Sports Turf Managers Association has a Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Guidelines?

Each was developed through the extensive work of the Standards and Bylaws Committee, which is made up of STMA members, for one specific reason: to advance the professionalism of the sports turf manager. "For our profession to attain the highest level of respect within the industry and outside of it, STMA needed to develop a code of ethics and conduct guidelines," says Bob Campbell, CSFM, and STMA Immediate Past President. Our members created these standards to validate their commitment to be the most professional sports turf managers possible," says Campbell.

The difference between the Code of Ethics and the Professional Conduct Guidelines is legal enforceability. The Code is legally enforceable and memberships can be suspended. Guidelines are just that[DASH HERE]principles to follow that ensure the most professional conduct possible by members.

With the Code of Ethics, the procedure to bring complaints forward about potential violations was also developed. The complaint process begins with a phone call to STMA Headquarters. The procedures also include an in-depth appeals process. For a copy of the policy, contact Headquarters at 800-323-3875. The conduct guidelines are to be peer-monitored.

Code of Ethics

The STMA Bylaws, Article V, Section 5.8, authorize the Board of Directors to enforce this code by procedures established through standing rules for the conduct of such procedures.

In order to build confidence and respect within the STMA between members and non-members alike, and to be recognized as a professional organization, a code of ethics is not only necessary, but also the observance of its provisions is essential.

Every member of STMA shall take pride in his/her work, derive satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment in a job well done, and regard sports turf management as a profession in which all members strive to maintain its good name.

A vital asset of an STMA member is a thorough understanding and up-to-date knowledge of the sports turf management business.

In order for STMA members to accomplish their goals and to uphold the best interests of the Association, high regard for, and strong enforcement of, the principles of the following Code of Ethics will be deemed a significant indicator of individual responsibility, character and professionalism.

As a member of the Sports Turf Managers Association, I accept and fully agree to abide by this Code of Ethics and pledge myself to:

1. Participate in Association activities and my daily sports turf job-related duties in a manner that brings credit to the Association and the profession.
2. Observe and exercise sound turf management and athletic field principles and practices during the performance of my job.
3. Strive to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct to credibly reflect upon, and to increase the stature of, the sports turf management profession.
4. Strive to improve my knowledge and effectiveness by freely sharing and exchanging information, experiences and ideas with fellow members and by availing myself of all opportunities for improvement.
5. Strive to maintain cordial and courteous relationships with employers, employees, peers and associates and to assure that all employees adhere to established standards and policies and take pride in the work they perform.
6. Assist my fellow sports turf managers in all ways consistent with my

abilities, only when called upon to do so, and with my supervisors' knowledge, participation and acceptance.

7. Honor all requests for technical assistance from sports turf facilities only when channeled through the sports turf manager of the facility making the request.

8. Abstain from the debasement of or encroachment upon the professional reputation and/or practices of another sports turf manager.

9. Abstain from applying for or otherwise seeking employment in a dishonest manner. For the purpose of this section of the Code, a member seeks employment in a dishonest manner if he or she does one or more of the following in connection with prospective employment:

- (a) provides false or misleading information to a prospective employer;
- (b) makes false, slanderous or defamatory statements concerning a fellow sports turf manager;
- (c) attempts to undermine or improperly influence the staff of a fellow sports turf manager;
- (d) attempts to deceive, mislead or misinform a fellow sports turf manager's employer, supervisor or fellow employees;
- (e) makes misleading, deceptive or false statements or claims about his or her professional qualifications, experience or performance; or
- (f) makes misleading, deceptive or false statements or claims about a member sports turf manager's professional qualifications, experience or performance.

10. Refrain from accepting employment, as a consultant, in a dishonest manner. For the purpose of this section of the Code, a consultant accepts employment in a dishonest manner if he or she does one or more of the following in connection with such consulting:

- (a) provides false or misleading information to a prospective employer;
- (b) makes false, slanderous or defamatory statements concerning a fellow sports turf manager;
- (c) attempts to undermine or improperly influence the staff of a fellow sports turf manager;
- (d) attempts to deceive, mislead or misinform a fellow sports turf manager's employer, supervisor or fellow employees;
- (e) makes misleading, deceptive or false statements or claims about his or her professional qualifications, experience or performance; or
- (f) makes misleading, deceptive or false statements or claims about a member sports turf manager's professional qualifications, experience or performance.

11. Base endorsements of products, equipment or procedures strictly upon satisfactory personal experience with the specific item or procedure.

12. No member, board member or officer may, on behalf of the STMA, sell or promote a product or service or otherwise benefit personally on behalf of a commercial company unless directed by the Board of Directors to do so on behalf of the STMA.

13. Uphold the integrity and dignity of the Sports Turf Managers Association in all internal and external activities and relationships, including the use of pictures and information in any form of print or broadcast media or product endorsement.

14. Support the STMA commercial affiliates and assist them in maintaining product integrity.

15. Express professional opinions on technical subjects publicly only when the opinion is founded upon adequate knowledge of the facts and competence in the subject matter.

16. Abstain from conduct constituting a crime under federal, state, or local law, the penalty for which is, or may be imprisonment, including but not limited to, crimes of moral turpitude and dishonesty. For the purposes of the Code, a member's conviction of such a crime will be considered conclusive evidence that the member committed that crime.

17. Abstain from knowingly making false statements or knowingly failing to disclose a material fact requested in connection with application or renewal for STMA membership or membership in an affiliated chapter.

18. Members have the right to report and are urged to report all known or suspected violations of the Code of Ethics and to voluntarily participate as a witness and present information in all proceedings to determine the possibility of a violation of this Code of Ethics.

The STMA Board shall administer and apply the Code and shall develop procedures regarding such administration and application.

Professional Conduct Guidelines

The following professional conduct guidelines are provided to encourage the highest standards of conduct among the membership of STMA. These guidelines are a companion document to the STMA Code of Ethics. While professional conduct guidelines may not be enforced with membership sanctions, these guidelines should nonetheless be promoted, practiced and encouraged by STMA members.

Noncompliance with these guidelines should be noted and self policed by fellow STMA members, officials and affiliated chapters to discourage future instances of such noncompliance. In assessing one's actions, all sports turf managers should ask the question, "Would my actions meet with the approval of other sports turf managers?"

1. A member should always contact a fellow sports turf manager prior to visiting his or her facility regardless of the reason for the visit, other than when attending an educational meeting, association event or as a spectator at a public event at the facility.

2. A member should only submit an application for a position and/or accept an interview for a position currently held by a fellow sports turf manager if the applicant has contacted the current sports turf manager to verify the position is open, or if the applicant has learned about the opening through an open position listing or through direct contact to the applicant by the facility's personnel.

3. A member should only accept a consulting assignment at a sports field facility if the current sports turf manager at that facility is aware of such impending consulting activity.

4. A member should make verbal consulting recommendations for a facility only with the knowledge of the current sports turf manager or make written recommendations only when issuing a copy of such recommendations to the current sports turf manager.

5. Commercial members, soliciting business for their company's products and services, should channel such solicitations through the current sports turf manager of the facility or ensure the current sports turf manager at that facility is aware of such impending solicitation.

6. Members should always conduct themselves in the highest professional manner at all sports turf related events and other public events where the member is representing the sports turf management profession.

7. A member should not render negative opinions or comments about fellow members.

Members are encouraged to remind fellow sports turf managers about these courtesies through phone calls, electronic messages and letters. Peer reinforcement of these standards is encouraged.

chapter news

Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:

For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, contact Chris Calcaterra at e-mail: chriscc@peoriaaz.com or call 623/412-4231 or Bill Murphy, at e-mail: bmurphy@ci.scottsdale.az.us or 480/312-7956.

Chesapeake Chapter STMA (formerly called Mid-Atlantic Athletic Field Managers Organization - MAFMO Chapter STMA): For more information contact Graham Davis at gdavis@american.edu or call 301/495-5522.

Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association: The CSTMA will be holding a Renovation Seminar Wednesday, June 8, at Fort Carson. For more information please contact the Chapter Hotline at 303/346-8954 or www.cstma.org or contact Chapter President Richard Buelter at 303/233-2922, or dbuelter@jeffco.k12.co.us.

Florida #1 Chapter: The next Chapter meeting is May 12 at the University of Miami in Miami, 1540 Levante Avenue in Coral Gables. For information on the Florida #1 Chapter visit the Florida #1 Chapter page on STMA's website or contact John Mascaro at



954/341-3115 or STMA@turf-tec.com.

Gateway Chapter Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Gateway Chapter or upcoming events, call Mike Krone, Missouri Baptist College at 314/392-2328 or e-mail krone@mobap.edu.

Georgia Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Skip Kirby at 770/928-1580 or e-mail skip@sportsturfmanagement.com.

The Greater L.A. Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on upcoming Chapter events call Emilio Avalos at 949/824-8243 or email ecavalos@uci.edu.

Illinois Chapter (formerly Midwest Chapter) STMA: The next Board meeting for the Illinois Chapter will be May 12 at 4:00 p.m., followed by a networking social. The meeting will be held at Gator's Pub & Grill, 1719 N. Rand Rd. in Palatine. June 30 is the inaugural Vendor Expo Field Day at the College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL. Join members and vendors for a day of education and equipment demonstrations. Lunch will be included. For more information on the Illinois Chapter call chapter secretary Libby Baker at 847/263-7603 or e-mail Bake60ft6in@aol.com.

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association: May 11 is the ISTMA Baseball Workshop at Sec Taylor Field at Principal Park in Des Moines, IA, you can find more information on the Baseball Workshop at www.iowaturfgrass.org. For information on the Chapter or upcoming activities, contact Jeff Wendel of The Turf Office at ph. 515/232-8222 or fax