

What drives you nuts?

We asked some readers via email, "After hosting an event at one of your facilities, what is the one issue with the public (athletes/coaches/officials) that just drives you nuts?"

Respect for the field is an important perception in my mind. Most of the public lack respect for the field and many athletes/coaches/officials only respect the field when it is convenient for them. Turfgrass is much like a human being. It is able to put up with an extraordinary amount of abuse; however both can be so fragile depending on the timing. What drives me nuts? People want the best but are unwilling to recognize and take action on what they can do to contribute to that goal. Spectators don't need to enter the field or bench areas for any reason. Coaches, please move the drills around and keep the bench well back from the out of bounds line. Athletes, use the field to perform but please avoid digging holes purposefully, move your drills and avoid unscheduled use. Officials/AD's, field safety applies to future games not just the current game or practice you would like to get in.

Everyone: please don't drive or park on the field; for that matter walk around the field to get to the other side. The field is intended for specific sport practice and play; if you are not a player/coach/official or responsible for the fields care then stay off please. You are adding unnecessary wear and stress that will contribute to an unsafe playing field.

- Martin from the Southeast

Trash in parking areas!
- Bill from the Northwest

Compliments come from the visiting teams, complaints from the home team.
- Ted from Midwest

I would have to say that as the years go on, there seems to be more people that leave personal items in the stands, e.g., cell phones, coats, etc. and when they come back later they expect that item to have been turned into lost and found. And then get angry with me or one of my crew for not finding the item they lost.

- Mike from Rocky Mountain region

TRASH! It drives me crazy to provide a quality facility to a sports organization and see the dugouts, bench areas and spectator seating areas littered with cups, candy wrappers, and other debris when there are empty trash cans just feet away.

- Phil from Southeast

My biggest issue is the disrespect people have towards your facility. Some, not all, think because they bought a ticket they can do whatever, and go wherever they please. There are reasons they may not be allowed in a restricted area, i.e. safety and security. The things such as trash, and wear and tear on normal items is part of the game, and those things don't bother me, it's the same people I have to tell over and over to basically grow up.

- Chris from the West Coast



The trash! We have trashcans everywhere and no one uses them!
– Eric from the Mid-Atlantic region

The conditions of the team area, officials' locker room, and team locker rooms. The conditions these areas are left in shows their lack of respect for the facility and the people who work there. One example would be, no one should be cleaning their cleats off by banging them against the walls leaving dimples in the wall and mud all over the place.

– Chris from Northeast

We host many events put on by our city that owns our ballpark. They are a great municipality to work with my only problem is that the teams/coaches/players have little or no respect for the facility. They act like they have never played on a field before. They walk across manicured infields, run over clean mounds, stretch and throw from exactly the same place every time (normally the foul lines), they trash the dugouts, batting cages, and surrounding areas. Have a little class and at least act like it is a privilege to play on a first class playing surface; act like you have a clue!

– Chris from the Atlantic Coast

After soccer games, the players unwrap the tape that was on their socks and shoes and just leave it on the field or sidelines along with other trash. The coaches don't hold the teams responsible. We are understaffed already, but now we have to clean up after the teams and coaches. We are there for the athletes, but at some point, they have to help the cause and take responsibility.

I have heard of some high school teams that go out and seed and fix divots after games. That would never happen where I am at, because the coaches and players take everything for granted. Players and coaches just don't understand what goes into making a field safe, playable, and looking good at the same time. There should be a conference for coaches that explains what we do everyday to give them some insight on our work. Maybe then, they would take that extra step and help out.

– Dustin from the Midwest

Cleaning up after the crowd, even when there were garbage cans everywhere.

– Rick from "Monsters of the Midway"

The biggest thing that leads to frustration for me (in this situation) is the lack of people's understanding in regards to how much

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abuse a field can take from use. Whether it is a string of several events in close together, additional events (such as homecoming festivities) that bring a lot of extra people onto the field, or how the weather is greatly impacts and/or change how the field can be used.

Depending on the current circumstances, what many people would consider a normal use of the field can be very destructive to the field, whether it be several events in a row, playing/practicing on a field when it is too wet, or having too many events on a field that in a recovery stage [from disease, drought, other problem]. To go hand-in-hand with that, many of these people struggle to understand the process of "bringing a field back" to top shape after it has damaged under these circumstances. A lot of times it is not easy to be able to convey all of these details to all of the individuals involved.

- Andrew from the Midwest

It has to be peanut shells and sunflower seeds on the warning track. I know it sounds petty but it drives us crazy getting them picked up.

- Nick from New England

Generally, coaches that do not take responsibility to have their teams clean up litter around their bench areas. It is not always

possible for our staff to get to these areas between every game. Therefore, a new team coming in may get a poor impression of the facilities and have less respect themselves.

- Keith from New England

The thing that drives me nuts is the trash that they leave at the players bench. I have a soccer facility and the players take the tape off their socks and throw it on the ground. They don't care if there is a game behind them so I try to get over there and clean it up a little before the next match.

- Dick from the Rocky Mountains

Our coaches leave a bigger mess for us to pick up.

- Jim from the Midwest

Everyone in baseball knows what an "on-deck" mat is but they never use it for its intended purpose.


- Joe from the Southwest

No one knows how to use trash cans!

- Mark from the Mid-Atlantic ■

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