

- Choosing newer cultivars of turfgrass that are more drought and disease resistant.
- Taking advantage of local and national educational opportunities that address environmental concerns.
- Be proactive by anticipating and being prepared for changes in the political climate and laws in your area.
- Look for ways to recycle or reuse items that in the past were discarded.
- Network, stay in touch with those around you and make every effort to share information and techniques.
- Investigate ways to make your facility more eco-friendly without breaking the budget.
- Consider plantings to shade buildings for energy conservation.
- Install energy efficient lighting and upgrade to energy saving heating controls.

I know that there are many more things that can be added to the list and I am sure that each of you has things that you have done to embrace the changing issue of environmental awareness. Keep it going and continue to develop and share your own list.

I don't think the green movement is about going all organic I think it is more about awareness. Sustainability is not only about resources it has to do with the way we get our fields to perform. If that takes more input of inorganic fertilizers to produce fields that are safe and playable then so be it. It doesn't mean that the common areas of our facilities can't be on an organic program.

Does it mean that we can't control invasive weeds with appropriate chemicals? I think common sense should be the rule.

Balance and planning can go a long way. The Green Movement is about looking at the future and asking the question, "What effect are my actions going to have on the environment and what can I do today to make it sustainable?" It is my responsibility to evaluate what they might be. I feel comfortable with a few weeds in my fields if it means reducing the input of herbicides but still having safe fields.

I am sure all of you have thought about many of the issues and ideas in this article at one time or another. I am also sure that many of you are well on your way to developing a sustainable maintenance program. I have only scratched the surface, there is so much more out there that ten articles might not cover all the information.

I hope the Green Movement has been demystified for those of you who are just starting to move in that direction. It is not a cult it is just an increased level of awareness.

If you have an idea about going green that you would like to share with the rest of us please contact me at kimered-ith1@gmail.com. ■

Kevin Meredith, CSFM is turf manager for the National Soccer Hall of Fame, Oneonta, NY.

Snow management tips

Honda Power Equipment offers these snowblower operational and maintenance tips for the upcoming season:

Check the snowblower's engine oil levels daily.

Check the machine's main wear items. These include the blower's skid shoes and the scraper bar; both are intended to rub along the ground as the unit is operated and can wear out even faster when trying to clear snow down to the bare pavement.

Note: Both the skid shoes and the scraper bar are, on many popular models, usually held in place by nuts and bolts. Operators should follow these steps for adjustment and replacement (but make sure the machine is **not running** while checking everything out!

- Place the snowblower on a level surface. For track-type snow blowers, step on the foot pedal and set the auger in the middle position.
- Loosen the skid shoe nuts and obtain the auger ground clearance for the appropriate snow conditions. Adjust the right and left shoes equally, and then retighten the nuts securely.
- Loosen all the nuts, holding the scraper, and adjust the scraper to the specified ground clearance. Be sure to retighten the nuts securely.
- Inspect the scraper and replace it if it is excessively worn.

A lack of power may indicate the need for a tune up where spark plugs are replaced and valves are adjusted. Black smoke coming out of the exhaust may indicate a "rich" condition, a common problem when operating at above 5,000 feet altitude. Here, your authorized dealer may suggest resetting the carburetor. For oil changes, tune-up intervals, information about replacement parts, and warranty information, refer to the owner's manual specific to the model.

Here are several good storage practices for snowblowers that help to ensure optimum performance and a long working life:

Because rust and corrosion will keep a snowblower from operating at peak performance, clean the auger housing with water and wipe down with a cloth before storing. Check the chute drive gear, shift and throttle levers, and ring gear; if any lubrication is necessary, do so before storing.

As with any gas-powered power equipment model, empty a snowblower's fuel tank or add fuel stabilizer before storing a snowblower for any length of time. This will make for an easy start on the next pull.

Check for any worn parts and order from the dealer as it is easier to replace what is needed ahead of the season's first snowfall. Check manufacturers service manuals for suggested maintenance schedules and keep good records for all equipment. Inspect all painted surfaces and touch up where needed.

This information supplied by Honda Power Equipment, www.honda.com