



Oriole Park at Camden Yards, courtesy of Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association

STMA goes to Baltimore

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is hosting its annual Congress and Exhibition October 14-18 in Baltimore, and STMA is involved in several ways. STMA is presenting two educational sessions and meeting with attendees from its booth on the trade show floor.

The Exhibition kicks off Wednesday the 15th mid-morning and closes Friday the 17th mid-afternoon. Typically, STMA's task as an exhibitor is to explain the benefits of membership in the association and sign up new members. But at NRPA the association's role takes a different direction than membership recruitment. STMA uses this opportunity to talk with employers of members—Directors of Parks and Recreation—and help to reinforce the importance of the sports turf manager to the facility. STMA positions the sports turf manager as the key person in protecting the safety of the athletes, recreational participants and fans. This translates to helping to limit liability for municipalities.

The association also stresses the importance of allocating sufficient resources to field management and provides information on how to support sports turf managers' continuing education, at the national conference

and through the certification program. CEO Kim Heck has attended NRPA each year since 2004, when she was hired to manage STMA. She says that recognition of the association has grown. "In 2004, many NRPA participants thought we sold synthetic fields, but by last year, participants would stop by the booth to say that their sports turf manager is a member of STMA," says Heck. "I think that we have made some solid progress within NRPA for being known as the association that offers value to their athletic field manager segment."

In 2007, STMA submitted two proposed educational sessions to NRPA and both were selected to be presented at the Congress. David Schlotthauer, athletic field manager at Brigham Young University, will present "Managing Athletic Events: Implementing a Safety Audit" Thursday the 16th from 8:30 – 9:45 a.m. His presentation will explore the benefits of conducting a safety audit and will actually walk participants through the process of conducting one. Later that morning from 10:15 to 11:30 a.m., David Pinsonneault, CSFM, CPRP will present "Developing Community-Based Environmental Programs for Sports Fields and Parks. ■