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## Enough change already?

**WE'LL KNOW** whether Punxsutawney Phil the Groundhog saw his shadow February 2 by the time you read this; I don't know why we pay attention to him since in most regions of the country prospects of an early spring annually is as unpredictable as, ahem, the weather.

But unlike the Bill Murray character in "Groundhog Day," we can count on one thing for sure—"change" is in the 2009 forecast.

That word, change, has been popping up all over, especially since President Obama was elected on the theme, Wall Street tanked big-time, and heck, the Cardinals made the Super Bowl. Yes, change is inevitable but not always welcome; for example, I hope my daily newspaper never goes the way of the dodo bird.

So though you might have heard enough about change recently to roll your eyes about whatever's next, here are some "changes" I learned about at the STMA Conference last month you might find interesting:

- The Playing Conditions Index (PCI), developed by an STMA Task Force, has undergone testing and is now ready for members to use to assess a field's playability. One tester, Peter Lockwood of the Nashville Sounds, said, "[The PCI] can be used as a tool for managers to tune their programs and help as firepower when asking for a better budget." Visit [www.stma.org](http://www.stma.org) to download or print instructions and the worksheet.

- According to keynote speaker Dr. Ali Harivandi, University of California Extension, another change coming is less water available for irrigating. "Drought is coming to everyone, especially in the south and southwest," he said. "The demand for that precious commodity, 'blue gold', doubles every 20 years." His message was clear: You may not have water issues yet but you will.

- I did not attend an educational session at the Conference without the impact of smaller budgets being discussed. More than once attendees were cautioned to find ways to cut back without laying off any staff—getting that position back in a future budget may be impossible.

- The material used as infill for synthetic turf system might be changing as well. A European company has introduced a 100% organic coconut fibers and cork material that reportedly absorbs humidity to help keep turf systems cooler.

- One more change to consider: Keynote speaker Steve Farber explained how leadership has nothing to do with titles or responsibilities and everything to do with transforming yourself into someone who's not afraid to encounter an "OSM"—Oh Sh- - Moment. True leaders stick their necks out sometimes for the cause. If you never experience an OSM in your leadership role, you're failing.

Correction: In last month's article by Kevin Trotta (p. 35), the amount of seed referred to should have been "10 lb/1,000 ft<sup>2</sup>" rather than "10,000 lb/1,000 ft<sup>2</sup>." Our apologies to Kevin and our readers.

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