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## Networking starts locally

EVER SIT BACK AND WONDER HOW TO DO SOMETHING THAT YOU HAVE NEVER HAD TO DO BEFORE, and where to start? Have you ever stopped and realized all that you have learned from another sports turf manager? Where would we all be if it wasn't for someone across town or across the country who took the time to answer our phone calls, and help provide a solution to us on that stumping issue that we just couldn't get our hands around?

Our local chapters provide us with a valuable networking opportunity to connect with other turf managers, so that we can build relationships for now and the future. This network provides us with ready resources for information and allows us to be a resource to someone else. I know that at least once a week I think about something that I have learned from someone that I have met through the local chapter or through the national association. These experiences make us the "go-to" people even on those non-turf related questions that we face at our jobs.

Volunteering to participate at either the local or the national level will broaden your resources and experiences. Becoming a leader within your local area is a way of giving back to those who have helped you along the way. Participating on the board of a local chapter allows you to plan educational seminars on topics that are pressing in your area. It is a rewarding opportunity to make connections with other sports turf managers, commercial vendors and educators in the area and learn more than you can imagine. If there is not a chapter in your area, then gather the other sports turf managers in the area and form one; do not miss the networking opportunity that comes from a chapter.

I know that we are all busy with work and our personal lives, so if you do not have the time to participate on a board you might be able to speak at a seminar or write an article to support the local chapter and share your knowledge. Remember all of us are "experts in the field" so don't be afraid to raise your voice and share your knowledge both on a local level and a national level.

By now you should have received the STMA 2010 Conference and Exhibition registration brochure, and are making plans to attend. The brochure and the STMA website, [www.STMA.org](http://www.STMA.org) have all of the information regarding the educational sessions that will be presented. In addition to the brochure, you'll also find other useful tools on the website to provide to your employer to justify attending the conference. It is a very comprehensive educational program that you will not want to miss. Just a reminder—the conference registration and the hotel rates increase in December, so don't wait to sign up. Register now and reap the benefits of discounted prices.