

Strategies for weathering the economic downturn

AS SPORTS TURF MANAGERS, it is our job to produce safe, playable surfaces to our athletes and users.

With the struggling economy, most sports turf managers are currently dealing with budget cuts, or have dealt with them sometime in the past few years. This has forced prioritization of fields, maintenance and supply cutbacks and also reduced time allocated to maintaining athletic and recreational surfaces. So how

do we provide optimum conditions when dealing with limited resources? Sports turf managers across the United States from various facilities share their strategies on how to handle the effects of the economic recession.

Our role as sports turf managers

"For turf managers, player and user safety and aesthetics take precedence. In order to

maintain playing surfaces at their highest level, sports turf managers must develop a set of standards and expectations. These standards set the bar for goals on what we wish to achieve each season. Unfortunately, in the current economy we are dealing with a cutback in supplies and personnel, which mean decreased frequency and reduced maintenance at any one site. This is where our standards become important. Depending on avail-



Photo credit: (Above) Bruce Dierolf, Boyertown (PA) SD

Photo credit: (Background) Graff's Turf Farms



able supplies, personnel, and expected consequences, we need to readjust our standards. Knowing our available resources and how that will influence a playing surface allows us to make attainable goals.”-Mike Tarantino, director of maintenance and operations, Poway (CA) USD

Prioritizing your fields

“When budgets are being cut, one of the first areas to review is setting priorities on fields and field maintenance. Fields that support greater use or are considered to be high priority fields should receive the greatest resources. Prioritizing maintenance activities may mean reduced cultural practices such as fertilization and mowing frequency or, reduced renovations such as aeration, topdressing and/or overseeding. Of course, all of these come with reduced short and long term playability and aesthetics. There may be areas other than playing fields where reduced maintenance activities can be implemented such as, landscaping or general common areas that carry a lesser degree of expectations.”-Steve Wightman, stadium turf manager, Qualcomm Stadium, San Diego

Whether you are maintaining one field or 20, prioritizing fields helps determine where time, supplies and maintenance should be allocated.

1. Review your entire maintenance program and schedule. Distinguish your high priority areas from low priority areas and try to determine where adjustments can be made in your budget.

Create a rating scale and evaluate areas to determine where they rate on your priority list so you can allocate the proper amount of time and money to maintain each at its highest level.

2. Game and main practice fields need the most attention.

- Game fields have high visibility and should always be kept in top condition for safety and aesthetics.

- Main practice fields are where athletes spend the majority of their time and need to be kept in safe, playable condition.

- These sites should be visited daily for maintenance practices.

3. Cut back maintenance frequency on low priority fields and

Prioritizing maintenance activities may mean reduced fertilization and mowing frequency or reduced renovations such as aeration, topdressing and/or overseeding.

other areas.

- Make sure the lower priority fields still meet safety standards.
- Have a rotating maintenance schedule that services these areas at least once or twice a week.
- Reevaluate how much money you want to allocate to maintaining parking and landscaped areas.
- 4. Reevaluate your budget regularly.

Labor costs

The biggest expense for a facility is the staff. To help avoid layoffs, here are some ways to redistribute your employees to try and maintain quality and frequency of service to playing surfaces.

1. Split shifts.

2. Implement an innovative work week as an alternative to overtime for hourly employees, or as a means to reduce overtime.

- The work week can start on a different day than the traditional Monday through Friday, and can be different for each employee. For example, if some of your staff's work is typically heavy on Thursday and Friday; their work week can be a Thursday through Wednesday model. They would work longer hours on Thursday and Friday, but still maintain the 40 hour maximum in a week.

- By staggering your employees throughout the week, you can make certain that all of the maintenance tasks are covered.

- You can also work with your employees to adjust their schedule to be variable, allowing them to work as much as necessary on certain days, as long as their seven-day period does not exceed more than 40 hours.

- These innovative schedules do require the employee and employer to have a written agreement.

3. Change full time positions to seasonal positions.

4. Evaluate each individual and focus their work based on strengths or what they enjoy doing the most.

5. Reduce employee benefits.

6. Make sure staff is well trained.

7. Contract out services.

- Although this still costs money, it may not be as expensive as using in house labor. Contracted services save us from paying hourly wages and benefits. It also allows our staff to focus on other areas while the contracted service is going on.



Photo credit: The Toro Company

8. Volunteers

- Recruiting teams, community groups and individuals can help tremendously.
 - Teams can help rake baseball and softball infields.
 - Eagle Scouts can help with projects such as building signs or sheds.
 - Local Garden Clubs can be utilized to care for landscaped areas such as traffic islands. David Pinsonneault, CSFM, public grounds superintendent for the City of Lexington, MA, has put an "Adopt a Traffic Island" program into place that local garden clubs take advantage of to showcase their work.
 - And sports leagues may be able to fundraise for projects, such as field renovation, or for supplies, such as line marking paint.
 - Volunteer contributions may prolong the need for major field renovation.
 - Be careful as to how much freedom you give volunteers. Their idea of helping may turn into a maintenance nightmare for you.
- ## 9. Incentive programs
- As part of the economic stimulus package, some cities receive money from the government that is allocated to the grounds department and used to pay temporary seasonal hires.

Reducing maintenance costs

"We aren't developing new ideas on managing fields, everything is the same, we just need to adjust our practices and think outside the box." - Mike Tarantino

1. Focus on small trouble spots instead of the entire field.
2. Cut back frequency of cultural practices such as mowing, or topdressing.
3. Try to remedy a problem by using cultural practices before using chemicals.
4. Be more efficient with pesticide and fertilizer applications.
 - Always follow label rates.
 - Consider spot treatments in areas of concern rather than broad based applications.
 - Reevaluate necessity of application versus preventative application.
 - Use a slow release fertilizer instead of quick release.
 - Reduce rate of fertilizer applications if possible. Reduce the application rate for the entire area. Instead of applying 1 lb. N/1000 square feet, try applying $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. N/1000 square feet. Or reduce the application rate only in lower traffic areas, such as end zones.
 - Determine exact square footage of each area you apply products and buy what is needed to eliminate excess.
 - Shop around. Sometimes less expensive products perform the same as the premium product.
5. Use plant growth regulators.
 - Field paint that also contains a plant growth regulator can reduce the number of times a week you need to paint lines on fields.
6. Cut back on field maintenance supplies such as paint, infield skin conditioner, or hand tools.

7. Restrict high priority field use to only necessary uses.

8. See how cost effective it is to sign 2-year contracts instead of 1-year contracts with outside companies or vendors.
9. Be more efficient with irrigation.
 - Use of soil penetrants, evapotranspiration monitors and scheduled run times can all help reduce costs.
 - Keep track of water dollars. You may not realize how much you are spending just to water your field.
 - Review your electric rates and schedule your field irrigation during off-peak hours to reduce your utility costs.

Equipment

1. Borrow equipment.
 - Some facilities have the capability to share equipment between different departments. For example, a parks and recreation facility may be able to share equipment with a local golf course.]
2. Depending on the size of you facility, rotate equipment between crews that put on a lot of hours to crews that do not.
3. Set time aside for equipment maintenance to prolong life.
4. See if you can arrange an advertising trade off.

Connie Rudolph, CSFM, head groundskeeper at Midway Stadium, St. Paul, MN has arranged a trade off with local equipment companies. In exchange for company advertising, she is allowed the use of a piece of equipment for the season.

Communicating effectively

"The key element to a successful approach in dealing with reduced budgets is effective communication with your boss, owner and teams. Their input is critical in helping to determine how limited resources can best be utilized. As part of the communication process it's important to stress the direct relationship between required maintenance and safety and liability issues."-Steve Wightman

Communication is fundamental to running a successful facility. Communicating our standards, expectations, and priorities helps everyone around us understand our goals and how we plan to attain them. As sports turf managers, it is our goal to build credibility and let superiors know we are professional, responsible, and knowledgeable in our line of work.

1. Be educated about your budget.
 - Know where your resources are being allocated and why they are allocated to that area. Know your costs associated with each area.
 - Be able to justify why a specific maintenance practice or material is essential if there is the potential for it to be cut out of the budget.
 - Be honest when calculating your budget. Determine what you need, how much you need and why you need it to present quality work. Try to see where you can afford to make cuts if the need arises.
2. Always keep lines of communication open between your staff, coaches, administrators, superiors, and peers.
 - Consistently communicate your priorities and facility conditions. Keep everyone updated about changes, problems, daily

maintenance, weather factors, etc. Educating the people you deal with on a daily basis may make your job easier.

- Hold meetings to outline the upcoming season or year.
 - Have staff meetings so your employees understand your expectations.
 - Communicate with coaches on what to expect. It is sometimes hard to make these people understand what is happening on the field.
 - Have a close working relationship with those that deal directly with the budget.
3. Listen to those around you.
 - Staff members often have valid input and ideas.
 - Surround yourself with people who can offer ideas.
 4. Stay positive. No one wants to be led by a pessimist, and your mood influences everyone around you.
 5. Be aware of your mistakes and don't repeat them. Evaluate your operations and determine how to sustain strengths and improve on weaknesses.

Once the economy hits rock bottom, it will be a slow recovery using tight budgets and thin resources.

Therefore, we need to focus on what really adds value to what we do and what is truly essential to make things better and stronger. Times like these call for sports turf managers who can

spark innovation, are adaptable and can execute change efficiently. It is important to remember that you are not the only one facing budget cuts, but that you have an extensive network of peers that can be relied upon for support and advice. ■

Contributors:

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This article appears courtesy of the Sports Turf Managers Association.

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Have you used the PCI?

ACRONYMS ALWAYS SEEM TO CATCH MY ATTENTION when reading through a magazine; sometimes it's just the pure fun of trying to guess what the acronym stands for or just curiosity.

PCI. I hope most of you are saying to yourself, "Ah, I remember that, Playing Conditions Index." Now the big question is are you using it? The STMA Playing Conditions Index was developed to give sports turf managers a "snap-shot" of a specific field at a given point in time. Approximately 30 questions related to resources, activities, and agronomic performance are used to produce a numerical value that ranks a field from excellent to unplayable.

The continued use of the assessment tool provides invaluable information to the sports turf manager and can help guide field management practices, assist with communication to user groups, can help to substantiate the need for more resources, and as needed provides a way to provide information to the media relations department. The package contains a Media Advisory Bulletin with instructions to help convey information on field conditions and its effect on athlete performance to sports information professionals on game days. I happened to have found another use for the PCI. If used correctly and honestly (we all like to brag about our sports fields) the PCI will become the sports turf manager's favorite tool. I have used the PCI to track maintenance practices or in some cases lack of. The PCI is telling me what is working and what isn't; for example did the fertilizer I selected provide the desired results? Were the climatic conditions applicable to the fertilizer selected? Not only is this information valuable for product selection but if you're a creature of habit and do specific applications at certain times of the year, logging comments about weather conditions that coincide with those applications, you will be able to log weather data that will pertain to those applications for years ahead.

Did we have an irrigation problem? Were soil samples taking

before application? You can apply the PCI to every maintenance practice you use to maintain your play field and every resource applied to that maintenance i.e. manpower and money. This alone will be a benefit when budget justifications are due, trust me, we managers love this type of real, documented information.

The PCI shown was done in June on the Poway High School varsity baseball field. The great assets of using the PCI is not only are you collecting data to be used later but the PCI serves as a note pad to record data while you're observing the playing conditions. I use the PCI assessment tool to note what maintenance practices may have worked or failed and to plan upcoming needed maintenance.

When the form is complete (with notes) three copies are made; one is given to the grounds staff so they can plan the needed maintenance, one to the Athletic Director to keep them abreast of the work needed and the condition of the playing field and the last copy is to the coach so they know we aren't neglecting their field. The original will stay in a folder dedicated to that particular playing field. This system allows me to keep track of the maintenance performed, when the maintenance was performed, what worked and what didn't, and weather conditions. It is also a communication tool with the grounds staff, athletic director and the coach and will allow me to review all four of the PCI's when I begin to prepare the budget and look at next year's maintenance plan.

To get the full benefit out of the PCI, use the PCI at least four times per year with one of those times close to budget preparation. If you haven't used the PCI, give it a try, you may be surprised at the amount of information you'll be able to collect and use at a later date.

STMA members can access and print out the PCI at www.stma.org/MemberServices/PCI (see page 16). ■

Michael Tarantino is director of maintenance and operations for the Poway (CA) USD.

Resources

1. Head turf manager experience **5**
 1 = 1-2 years
 2 = 3-4 years
 3 = 5-6 years
 4 = 7-8 years
 5 = 8+ years

2. Head turf manager experience at site **3**
 1 = 1 year
 3 = 2 years
 5 = 3+ years

3. Total number of fields currently overseen **1**
 1 = 16+ fields
 2 = 11-15 fields
 3 = 6-10 fields
 4 = 2-5 fields
 5 = 1 field

4. Head turf manager education (highest level completed) **3**
 1 = High school
 2 = Attended some college
 3 = Non-turf related AA or BS
 4 = AA in turf management/agronomy
 5 = BS in turf management/agronomy or higher

5. CSFM designation from STMA **0**
 0 = No
 1 = Yes

6. Weekly man hours dedicated to maintaining field **3**
 1 = 0-24 hours
 2 = 25-49 hours
 3 = 50-74 hours
 4 = 75-99 hours
 5 = 100+ hours

Activities

7. Are multiple sports played on this field? **0**
 0 = No
 -3 = Yes

8. Last activity type (see Table 1 at end of worksheet) **4.5**

9. Time since last activity **1**
 1 = less than 24 hours
 2 = 2-5 days
 3 = 6-9 days
 4 = 10-13 days
 5 = more than 2 weeks

10. Activity scheduled to occur (see Table 1 at end of worksheet) **4.5**

11. Amount of rainfall on field in last 48 hours **5**
 1 = more than 1.5 inches
 2 = 1.0-1.4 inches
 3 = .5-.9 inches
 4 = 0.2-.4 inches
 5 = 0.0-.1 inches

Agronomic Performance of Turf

12. Turfgrass variety suited to activity (consider activity and season) **5**
 1 = Unmanageable
 3 = Manageable
 5 = Ideally suited

13. Add 3 points if you overseed (0 if you do not) **3**

14. Root zone quality (consider depth and mass) **4**
 1 = less than 1.0"
 2 = 1.0-2.0"
 3 = 2.1-4.0"
 4 = 4.1-6.0"
 5 = 6.1"+

15. Add 1 point if you conduct soil testing annually or more frequently (0 if you do not) **1**

16. Add 1 point if you conduct nutrient analysis annually or more frequently (0 if you do not) **0**
 Add 1 point if the results of your nutrient analysis were ideal (0 if no nutrient analysis or poor results)

17. % Turf worm/bare **5**
 1 = More than 40% field is bare soil
 2 = 30 - 39%
 3 = 20 - 29%
 4 = 10 - 19%
 5 = 0 - 9%

18. Desirable turfgrass cover of field is currently **5**
 1 = Dormant
 3 = Overseeded
 5 = Growing

19. % Diseased **5**
 1 = More than 40% infested
 2 = 30 - 39%
 3 = 20 - 29%
 4 = 10 - 19%
 5 = 0 - 9%

Severity of disease *Answer only if awarded 1 - 4 points on question 19*
 -1 = Moderate (red thread, dollar spot, etc.)
 -3 = Severe (pithium, gray leaf spot, etc.)

20. % Infested by insects **5**
 1 = More than 40% infested
 2 = 30 - 39%
 3 = 20 - 29%
 4 = 10 - 19%
 5 = 0 - 9%

Type of infestation *Answer only if 1 - 4 points awarded on question 20*
 -1 = Moderate (cut worm, army worm, etc.)
 -3 = Severe (grubs, mole cricket, etc.)

21. % Infested with weeds **5**
 1 = More than 40% infested
 2 = 30 - 39%
 3 = 20 - 29%
 4 = 10 - 19%
 5 = 0 - 9%

Type of infestation *Answer only if 1 - 4 points awarded on question 21*
 -1 = Moderate (dandelion, etc.)
 -3 = Severe (goose grass, crab grass, etc.)

22. Thatch/Tensile strength **3**
 1 = Little or no thatch, weak tensile strength
 3 = Excessive thatch, adequate tensile strength
 5 = Ideal thatch, ideal tensile strength

23. Compaction (Account for aeration, moisture content, etc.) **3**
 1 = Too little compaction
 3 = Too much compaction
 5 = Ideal compaction

24. Drainage issues in turfgrass areas **5**
 1 = Devastating water retention, depressions, etc.
 3 = Inconsistent runoff, non-uniform grade, etc.
 5 = Excellent runoff, ideal grade, etc.

25. Add 3 points if you have a sand-based field (0 if no) **5**

26. Irrigation (award 0 points if no irrigation system present) **5**
 1 = Quick coupler/hose only
 3 = Manual sprinkler system
 5 = Automated sprinkler system

27. Quality of irrigation system (if applicable) **3**
 1 = Poor
 3 = Adequate
 5 = Optimal

28. Add 3 points if you conduct annual water audits (0 if no) **5**

29. Mowing frequency **2**
 1 = Less than weekly
 3 = One to two times per week
 5 = Three times per week or more

30. Award 2 points if mowing frequency is consistent throughout the year **2**

TOTAL 1 94

TABLE 1 - Activity references©

5 = PE class
 4.5 = Baseball/ softball
 4 = Field hockey/ lacrosse
 3.5 = Camps/ tournaments/ special event - moderate
 3 = Soccer
 2.5 = Camps/ tournament/ special event - intensive
 2 = Football
 1.5 = Concert/ festival/ band practice
 1 = Activity during or after precipitation

Football/Soccer/Lacrosse Playing Conditions Index©

121 - 103 5 - Excellent
 102 - 85 4 - Above average
 84 - 67 3 - Average
 66 - 49 2 - Below average
 48 or below 1 - Unplayable

Baseball/Softball Specific

31. Uniformity of playing surface **5**
 1 = Many large rocks (.5" or larger), other hazardous materials, weeds, etc.
 2 = Many small rocks (.5" or smaller), other hazardous materials, weeds, etc.
 3 = Few very small rocks, very few if any weeds
 4 = No weeds, no rocks, but irregular or inconsistent materials
 5 = Ideal uniformity of material

32. Add 3 points if soil conditioners are used regularly (0 if no) **3**

33. Maintenance of mound and home plate areas **5**
 1 = Poor (Severe holes, filled/leveled with existing materials, moisture rarely applied, etc.)
 3 = Adequate (Some holes, filled with fresh clay when possible, moisture applied when possible, etc.)
 5 = Expert (Minor or no holes, filled daily with fresh clay, regular moisture, etc.)

34. Grass to skin transitions **4**
 1 = High lip, inhibits drainage, very irregular shape/ edging, etc.
 2 = Noticeable lip, very irregular shape/edging, etc.
 3 = Minor lip, somewhat irregular shape/edging, etc.
 4 = No lip, adequate shape/edging, etc.
 5 = No lip, ideal shape, ideal edging, etc.

35. Infield grading of skinned areas **5**
 1 = Poor grade, devastating water retention, depressions, washout, etc.
 3 = Inconsistent runoff, non-uniform grade, little or no standing water, etc.
 5 = Excellent positive runoff, ideal grade, etc.

36. Frequency of moisture on skinned surfaces **5**
 1 = Never
 3 = Sometimes/sporadically
 5 = Daily/as needed

37. Add 3 points if field tarped during any rainfall within 24 hours of an event (0 if no) **5**

TOTAL 2 27

TOTAL 1 94

+TOTAL 2 27

=TOTAL 121

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 2 = Football
 1.5 = Concert/ festival/ band practice
 1 = Activity during or after precipitation

Baseball/Softball Playing Conditions Index©

149 - 127 5 - Excellent
 126 - 104 4 - Above average
 103 - 82 3 - Average
 81 - 60 2 - Below average
 59 or below 1 - Unplayable

Elements of a successful maintenance schedule



>> KEVIN BEVENOUR ASKS, "Why don't more folks use these?"

A "A list, catalog, or inventory of details."
 "A list of times of reoccurring events or projected operations."
 "A timed plan for a procedure or project."
 "To plan or appoint."

These are the ways Webster describes the word "schedule." Some others say, "Life saver," "necessity," or "guide." Without several, I think my wife would have to be committed to the rubber room trying to keep track of me and my two young daughters. Whether you realize it or not, everyday is full of schedules. What time you set the alarm clock to get up each morning is the start of your daily schedule. The time you leave the house to get to work is another. Others are out of your control; try telling your body it's not time for that first cup of coffee just yet, or in my case, an ice cold Diet Coke. Some of us deal with multiple schedules for multiple things. I am fortunate to have schedules based on calendar years, school years, and budget years, not to mention employees, construction, trash pickups, recycling, tree care, and shrubbery. Landscape maintenance has seven different pruning schedules just in itself.

And then there are athletic field maintenance schedules, the topic of this article. I called upon some of my colleagues for help in gathering ideas. I generally asked the same questions to everyone and we led each other

Field Maintenance Schedule

Field		25-May MTWTF	1-Jun MTWTF	8-Jun MTWTF	15-Jun MTWTF	22-Jun MTWTF	29-Jun MTWTF	6-Jul MTWTF	13-Jul MTWTF	20-Jul MTWTF	27-Jul MTWTF	3-Aug MTWTF	10-Jul MTWTF
Upper (M1)	R	H W I F S			CCC B	CCC I	P H I F			CCC I	B D I F		
Pucillo (M2)	U	H AAA	I	F	B		F H	CCCCI	CCCCI	B D	CCCCI	F	
Baseball (M2)	U	H AAA	I F			B W	CCCCI	P H I F			B D		I F

Key	A - Core aerate, top dress, seed, fert	P - Pest control application
	B - Biostimulat application	R - Irrigation by water reel
	C - CAMP	S - Seed
	D - Crabgrass control application	U - Automatic irrigation
	F - Granular Fertilizer application	W - Broadleaf weed control
	. - Holiday	M1 - Regular mowing once per week
	I - Field inspection	M2 - Regular mowing twice per week

into other related topics. We all came to the same conclusion on what a good maintenance schedule should do: give grass the best opportunity we can to grow. What do top managers do that's different from what I do? Who does the same things? How can I make

it work? When do I get it done? The goal for this article is two-fold. One, to provide some educational and informational subject matter in a lighthearted fashion, and two, for all of us to realize, at some point, we have been there and can relate to what others are faced with. Oh, and three, to have a little fun while I'm supposed to be working!

Do you HAVE a schedule?

Do you have a maintenance schedule for your athletic field(s)? Hopefully, everyone has something. Whether it be something simple on paper, a complex, multi-layered spreadsheet, or just thoughts locked away somewhere inside your big melon, have something.

Keep it simple; for example: AM—Keep boss out of trouble, PM—Keep self out of trouble. I have a hard time with this one. Use things that normally occur as a guide like holidays, beginning of seasons, or just months. I like using July 4th as a guide. This is where I look at things like grub control, fertilization applications, and monitoring of crabgrass germination and it's a good mid-point of the year to take inventory of where you are on your maintenance schedule.

Keep records. Remembering what you did last year is a great guide for the next year, but you have to write it down and retain the data. Those of us who have been at this for a long number of

years have the philosophy that we just "know" when things need done, but for my own benefit I make sure there's something written somewhere, just in case. We are currently in the middle of the information age and there are many people, especially supervisors, who just love to have information at their finger tips. Computers are in every office. We all have the important person who sits behind the desk and needs to know what's going on and when questions arise, may come to you for the answer. If you have it, you just succeeded in following the first schedule presented to you.

No "to-do" lists

Don't get caught up in blindly following your plan. Things beyond your control will inevitably happen. When I asked my peer group to provide the biggest reason a schedule is not followed, the answer was unanimous. I'm sure everyone has it by now, that's right: Weather. It can make us look good and it can make us look really bad. (You'll note there are no pictures of campus with this article.)

I had my schedules changed frequently in the past couple of months for this very reason. Field maintenance was halted when the call came in that our day care director was losing her kids in the grass around the playground because it was so high. Don't worry, all the kids were saved. Things such as field use, vacations, campus

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events, and simple timing are other distractions. Hurrah, we just made the post-season; congratulations, 2 more weeks of practice and by the way, we're going to host the first round. Remembering your schedule is only a guide will hopefully save you some unmerited stress.

What should you consider when making your schedule? The two things you need to think about before you get started are budget and manpower. Once again, these were the two issues that everyone talked about. You can have the best intentions and have a program that will take your fields to the next level, but you need the backing to get it accomplished. "Nothing is written in pen without a budget number," was one of the statements I heard. I can't disagree. Raising the amount of nitrogen through increasing applications is a great idea, but do you have the person available to do it?

Another issue to consider is actual field

use. The following are some questions you need to answer: Who uses the field—men, women, boys, girls, small kids? Males tend to be more aggressive turf destroyers than females. What is the field used for, baseball, soccer, hockey, band, multi-sport? Each sport carries its own challenges; crease areas, mid-field, repetitive plays. What is the level of play; professional, NCAA, intramural, club, recreation? Ranking your field priority helps to adjust the maintenance level each may receive. In a school setting, is it in season or non-traditional; game field or practice field? How often is the field used; every day, weekly, seasonally? Am I the only one whose baseball season starts January 15? What are the expectations placed upon you by the hierarchy of your organization?

In the end, we all came to the same conclusion: we do what works for us. What works for Dan or Jim, may not for me or Jerry or Mike. Plan your work, work your

plan. Sure, we'd like to do more and will push ourselves to give the athletes that use our fields the best playing surface we can with what we have. We simply won't settle. We've tried, failed, succeeded, and learned.

I wish there was a magic formula or some voodoo spell to cast, everyone does. It simply comes down to hard work and caring about the final product. Find what works for you and make yours a Maintenance Schedule of a Top Manager. ■

Kevin Bevenour is grounds supervisor for Millersville University, Millersville, PA.



Basic sample maintenance schedule

Brooks Field (field hockey, club & intramurals)

Spring:

Deep aeration (Earthquake)
Seed
Fertilizer application
Broadleaf weed control as needed

Summer:

Fertilizer application
Biostimulant application as necessary
Crabgrass control as needed
Irrigation to bring turf out of dormancy before start of use

Fall:

Fertilizer application
Overseed during use
Irrigate as necessary
Deep aeration

Winter:

Core aerate as necessary
Fertilizer application

Baseball

Spring:

Deep tine core aeration
Seed
Fertilizer application
Broadleaf weed control as needed
Biostimulant application
Irrigate as necessary

Summer:

Irrigate
Fertilizer application
Crabgrass control as needed

Fall:

Irrigate as needed
Topdress as needed
Fertilizer application
Biostimulant application
Seed

Winter:

Fertilizer application
Biostimulant application

Softball

Spring:

Deep aeration (Earthquake)
Seed
Fertilizer application
Broadleaf weed control as needed
Biostimulant application

Summer:

Fertilizer application
Crabgrass control as needed

Fall:

Topdress as necessary
Seed
Fertilizer application
Biostimulant application
Deep aeration (Earthquake)

Winter:

Fertilizer application

Stadium Practice Field

Spring:

Topdress as necessary
Fertilizer application
Broadleaf weed control as needed
Seed

Deep aeration (Earthquake)

Summer:

Fertilizer application
Biostimulant application
Crabgrass control as needed
Irrigate to bring turf out of dormancy before use

Fall:

Seed
Irrigate as needed
Fertilizer application
Biostimulant application
Broadleaf weed control as needed

Winter:

Topdress as necessary
Fertilizer application

Spoils Field (Multi-purpose)

Spring:

Seed
Fertilizer application
Broadleaf weed control as needed

Summer:

Fertilizer application
Crabgrass control as needed

Fall:

Seed
Fertilizer application

Winter:

Core aerate
Seed
Fertilizer application

Pucillo

Spring:

Deep tine core aeration
Seed
Fertilizer application
Broadleaf weed control as needed
Biostimulant application
Irrigate as necessary

Summer:

Fertilizer application
Broadleaf weed control as needed
Biostimulant application
Crabgrass control as needed
Irrigate as necessary

Fall:

Seed
Fertilizer application
Broadleaf weed control as needed
Biostimulant application
Irrigate as necessary

Winter:

Fertilizer application
Broadleaf weed control as needed
Biostimulant application
Gypsum application
Deep tine core aeration
Topdress as necessary

5 Ways to **Gain Respect** by **Managing Stress**

THE EASIEST WAY TO COME TO MANAGEMENT'S ATTENTION is to melt down during a crisis. Or to say the wrong thing to the wrong person, just because you are having stress at home and you carry it over into the workplace. All of your good accomplishments, goals attained, and co-worker respect, all gone in one fleeting moment. All because you didn't know what to do to relieve stress.

Here are 5 ways to gain respect at work by being able to handle stress, specifically by managing your time better.

1. Have clear and defendable priorities. By being able to set your priorities, you are much more likely to achieve the most important items first. Also, being able to defend working on a priority, instead of working on a distraction, will allow you to accomplish more, in less time, and with less stress.

2. Have definite and defined short term, medium term, and long term goals. By being able to set specific deadlines for your goals, you can more easily decide the order in which your work needs to be done.

3. Have time in your schedule to handle stress. A good time management system will have gaps between appointments, and time allotted to pondering and thinking.

4. Have a tracking system for items you have delegated. Delegating work allows it to be done in parallel with what you are working on. So your efforts are doubled or tripled. You become more valuable by being able to get more accomplished.

5. Have time to rejuvenate. All your good intentions and skill aren't worth beans if you don't have the energy to accomplish them, your time management system should have time built in to focus on yourself.

Most stress management articles and books aim to answer the question of how does stress affect health. And with good reason. Stress not handled properly can kill or cripple you. But stress unhandled can also kill your career. One of the most respected qualities that management is looking for in choosing who to promote or who to give responsibility to, is the ability to remain calm under pressure, the ability to handle the day-to-day stress of the workplace, and to handle the sudden unexpected crises that always pop up. By having a quality time management system, you can more easily handle stress. By handling stress at work, you are much more likely to receive more promotions, more recognition for your skills, and the respect of your co-workers and management.

This article originally appeared on the STMA News online newsletter. ■



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NRPA's Annual Congress in Salt Lake City to host nearly 9,000

FUTURIST JIM CARROLL will deliver the keynote address in the opening ceremony of the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) annual Congress & Exposition to be held at the Salt Palace Convention Center, October 14, 2009.

The association's annual gathering brings together parks and recreation professionals, citizen advocates, industry partners, suppliers and key policymakers for a 4-day event October 13-16 highlighted by the keynote presentation, educational sessions, a trade show of more than 400 exhibiting companies, the community service project Leave It Better, certification courses, workshops, special events, and social/networking activities.

Jim Carroll is one of the world's leading futurists, specializing in trends and innovations. As someone who has assisted hundreds of organizations in thinking about and preparing for the future, Carroll has been recognized for his insight into the leadership skills needed today. Carroll, whose clients include Nestle, Motorola, Verizon, the BBC, will help attendees explore new opportunities in the field of parks and recreation. He will address the challenges faced by parks and recreational professionals during the current economic contraction by focusing on innovation and by aligning success with fast-paced future trends.

Carroll will help clarify the impact and opportunities presented by President Obama's economic recovery plan, which focuses on health-care, education, infrastructure, and renewable energy, all of which parks and recreation can be a critical force. He'll concentrate his presentation on three areas:

- The ability to link organizational mission to the major trends and developments that will influence the field of parks and recreation through the coming years;

Schedule At-a-Glance

Sunday, October 11

8 a.m.—5 p.m. Aquatic Facility Operator Course (Day 1)

Monday, October 12

8 a.m.—5 p.m. Aquatic Facility Operator Course (Day 2 and Exam)

8 a.m.—6 p.m. Alternative Funding Development Program
Leadership Development Seminar
Building Customer Service and Winning Customer Loyalty

7:30 a.m.—5 p.m. AFRS PTI Training

Tuesday, October 13

7:30 a.m.—5:30 p.m. Registration

8 a.m.—5:30 p.m. Meetings

8 a.m.—11 a.m. Alternative Funding Development Program

Leadership Development Seminar

Building Customer Service and Winning Customer

Loyalty

8:15 a.m.—5 p.m. Off-Site Institutes

8:30 a.m. Golf Tournament—Valley View Golf Course

12:15 p.m.—5:15 p.m. Education Sessions

1 p.m.—2:30 p.m. NRPA Leadership Orientation

5:30 p.m.—7 p.m. Welcome Reception

Wednesday, October 14

7:30 a.m.—5:30 p.m. Registration

8:30 a.m.—10:30 a.m. Opening General Session & Keynote

2 p.m.—5 p.m. Meetings

10:30 a.m.—5 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open

2 p.m.—5:15 p.m. Education Sessions

Thursday, October 15

7:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m. Meetings

7:30 a.m.—5 p.m. Registration

7:30 a.m.—8:30 a.m. Fun Run/Walk

8:30 a.m.—11:45 a.m. Education Sessions

8:15 a.m.—3 p.m. Off-Site Institutes

11 a.m.—4 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open

2 p.m.—5 p.m. Meetings

2 p.m.—5:15 p.m. Education Sessions

TBD Citizen Branch Awards

5 p.m.—7 p.m. Career Fair

6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m. EMS Banquet

Friday, October 16

7:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m. Meetings

7:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m. Registration

8:30 a.m.—11:45 a.m. Education Sessions

10 a.m.—2 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open

2 p.m.—3:15 p.m. Education Sessions

2 p.m.—5 p.m. Meetings

3:45 p.m.—5 p.m. Closing General Session

5:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m. Closing Party

Saturday, October 17

7:30 a.m.—5 p.m. Meetings

*Schedule and times subject to change

- A leadership style that encourages a culture of agility, one that allows for a rapid response to sudden changes in programs, markets, competition, and other technological and workplace trends; and

- A performance-oriented focus in which people are encouraged to turn new challenges into opportunities, rather than viewing change as a threat to be feared.

"In these difficult economic times, it will be refreshing and instructive to learn from one of the truly great minds in strategic planning," says NRPA Chief Executive Officer Barbara Tulipane. "Attendees will leave the conference well armed with a variety of tools and strategies to help them successfully confront the challenges of the coming year."

In addition to Carroll's keynote address, the NRPA Congress features many other must-attend events and forums: more than 200 educational ses-



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CENTRAL
Garden & Pet

sions, a trade show with more than 400 vendors specializing in parks and recreation, one-on-one introductions to colleges and universities offering parks and recreation degrees, and a career fair. Additionally, attendees will have opportunities to experience the beautiful areas surrounding Salt Lake City with custom-designed optional programs.

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of 20,000 professionals and citizens, NRPA

encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, recreation initiatives, and conservation of natural and cultural resources.

Headquartered in Ashburn, VA, NRPA works closely with local, state, and national recreation and park agencies, citizen groups, and corporations to carry out its objectives. Priorities include advocating favorable legislation and public policy; increasing public awareness of the importance of parks and recreation; providing continuing education, professional certification and university accreditation; and conducting research and technical assistance. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. ■

Off Site Institutes

October 13

Unique Recreation Facilities

—Working with Special Interest Groups

Salt Lake County residents overwhelmingly approved the Zoo, Arts and Parks (ZAP) Tax which provides \$0.01 of every \$10 spent in the county for the development and construction of recreation facilities. Salt Lake County parks and recreation have 23 ZAP projects currently underway with many special interest facilities designed to meet the needs of a specific user group. The "Flight Park" is a unique facility designed for the hang-gliding population. Learn about the process of working with and designing a special-use recreation facility.

The National Ability Center: The Recreational Approach to "Challenging All Abilities"

Since 1985, the National Ability Center (NAC) has been providing opportunities for individuals with disabilities to discover their abilities. This institute will focus on teaching and demonstrating the methods NAC has used for more than two decades. Learn in a hands-on environment how five of the NAC's 23 programs work to see success.

Collaborating to Bring About the Future of Recreation

Snyderville Basin Special Recreation District, a special service district, along with Park City Recreation, a municipal department, have collaborated to bring residents of Western Summit County a wide variety of recreational opportunities unique to the area: Tour the Basin Recreation Field House, an indoor artificial turf facility; Park City's Dirt Jump Bike Park, with over an acre of jumps for beginner to advance riders; Park City's Skate Park, Utah's largest concrete park; and Park City's Sports Complex, a collaborative effort by both entities to bring an Olympic size Ice Rink, an outdoor artificial turf field, three softball fields, two multipurpose fields, and one exhibition field with stadium seating to the area. Learn about the political process, development, operations and maintenance, and programming unique to each facility.

Cities Partnering with Developers to Create Community

South Jordan is one of the fastest growing cities in Utah. Development has skyrocketed in the past 5 years with much of the growth occurring within Daybreak, a planned community on the west end of the city that includes more than 1,000 acres of parks,

trails, open space, and a 35-acre lake. With so much growth in such a short period of time, it is important to establish a strong working relationship between the city and developers as many of the parks have already or will in the future be turned over to the city. Learn how to maintain an effective working relationship with developers in creating an effective park system within the community. Visit the new Oquirrh Lake, Daybreak Information Pavilion, and various parks throughout the community.

Parks and Recreation as an Economic Development Tool

Major League Soccer's ReAL Salt Lake franchise sought a new soccer-specific stadium in 2005. After much debate, a site in Sandy City was selected for the stadium. Sandy City supported the stadium development to pursue redevelopment in the surrounding area and to create a partnership between the team and the parks and recreation department for support of local recreation programming. In addition to touring the soccer stadium, we will tour another location where park facilities played key roles in the surrounding commercial development.

Horses to Horse Power

9:45 a.m. — 5 p.m. 0.7 CEUs

Deseret Peak Complex, a public facility, and Miller Motor Sports Park, a privately owned company, are located strategically adjacent to one another. Together they provide an interesting mix of recreation and culture, both public and private. It is a multi-use recreational facility built on 206 acres with a variety of venues that reflect the needs and customs of the community. The various activities include: equestrian, sport fields, swimming pool, BMX and Moto X tracks, a museum, and convention facilities. Miller Motor Sports Park is the premier road race course in North America sitting on 511 acres and the amenities include: a Kart Track, Paddock, Rental Garages, Club House, Larry H. Miller Auto Museum and Performance Training Center Home of the Ford Racing High Performance Driving School.

Municipal Golf:

The Economic Impact and Opportunities for Success

Participate in a series of highly interactive, hands-on walk-throughs covering a variety of golf operations topics including the economic impact of golf to park and recreation agencies and tips from the industry professionals to ensure positive economic revenue.

Experience five mini-sessions on the following topics: the customer experience; accessible golf; evaluation and planning for golf course improvements, the health and wellness benefits of golf; golf course maintenance and operations. Each session will last approximately 40 minutes.

Building the Future: Green Recreation Facilities

Salt Lake County residents overwhelmingly approved the Zoo, Arts and Parks (ZAP) Tax which provides \$0.01 of every \$10 spent in the county for the development and construction of recreation facilities. Salt Lake County parks and recreation have 23 ZAP projects currently underway with two multi-million dollar recreation facilities being built to new LEED Certification standards. They will be two of the first buildings in the county to be green buildings. Come see, visit, and learn about the LEED certification process and building first hand.

Community Fishing: Landing Partnerships in Fisheries Management and Education

Gone Fishing. As cities increase in size and developments expand outward, outdoor recreation becomes more difficult. Community or urban fisheries is one way the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources is bringing back traditional outdoor activities. The Division is committed to developing community fisheries: places one can walk, bike, or bus to; and catch a fish or two. Community fisheries provide a fun, easy way to spend quality time with family and friends outdoors. Nearly 40 community fishing waters have been developed in Utah, many by partnerships with local park and recreation agencies. Visit three local waters and discuss their creation, operation, maintenance, and funding.

Discover the Reinvention of Ogden City: World Class High Adventure Sports Capital!

Is it getting harder to attract new businesses and families to your town? Then it is time to learn how Ogden City reinvented itself from a railroad town to a world class high adventure sports capital! Learn how your city can find a new marketing niche that could bring new businesses and families to your town. See Ogden's High Adventure facilities, how they secured world class sporting events and meet their leaders! Learn their secrets how they created a new marketing niche.