

# Managing a clean and efficient shop

**A**s the shop manager at a private high school that sits on 127 acres in west Nashville, TN I make sure that the grounds staff has sufficient supplies in stock to perform their day-to-day tasks and to also have all the equipment ready and serviced to be used as needed. So I need a shop that is well organized, clean, and a safe working atmosphere.

## TAKES A TEAM

To achieve these goals it takes a team of staff members. It is very important that the team is on board or running the shop is a lot more difficult than it needs to be. Having a proper place for equipment and tools or whatever be cuts down on the time spent looking for any item. And that's whether it's your little tool shed out back or the 8,000-square foot shop that you work in every day.

I found that taking inventory of your tools semi-annually or quarterly allows you to keep track of everything much easier, especially if you are trying to incorporate a budget or already have one in place. Just another simple step to managing department dollars!

## CLEANLINESS IS KEY

Having a clean shop not only makes a strong impression on outsiders and fellow employees, but I think it goes a little deeper than that. It shows that the individual in charge of that particular shop really takes pride in his job.

Keeping up and staying organized work hand and hand, meaning that when you have

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a particular place for everything within those four walls no matter the size of your working area, there should be absolutely know reason why things get misplaced or be hard to find. And that goes back to having a strong team where everyone can depend on each other and pick up one another's slack.

Granted it is nearly impossible to keep these high standards implemented at all times unless you just don't have that much going on in your shop, and I think I can speak for the



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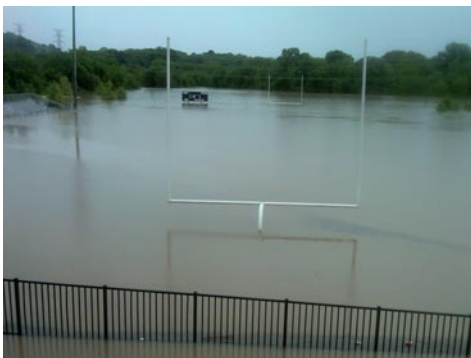
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» Our school, Ensworth, was affected by the flood this past May, when the Harpeth River rose higher than ever in any local's current lifetime.



majority of us in that 90% of the time we are wondering where the day went. That's one of things that I have learned in the turf industry—it is very fast paced, demanding, and can be very expensive.

Our school, Ensworth, was affected by the flood this past May, when the Harpeth River rose higher than ever in any local's current lifetime. Some even have gone as far as to stating that this was a 200 or even possibly a 500-year flood. All ten of our fields including six of our bermudagrass "performance" fields were under on average 15 feet

of water. We also had 6-8 inches of standing water in three of our auxiliary gyms and performance gym. All the flooring had to be replaced due to expansion, contraction, bowing, and buckling. By pulling together faculty, staff, and parent volunteers we are nearly back to 100% inside and out after a little more than 2 months of hard work and determination!

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I really enjoy every day running into the potential of a new challenge or learning experience, especially when something different goes wrong that I have never dealt with before. I get my fair share of that being responsible for 27 pieces of equipment between two campuses; being a one-man show there is very seldom a dull moment. ■

*Chris Olson is turf maintenance shop manager at Ensworth Schools, Nashville, TN. The head groundsman there is STMA Board member Martin Kaufman, CSFM.*

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