

Field painting tips & disaster stories



Q: What 3 factors do you consider most important to completing field painting work efficiently and successfully?

Q: What is the worst painting disaster you've ever been involved with or seen happen?

**MARK FREVER, CSFM,
Albion College (MI)**

Pre-mow surface with rotary mower that has side discharge or capable of bagging.

Clean nozzle tips or replace worn tips for consistent width of painted line.

From start to finish, pull lines with string, preferably offset.

A local soccer club parent had the idea to reduce the frequency of painting lines—he would just add a touch of glyphosate to the paint. After 2 weeks of painting he reduced the turf but had to continue painting bare soil. Consequently, the bare soil lines became trip hazards until they filled in with weeds.

**ALLEN JOHNSON, CSFM,
Green Bay Packers**

No disruptions from extra activity like team walk-throughs, extra event practices, etc. during application.

Make sure there is drying time and good weather if possible.

Have the correct number of people to do the job right.

I hate to admit this, but I inadvertently painted the “G” on Lambeau’s 50-yard line upside down once. The error was caught by

one of our stadium chefs who was looking at the field from one of the luxury suites. I was very, very glad that someone noticed and brought it to our attention with plenty of time to correct the error. Ironically the upside down G looks like an “e” and we happened to be hosting the Philadelphia Eagles. Someone was looking out for me on that day.

**DAVID M. PRESNELL, CSFM,
Gainesville (GA) Parks &
Recreation**

A good surface. You need healthy turf-grass that is mowed at a good height.

Be prepared. Always check weather, have all supplies on hand, mix paint properly and paint as close to the event as possible.

Be precise. ALWAYS pull strings/sled & use stencil. Always measure everything and check it twice. Straight lines and crisp logos make all the difference.

I have seen and been a part of all kinds of small mishaps. Everything from spilling paint, string getting pulled on wrong side and putting arrows on the wrong side of numbers. The biggest one was when we were painting an end zone logo and someone was blowing clippings off with a tractor and blower. The guys painting went to refill the paint and be-

fore you knew it the tractor went thru the logo (not once but twice) and tracked red and white paint everywhere. Thank goodness it was water-based.

**SHAUN ILTEN,
Home Depot Center (CA)**

Make sure all equipment is running properly and have all the required tools needed for the job (tips, measuring tapes, nails/stakes, string, fuel, proper paint etc.)

Double check all your measurements—make sure all your points are accurate and making sure your field is squared.

Proper communication with your staff during the field painting work, which means being aware of each individual task is being accomplished properly.

The worst painting disaster I was involved would have to be when I was painting a standard football field for a high school game. I was painting yard lines when I reached my last three yard lines to go, when I noticed that one of my yard lines was severely angled. One of my co-workers had skipped a marker and went to the next one so one side was 5 yards and the other side was 10 yards! This could have been avoided with proper communication and double checking all my measurements making sure that every yard line that I paint is accurate.

**KEVIN MALONE, CSFM,
Columbia University**

Have enough prior notice from athletics to complete the task when weather and conditions are most favorable.

Ensure the sprayer is in tip top shape and working properly.

Using high quality paint.

I would say the worst disaster would be just before my taking this position, the lacrosse lines that are supposed to be painted with removable paint were painted with a permanent product! It took many gallons of Goof Off, paint remover, you name it and many, many hours of scrubbing to finally remove the paint. Columbia only wants football lines on the main fields during the game season. Hopefully that will never happen again! ■