



>> A REEL GRINDER is a must for any turf manager; however since they are very expensive most don't have the means to get one so having the work done by others is a great option.



>> Top Left: IF YOU ARE HAVING ISSUES with a unit not starting this battery/starter tester will quickly identify or eliminate some issues.



>> Bottom Left: THESE HOSES ARE FOR TESTING and draining a hydraulic system, which should be done at designated intervals, including during a winter service by a local distributor.

## Managing and maintaining your equipment fleet

**N**ow that the turf growing season has ended for most of the country and winter is here, many turf and equipment managers turn their attention to servicing and repairing equipment for the rigorous spring schedule that will soon be here. Whether you have one unit or several units, preparations and planning this winter can help ensure a productive, successful equipment season in the spring.

Winter preventative maintenance programs can be scheduled to cover many of the larger recommended maintenance schedule items that are required. Because these services can include draining of fuel and hydraulic tanks and replacing many of the hoses, scheduling these services with a local equipment distributor can save time, money, and potential down time in the spring. Once spring arrives and the equipment is back out and being put through its paces, many of the common issues that are faced in the field can be prevented by following a regularly scheduled maintenance plan. The minimum maintenance standards that are outlined in the owner's manual for each piece of equipment are essential to ensure the units in your fleet are operating

to their maximum level of expected performance.

Changing the oil and filter regularly, checking tire pressure, replacing belts and hoses, changing the fuel filter, and if the unit is diesel draining the moisture from the fuel tank are some simple but important measures aiding in the performance of your equipment. While many of these tasks are performed on a regular or interval basis, there are other requirements that each operator should follow before using any piece of equipment. Doing a walk around inspection of the unit to visually check for issues is something that is often overlooked. Seeing an operator walk up to a unit and get on and ride away without looking on the ground to see if there are any leaks is a common occurrence in a race to be productive. This

simple check could identify a potential issue and prevent environmental contamination or damage to playing surfaces.

Training your team in proper pre and post inspections when using equipment is a key element in the maintenance reg-

iment. Checking fuel levels to ensure you start each shift with a full tank of gas is the start of any pre-operation process. If you plan to refuel your equipment during the day, make sure the unit is moved to a flat, concrete surface, turn the engine off and allow the engine to cool. Checking safety devices to ensure they are working properly and have not been tampered with is also a critical step. Manufacturers have continued to improve safety features that include automatic shutoffs, ROPS systems, vibration and noise reduction components, and seat belts to help prevent many of the injuries that occur. Tampering with these safety devices or using equipment for tasks not designed for can put the equipment at risk of serious damage. More importantly your operator or even bystanders can be at peril of serious injury or death.

### Fleet management system

**ONE OF THE KEY ELEMENTS** of a maintenance operation is the ability to efficiently and accurately track imperative equipment data to ensure preventative maintenance is performed on schedule. One solution, myTurf, is The Toro Company's fleet management system that offers a unique combination of tools that increase the efficiency of a turf equipment maintenance operation by reducing unnecessary steps and automating others. myTurf has you covered whether it is being able to locate and order parts online, automatically load service schedules, or view purchase and repair histories, whether for Toro equipment or any of the other brands in a fleet. The goal of a good online fleet management tool is to make sure the preventative maintenance gets done on time efficiently, automatically and simply.

## Facility&Operations

When a piece of equipment does break down, the clock to get equipment back up and running starts ticking! Whether you have an on-site service technician or you call to have a service technician come out, your goal is to be productive and keep the plans and tasks for your operation running efficiently while keeping the highest standards of proper equipment repair and safety paramount to your team's success.

There can be several techniques used to properly diagnose the source and extent of equipment issues. Today's technicians are highly trained and skilled professionals. They are able to diagnose issues that may be due to electrical, fuel, hydraulic or mechanical failures. Through planning and staging standard or highly used parts in inventory, this strategy can more often than not make repairs quick and alleviate precious time needed to accomplish daily or weekly tasks.

Having the right equipment to properly diagnose any issue quickly and getting the unit back up and running is another important key to properly keeping your equipment up to par. As many equipment managers have

discovered, equipment has become more advanced to meet the challenges and demands of the industry. Making sure that a technician has all the right tools and equipment can be costly and with budgets getting tighter this is becoming more challenging. However, the upfront investment can save you thousands of dollars via proper daily, weekly, monthly and annual costs in equipment and downtime—furthermore, how do you quantify sleepless nights wondering how you will get tomorrow's tasks completed when broken equipment didn't allow for completion of the previous day's agenda?

In addition, the cost of environmental contamination and disposal of used fluids generated at equipment maintenance facilities is becoming more regulated through state agencies. Examples of disposable fluids include; oil, anti-freeze, brake fluid and cleaner, solvents, batteries and fuels. Appropriate, safe disposal has prompted many to upgrade their facilities in order to meet or exceed regulated guidelines. In some cases operations have or will decide to leave a portion or all their service and/or repair to someone else.



>> **LIFT SYSTEMS** can prevent injuries and eliminate unsafe conditions for employees.

With the many daily activities that equipment and turf managers have to be concerned with, trying to remember when you last did a service or what parts you needed to complete the recommend service can be a challenging task. In some cases, technicians have a dry erase board or a hand written note book somewhere in the shop that they use to track all the equipment services. What if someone accidentally erases something from the board or in case of an accident that destroys those records, what does one resort to as a back up?

Maintaining proper records of equipment maintenance is another large component of keeping your equipment in shape for many years. As technology continues to emerge

## FieldSaver.® Save your field from rain and wear.



Full Infield Rain Tarp



Infield Turf and Collar Protector



18 oz. Vinyl Spot Field Tarps with Grommets or Weighted Edge



Also  
in 6 oz.  
poly

FieldSaver® rain tarps are best-in-field for any field!

Special offers ONLY at [www.CoverSports.com](http://www.CoverSports.com)  
For price quotes, sizes and fabric specs,  
visit [www.CoverSports.com](http://www.CoverSports.com)  
[sales@coversports.com](mailto:sales@coversports.com) • 800-445-6680



Humphrys CoverSports  
Industrial and Athletic Fabric Products Since 1874

## SportsTurf

SPORTS FIELD AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

has gone  
mobile!



Now you can access all  
the latest news and events  
anywhere, anytime.

Simply visit  
[www.sportsturfonline.com/  
mobile4](http://www.sportsturfonline.com/mobile4)

to stay connected.

some technicians have created elaborate spreadsheets on their computers that they use as part of their documentation process for maintaining equipment as a transition from hand written notes in a book or record keeping on a board.

With the dawn of information technology and Cloud-based software, new fleet management software solutions are attempting to take fleet maintenance to a new level. Fleet management tools are gaining adoption in the market by simplifying the process of tracking preventative maintenance and the inventory management and ordering of necessary parts. Logging and wireless update and reporting of operating hours, for easier tracking of maintenance intervals, is an added benefit of these solutions. When preventative maintenance alerts appear in the software, the system will provide information you need on the unit via a "work order" that includes the service required and what parts are needed to complete this service. Once this information is provided, a technician can simply order the parts online and have them shipped right to their facility the next day.

You can also use solutions like The Toro Company's fleet management system, myTurf, to get a total cost of ownership information to help drive equipment upgrade decisions. And, since many of these solutions are now web-based, instead of residing on a desktop computer like prior generations, data is backed up daily for security and work order processing or parts ordering can be accomplished from any web-connected computer with a simple log in and password.

Working equipment is vital to any organization. No matter how big or small the piece of equipment is in size or importance, keeping it running at peak performance is critical. The window of opportunity to complete tasks can sometimes be a huge difference maker and in some cases when things go awry; they become an equipment or turf manager's worst nightmare! Tracking and following proper preventative maintenance practices, ordering appropriate parts per manufacturer's guidelines, including a full winter service plan can help alleviate many of the challenges that are faced in the field every day.

Having the appropriate equipment main-

tenance practices in place for each unit is essential to every operation whether it's a small one to two acre property or a larger one hundred acre facility. It's all about your users' expectations and your vision and passion to meet or pursue something greater. While equipment is being serviced for the winter this is also a good time to review safety procedures and pre-operation equipment checklist with employees. This includes going over the operator's and safety manual or watching associated video's for the different units that you have. Covering routine maintenance schedules and safety tips with employees can give you an additional set of eyes in the field. Following these suggested guidelines can drastically decrease down time and improve overall team productivity so moral and general operations help keep employees and the environment safe, including better playing surfaces and turf in 2013 and beyond. ■

*Jason Kopp has been a sports turf and grounds manager for more than 20 years and is currently territory manager for Turf Equipment and Supply, Jessup, MD.*

## WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

EITHER WAY, YOU'LL WIN WITH TURFCO® SPORTSFIELD TOPDRESSERS



**WIDESPIN™ CR-7**

- ▶ Broadcast up to 40 feet for maximum productivity
- ▶ Patented WideSpin™ technology gives you the perfect spread with the least adjustments from light to heavy
- ▶ Spinner angle adjusts up and down for maximum versatility



**METE-R-MATIC™ XL**

- ▶ Just hook up and go—ground-drive system means no hydraulics or speed calibration
- ▶ 60" drop spreader with extra large hopper capacity for less reloading
- ▶ Patented Chevron® belt ensures uniform application of all types of materials, regardless of moisture content



WWW.TURFCO.COM

**Demo TURFCO on your field — call 800-679-8201 today.**

TURFCO MANUFACTURING, INC. | 1655 101st Ave. NE | Minneapolis, MN 55449-4420 | TOLL FREE 800-679-8201