

President's Message

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It's hot so keep cool

The heat of summer is here and it not only affects us as people but it affects our surroundings and the turfgrass we maintain. We can try to keep cool by going to the beach, jumping in a pool, running under the sprinkler or seeking air conditioning. The turf is not as fortunate. It needs help keeping cool, and lucky for the turf we are professional sports turf managers that can lend a helping hand.

Irrigation is a key. When was the last time you audited your system to ensure it was delivering the right amount of water where you need it? (See page XX for how to conduct an irrigation audit.) STMA has resources on irrigation use as does the Irrigation Association. Check the sprinkler heads, check the pressure and check that you are not watering at the wrong times leading to disease and other issues. Make sure the water is getting to the turf and not to some parking lot.

Lexington is one of the pilot sites for the Environmental Certification program that STMA is developing. The assessment tool is a good way to review your irrigation practices to ensure you are delivering water to promote healthy turf and be environmentally responsible. Other ways we can help the turf is to make sure we have proper mowing heights and sharp blades. Keep the crowns cool by not exposing them to the extreme heat and keep the blades sharp to minimize tear and openings for disease. You can also try to limit use

but this does not always work. At the end of the day what user group or individual does not want to feel cool grass under their feet when playing a sport or activity or just sitting down to take a break? Keeping turf healthy and cool helps people keep cool.

The summer heat also means that the year is now half gone. Hard to believe. Let's give a hand to all those maintaining professional soccer stadiums and baseball stadiums as they are in the busy time of their year keeping fields safe, playable and looking good. For us municipal folks, the Year has just begun. Take advantage of your new budgets and resources to strengthen your turfgrass and get it ready to handle fall play. August is when we have a 2-week window to get the football and soccer fields ready for high school play on August 20. Keep looking to STMA for resources that will help you do your job.

Summer is also a time for people to read so check the list of books recommended for certification prep. Who wouldn't want to sit down on cool grass on a nice summer evening to read a book that Dr. Goatley helped author? Think about becoming certified and help get the number of CSFM's to 200. Certification strengthens the profession and shows your commitment to being the best sports turf manager you can be. So enjoy the summer and know that people look forward to being on cool turf to help beat the heat and know you make a difference. ■