



From the Sidelines

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File this under “You don’t see it every day”: Mike D’Ascanio is the sports field lead at the University of California, San Diego, and also founder of Groundskeeper Tech LLC. His new software, SprinklerMaps, gives you the ability to chart your irrigation, landscape, utilities, etc., with precision on a live satellite map. As Luke Yoder of the Padres says on Mike’s website, “Say goodbye to paper maps. The digital age of irrigation mapping is finally here.”

Other tools are also included, such as a sprinkler radius viewer and square footage estimator. SprinklerMaps is practical enough for turf maintenance workers to use on the job via iPad.

In our correspondence, D’Ascanio wrote: “The mobile technology age is in full swing. Developers are continually introducing new tools and apps that can help to make our jobs (as well as our lives) far more efficient. Technology and information is now accessible on a level that humanity has never seen before, and the trend is not going to stop anytime soon. Even in the turf industry, we are seeing the emergence of apps and smart phone tools that are bringing the industry up to date with technology. It can be overwhelming at times to sift through the vast amount of apps and information available to come away with something useful.”

Other apps can help any turf manager on the job. One example most of you are probably using already is weather tracking. “Having access to accurate weather forecasts, rainfall accumulations and historical data can prove to be handy. Staying on top of the weather has never been easier with the abundance of weather applications available on smart phones. With so many on the market, finding right one with the features you are looking for may take a little testing, but reading the descriptions and reviews will give you a good idea of what you can expect to get out of each app,” D’Ascanio says.

Remember all that useful information from your turf textbooks that you totally forgot about? Well now you have all of that information at your fingertips with apps like, for one example, the Turfgrass Management app developed by the University of Georgia. This app provides a textbook worth of information that can help you to identify weeds, select herbicides and pesticides, determine pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet, and much more. Another new one is the Mobile Weed Manual developed by the turf guys at the University of Tennessee, which can help you quickly determine solutions in for weed management. Penn State Extension recently introduced an app called H2OSolutions to help users diagnose the causes of observed water quality problems and help guide water-testing decisions.

Most of you have a smart phone in your pocket and your peers in the sports turf industry are making it more useful than ever in your job. Maybe you’ll be the next guy to figure out a new app! ■

Mike D’Ascanio



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