

It's In The Bag!

Year Round Outdoor Maintenance Products From Lange-Stegmann

**Call For
A FREE
Sample!**



SPRING • SUMMER • FALL

Lange Pro[®] Products with AgricoTurf[®] for Stabilized Nitrogen Week After Week

- You get proven performance at less cost.
- **More Nitrogen:** AgricoTurf minimizes denitrification, volatilization and leaching. Therefore, more of the nitrogen you're paying for is available to your grass.
- **No Coating:** AgricoTurf does not depend on a fragile coating and can be used in a dry or liquid form. You are assured of consistent nitrogen performance week after week.
- **Quality:** Lange Pro uses superior ingredients and rigid manufacturing standards in standard and custom blended products including fertilizer/pesticide combinations.



WINTER

Melt Man[®] Plus... Fast-Acting, Below 0° Ice Melting

- Melts ice and snow at extremely low temperatures...well below 0°F.
- Works faster than conventional products.
- Won't burn hands.
- Won't harm grass, trees or shrubs.
- Is easy to use and easy to store from season-to-season.
- Is not messy.

We are sure you'll love Lange Pro fertilizers with AgricoTurf and Melt Man Plus ice melter. So we want you to try these products FREE! Call Now! This is a Limited Time Offer. While Supplies Last.

Please visit us at the GIE Expo — Booth #'s1043-1045

Call Toll Free **1-800-862-6210**

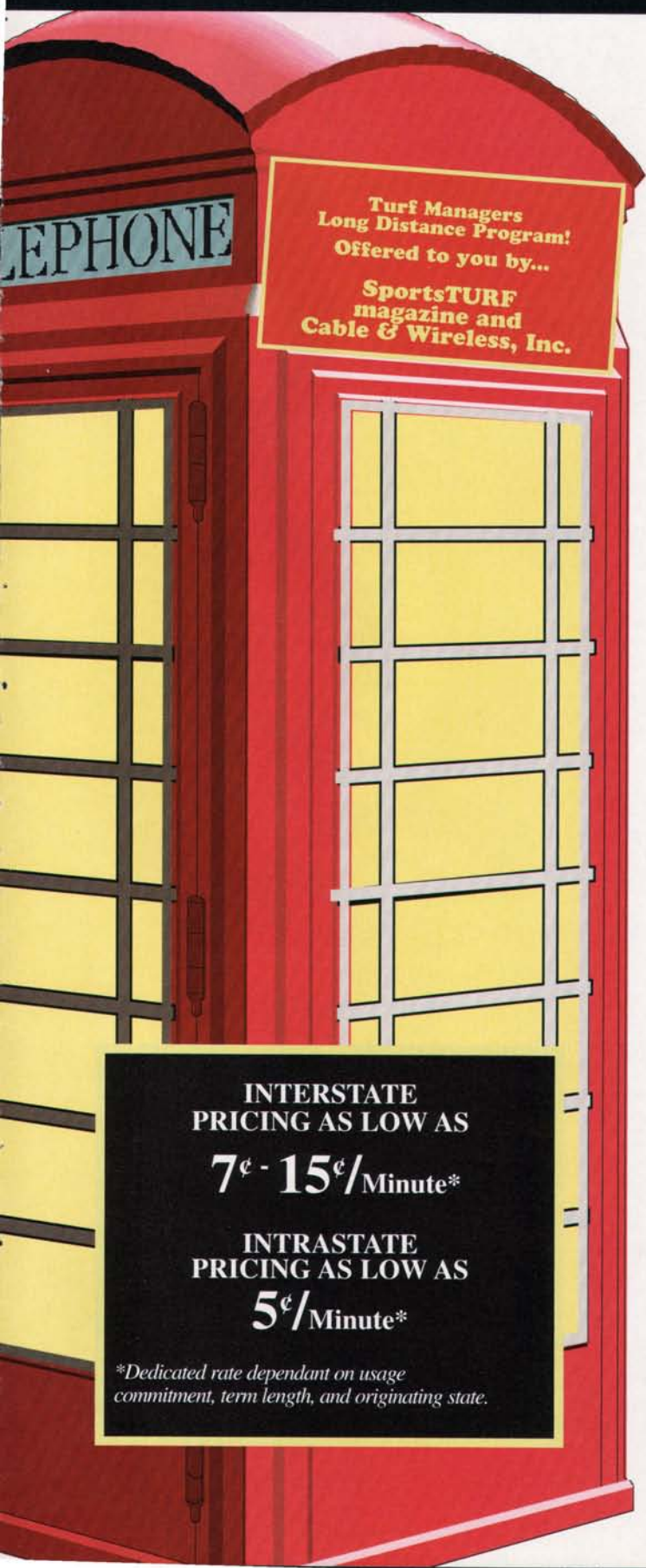
LANGE

Specialty Products Group
Lange-Stegmann Company
St. Louis, Missouri

SPORTS TURF & GROUNDS MANAGERS

Get The Best

LONG DISTANCE RATES



INTERSTATE
PRICING AS LOW AS

7¢ - 15¢/Minute*

INTRASTATE
PRICING AS LOW AS

5¢/Minute*

*Dedicated rate dependant on usage
commitment, term length, and originating state.



CABLE & WIRELESS, INC.

SportsTURF magazine's choice for long distance carrier is Cable & Wireless, the nation's largest long distance company serving businesses only! Cable & Wireless can help you increase productivity, reduce operating expenses, and gain a competitive edge.

BUSINESS FIRST® is:

- **ONE-STOP** Shopping for local, long distance, cellular and pager services.*
- **ONE** low flat rate for intrastate, 800, fax, and cellular long distance calls.
- **ONE** consolidated bill for all calls, all locations.
- **ONE** low rate for all U.S. calling card calls and no per-call surcharges!
- Versatile calling card features including Voice mail, Fax mail, and Quick Conference Calling.
- Customized Pre-paid Calling Cards.
- No monthly service fees!

Call toll free for your consultation at:

1-888-833-RATE

Ask about your FREE
personal toll-free number!

*Not available in all states.

sportsTURF

PROGRAM



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
SPORTS TURF MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

STMA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT **MIKE SCHILLER**
PAST PRESIDENT **GREG PETRY**
PRESIDENT-ELECT **STEPHEN GUISE**
COMMERCIAL VICE PRESIDENT **HENRY INDYK, PH.D.**
SECRETARY **EUGENE MAYER**
TREASURER **RICH MOFFITT**
STMA BOARD MEMBERS **L. MURRAY COOK,**
BUCKY TROTTER, MARY OWEN, BOB PATT, BOB CURRY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR **STEVE TRUSTY**
STMA OFFICE
1375 ROLLING HILLS LOOP, COUNCIL BLUFFS, IA 51503
PHONE: (800) 323-3875
E-MAIL: TrustyTips@aol.com
WEB SITE: <http://www.aip.com/STMA>

MAGAZINE STAFF

VICE PRESIDENT GROUP PUBLISHER **COLLEEN LONG**
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR **HELEN M. STONE**
EDITOR **JIM WILLIAMS**
EQUIPMENT EDITOR **DANIEL INGHAM**
PRODUCTS/NEWS EDITOR **JAMES ALDERSON**
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE **DEANNA MORGAN**
INTERNET MARKETING SERVICES **GRETCHEN WAGNER**
NATIONAL ACCOUNT SALES **LIZ RICHARDS**
PRODUCTION MANAGER **SUSANNE K. NOBLE**
PRINT PRODUCTION COORDINATOR **LARRY HOLMES**
AD TRAFFIC COORDINATOR **KAREN ROSS**
MANAGER ELECTRONIC IMPOSITION **DEBORAH A. BELLE**
ELECTRONIC IMPOSITION **JAMES L. FRANKLIN**
LIST RENTAL **GLEN GUDINO** PH: (847) 427-2083
FAX: (847) 427-2006
CIRCULATION MANAGER **ROB HARKEY**
PH: (847) 427-2067
FAX: (847) 427-2097

ADVERTISING AND EDITORIAL OFFICES

68-860 PEREZ RD., SUITE J, CATHEDRAL CITY, CA 92234
(619) 770-4370; Fax (619) 770-8019



ADAMS TRADE PRESS, Inc.

PRESIDENT **MARK ADAMS**
VICE PRESIDENT/OPERATIONS **PEGGY BILOUS**
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER **G. PATRICK O'DOWD**
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES **MARGIE DAVIS**
DIRECTOR/WEB DEVELOPMENT **ROB SKLENAR**
DIRECTOR/MIS **SUZANNE DELAHANTY**

sportsTURF Magazine (ISSN 1061-687X) is published monthly by Adams/Green Industry Publishing, Inc. Material in this publication may not be reproduced or photocopied in any form without the written permission of the publisher.

Copyright © 1996. Member of the
Business Publications Audit of Circulation, Inc.



SUBSCRIPTION RATES

ONE YEAR \$40 TWO YEARS \$65

FOREIGN (ONE YEAR) \$65 • \$130 Airmail or Single Copy \$5

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Provide old mailing label and new address; include ZIP or postal code. Allow 6-8 weeks for change. Send correspondence regarding subscription service to: sportsTURF, P.O. Box 10515, Riverton, NJ 08076-0515, (609) 786-6805.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID at Cathedral City, CA and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Please send change of address to sportsTURF, P.O. Box 10515, Riverton, NJ 08076-0515.

4 sportsTURF • <http://www.aip.com>

VOLUME TWELVE, NUMBER TEN

OCTOBER 1996

MAIN EVENTS

8 Gary Peterson Reaches Out with STMA's Mission

In Iowa, quality fields are popping out all over, thanks to the house calls of turf doctor Gary Peterson. He's an STMA member and cooperative extension horticulturist who "sells" his free outreach program to facilities that want soft, safe turf for their athletes.

12 Protecting Turf from Winter Injury

University of New Hampshire turf specialist John Roberts provides, in a nutshell, today's best management practices for helping turf survive the winter.

22 Fall Is for Soccer?

With its growing number of players, soccer faces escalating demands for field use — and for smart maintenance. An STMA brain trust shows how pressured turf managers can squeeze their fields through another season.

24 Test Your Knowledge of Pesticide Safety

If you deal with pesticides either as an applicator or as a manager, test what you know about fundamental safety practices by taking this quiz. What you learn may save your or a buddy's life.

LINE-UP

5	STMA Message	21	Happenings
6	Front Office	28	Rookies
6	Calendar	30	Classifieds
11	Chem Log	30	Ad Index
14	STMA in Action		

On the Cover: Preparing for winter, groundskeepers spread a turf cover over the field of North AmeriCare Park (formerly Pilot Field) in Buffalo, NY. Photo courtesy: Bob Curry, Covermaster Inc.

STMA MESSAGE

We're All on the Same Team



By *L. Murray Cook* — *baseball stadium manager, Walt Disney World Sports, and STMA board member, category I.*

During the past year, the STMA has gone through some very positive changes. The STMA is growing at a strong pace throughout the U.S., and the association has begun to correlate information to benefit the sports turf industry.

The professional sector of the STMA is a crucial part in establishing the backing needed to create programs for proper turf management. Our contacts regarding turf sponsors and equipment supplies can only benefit our profession.

The word "our" is a difficult word for some professional groundskeepers to say, but the STMA is *our*

association for the professional sports turf manager. The founders of our association provided a vision for our group to grow and learn professionally, and we should all be a part of the future growth.

Although we have varying levels of education and experience, the toughest issue that we still must overcome is the "mine's better than yours" philosophy in the industry. We must become a team if we plan to compete for better budgets, better equipment, better staffing levels and higher salaries in our industry.

All STMA categories have their own names, reflecting the various levels of play and budgets. At future National STMA meetings and in upcoming issues of our *sportsTURF* magazine, we plan to bring in speakers and select articles to meet the needs of all categories — from the highly technical for long-established professionals to the basics for novices. Very similar to a major league team's organization, we have the great players and the learning players. From the

minors to the majors, the consistent philosophy is that we are all on the same team. As professionals, we should never forget our roots and why we are in the industry: "To learn from others and share information to improve our professional image."

The rapidly advancing technology within the sports turf industry is reflected by the improvements in playing facilities and the new field constructions. An athletic field that costs \$200,000 five years ago now costs \$600,000 to build. It's basically the same field, serving the same purpose, but always changing for the better. These advancements and the ever-increasing professionalism among sports turf managers put the STMA on the verge of earning a position of leadership and respect.

From that position, with the strong support of those of us at the professional level, the STMA will be better able to bring acknowledgment to the vital role sports turf managers play in the world of sports.



JOIN NOW

Be a Member of STMA through 1997

The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) is an organization of professionals representing all segments of the sports turf industry. Our members work to combine the science of growing grass and the art of maintaining sports turf to produce playing fields that are both safe and aesthetically pleasing.

STMA provides members with a variety of benefits, including: Education through regional institutes and conferences; support for sports turf research; facilities tours; a national awards program; access to the STMA National Conference and Exhibition; complimentary subscriptions to *Sports Turf Manager* and *sportsTURF Magazine*; and much more.

If you're serious about the sports turf industry, then it's time to become a member of STMA. Join today!

Member Information

Name _____
 Title _____
 Employer _____
 Type of Business _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Fax _____
 E-mail Address _____
 Signature _____
 Referred by _____

(ST8)

Membership Category (please check one)

- Professional sports turf facility manager \$75
- Four-year colleges and universities sports turf facility manager \$75
- Other schools, research, ext. Agents, teaching \$75
- Parks and recreational sports turf facilities \$75
- Commercial (US or International) \$175
- Additional members from same company \$45
- Student (non-voting) \$20
- International (other than commercial) \$75
(must be in US dollars)

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

Please enclose payment (check, money order, Master Card, Visa, Discover or American Express) and send to:

Sports Turf Managers Association
 PO Box 3480

Omaha, NE 68103-0480

For more information, contact STMA Headquarters at 800/323-3875

"Promoting Better and Safer Sports Turf Areas"

THE FRONT OFFICE

OPINION PAGE



Date to Remember

Don't forget that *November 30* is the deadline for completing questionnaires for the Field of the Year awards. You don't have to pay an entry fee or be an STMA member to compete. Nor must you have a big budget — the winner of last year's Football Field Award was not a pro or college facility, but a hard-working high school.

To obtain a questionnaire, call STMA at (800) 323-3875 and request an "Awards Program" packet, which contains questionnaires for baseball, softball, football and soccer fields. For the baseball awards, you can short-cut the process by answering Partac/Beam Clay's "Diamond of the Year" ad in this issue, which displays the types of questions asked about the other fields as well.

Covering Your Grass

STMA member Scott Gaunky, groundskeeper of Mundelein High School in northern Illinois, provides lessons for others in how to use a turf cover to protect a field.

First, you must get a turf cover — which is no small purchase for a high school. Gaunky finagled a cover through personal enterprise. On his own time, he went out and solicited materials to build a good infield for Mundelein's ball diamond. When school administrators saw the showpiece, they felt obliged to protect "their" investment and purchased a turf cover for the infield.

Next, you must learn how to use the cover — otherwise, it'll harm rather than help your turf. For his education, Gaunky went to fellow STMA member Ken Mrock, groundskeeper for the Chicago Bears. Six years of healthy turf later, Gaunky is a cover master himself and shares the essentials of a program that eases his prized infield through the winter and promotes a quick, healthy green-up in spring.

(1) The program starts during the growing season when he puts down 14 to 18 pounds of potash and two to three pounds of ammonium sulfate per 1,000 square feet. This diet, especially the potash, strengthens cell walls, which helps harden turf for winter.

(2) The next step is to get the cover up and down at the right times (neither too soon nor too late) to avoid heat damage. For Gaunky, that means laying the cover down after the first heavy frost, usually early November, and pulling it up just before the baseball season, in mid-March. By that time, thanks to speedy spring transition, the grass is growing, healthy, and tougher than portions of the diamond that go uncovered.

(3) Before covering the field, he applies a granular fungicide to the turf, primarily for snow mold.

(4) During the winter, he monitors the temperature under the cover, especially during warm spells, to ensure the grass doesn't cook. Otherwise, he rarely checks beneath it. Since the cover is air, light and moisture permeable, the grass suffers little stress. Even under heavy, wet snow, the grass does not suffocate, largely because his infield is turtlebacked (crowned), which provides good drainage.

The efficient drainage allows snow to act as an insulating blanket, protecting dormant turf against many of the hazards of winter. In Gaunky's experience, the more snow, the better. One year when Mundelein's diamond received little snow the grass did not green up as well. The infield was slower to respond than usual, but the uncovered grass was even slower. Without either snow or a turf cover, the grass was more susceptible to wind burn and dessication.

Jim R. Miller

EVENTS

CALENDAR

October

22-23 The First Step to Behavior-Based Safety. Two days of training in behavioral methods for accident prevention. Offered by Behavioral Science Technology Inc. The Westin Galleria, Dallas, TX. For information, call (800) 548-5781 or (805) 646-0166; fax, (805) 646-0328; e-mail, bstojai@bscitech.com.

24 Third Annual Southeast Texas Grounds Maintenance Conference. Conroe, TX. Contact: Patti Jones, Montgomery County Extension Office, (409) 539-7822.

27-29 California Fertilizer Association Annual Meeting. Loews Coronado Bay Resort, Coronado, CA. Contact: CFA, (916) 441-1584.

27-30 26th Annual National Institute on Park and Grounds Management Conference and Show. Minneapolis, MN. Contact: (414) 733-2301.

October/November

31-1 The First Step to Behavior-Based Safety. The Radisson Barcelo, Orlando, FL. For more information, see first listing, above.

November

3-6 International Conference on Evapotranspiration and Irrigation Scheduling, in conjunction with the Irrigation Association EXPO, sponsored by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers. Convention Center, San Antonio, TX. Contact: ASAE, (616) 429-0300.

11-12 Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California's Educational Showcase, *The Golf Course Institute*. Coconut Grove, Santa Cruz, CA. Contact: GCSANC at (916) 626-0931.

Send announcements of your events two months in advance to:
Editor, **sportsTURF**, 68-860 Perez Road, Suite J, Cathedral City, CA 92234. Fax: (619) 770-8019.



HTTP://WWW.AIP.COM

Plug

COMPREHENSIVE LINKS TO INDUSTRY WEBSITES

ASSOCIATION INFORMATION

LIVE MODERATED DISCUSSION FORUMS

REFERENCE MATERIALS

GREEN-NET "YELLOW PAGES"

EXCLUSIVE EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL ARCHIVES

The Green Industry's Comprehensive Website

in

to

GREEN NET

<http://www.aip.com>

Photo courtesy: Sharyn Luka



Gary Peterson Reaches Out With STMA's Mission

By Bob Tracinski

Every sports field could be a quality field, with enough outreach in education, training and creative funding ideas.

The mission statement of the national Sports Turf Managers Association is "To be a leader in the sports turf industry, to enhance, promote and improve professionalism through excellence in communication, training, research, education and services."

Gary Peterson, Iowa State University Cooperative Extension commercial horticulture specialist, began an outreach program in the summer of 1992 that focuses on this mission statement. He uses a direct offer of a free service to sports field managers to help improve field quality. The program was initially keyed to high school facilities.

Peterson says, "Many of the calls for help with sports fields came from small schools, often in rural areas. Generally, the person responsible for field care also was in charge of all the grounds, including the walkways and parking, and maybe the exterior and interior of the buildings as well. Many of these people tackle the whole job themselves, with limited, part-time assistance, sometimes from students or volunteers.

"I've been in extension for 30 years, and developed a special interest in sports turf. When my kids were in sports programs played on an outdoor field, I wanted to make sure it was a well-maintained field with no visible or hidden hazards. I'm sure every parent wants that same degree of safety for their kids. And every young athlete deserves the same opportunity to play to the best of their ability on a 'level playing field.' The

program combines that need with the realities of today's tight budgets, limited staffing and constant time demands."

While the program is keyed to schools, it's also offered to parks and organizations, and Peterson will focus more attention on the smaller town parks and recreation programs in 1997.

For People Who Care

A cover letter from Peterson is sent to targeted schools, addressed to "Dear Sports Turf Manager." The letter reads: "Enclosed you will find a brochure that explains a free service that is available to your school. Many schools have taken advantage of this opportunity over the past five years. If you are interested, please fill out the form and return it to me. I look forward to working with you." The letter adds, "If you are not the individual who needs to see this information, please pass it on to the appropriate person."

The outer cover of the single-sheet, tri-fold brochure shows a line drawing of a football field under the heading, "Sports Turf Management — important to the future of your facilities." The interior of the brochure starts off with a question, "Concerned about turfgrass problems on athletic and recreational turf?" Then states the offer, "Let Iowa State University Extension help. ISU Extension offers a free turfgrass consultation service to schools, parks and organizations by a commercial horticulture specialist. The specialist will: visit your site and develop a management program for your facility."

To make contact as easy as possible, Peterson's direct phone number is listed. Also part of the brochure is a tear-off return form for supplying pertinent information, including check-off boxes to note the turf areas to be evaluated.



The goal of Gary Peterson (left, in a maroon cap) is to help every sports turf manager in Iowa produce a safe, quality field for every athlete. Photo courtesy: Steve and Suz Trusty.

Peterson says, "There are lots of materials available on sports turf management and multiple resources provided by the national STMA and regional chapters. Iowa has a strong chapter that continues to grow even stronger. The main problems with reaching all those we need to reach with sports turf training and education are time and money. It's tough for the individuals at smaller facilities with multiple responsibilities to fit in time for reading the literature and attending the meetings."

Peterson notes that the individual in charge of fields may be pulled in many directions, with the squeaky wheel often getting the most attention. Also, at many schools, the playing fields are at the back of the property or across town on a separate property and not as visible to those in charge, or to the general public, as the main buildings. In some communities, especially those feeling a financial pinch, there's that old perception to overcome — that anything green, including weeds, covering the field is an okay playing surface.

"Our aim with the program is three-fold," says Peterson. "First, to analyze the situation and get them started on as complete a maintenance program as they can manage, given their specific circumstances. Second, to establish contacts they can tap for further assistance. And third, to give them the information they need and the help, if necessary, to convince the appropriate entities of the importance of adequate field maintenance from the players' standpoint and from the facility's liability standpoint."

Three commercial horticulture specialists serve Iowa, basically dividing the state in thirds geographically. Peterson covers central Iowa, with Eldon Everhart

taking the west third, and Pat O'Malley the east. Though all three are equipped to handle all aspects of commercial horticulture in their geographic areas, including the sports turf outreach program, for further efficiency, each has concentrated extra efforts in specific segments of the industry. Peterson keys on turf, including sports turf; Everhart on greenhouse and ornamental producers and retailers; and O'Malley on fruit and vegetable growers.

Peterson notes that the need for adequate field care is getting easier to "sell." As the sports turf industry becomes more visible, the extension service is getting more calls from the people who care for these surfaces. Coaches, athletic directors and school administrators are noticing schools with good field-care programs and are becoming more concerned with establishing similar programs at their own facilities. Administrators are growing ever more aware of the liability factor and possible litigation if a field does not meet safety requirements. Increased recognition of the sports turf industry is helping shape the public's perception of what differentiates a "good" field from a "bad" field.

Peterson knew the program was a good idea, but had no handle on what type of participation to expect. The first year, he sent the letter to a targeted 15 school systems within five counties and got responses from seven of them. He broadened the outreach each year, adding 25 schools in 1993, 30 schools in both 1994 and 1995, and 20 schools this year. The program now reaches all 34 counties in central Iowa.

Getting Physical

Once Peterson receives a response form or phone call, he explains the program in greater detail, again assures the contact person that there is no charge, and sets an appointment for an on-site visit. Ideally, the person in charge of field care and the school's athletic director or administrator (or both) participate in the on-site meeting.

Peterson says, "We walk the fields together, discussing the current status, the goals and a rough idea of what it's going to take to get there. I always take a soil probe so we can draw samples for testing. We also use the cores to examine and explain the soil profile and turf root development. The probe is a great tool to get across the extent of a compaction problem. If the administrator or athletic director physically pulls a core from a little-used area and one from between the

Evaluation of Athletic Field	
Baseball _____	School _____
Football _____	Individuals in charge _____
Softball _____	_____
Soccer _____	_____
Fertility Program	Herbicide Program
lbs. Nitrogen _____	Broadleaf _____
Times of year _____	When Applied _____
WS _____	Annual Grass _____
WIN _____	When Applied _____
Cultivation Program	Mowing Program
Time of year _____	Height of cut _____
# of times _____	Playing time _____
_____	Summer _____
Seeding Program	Irrigation Program
Time of year _____	How often _____
Amount _____	Amount _____
Type of grass _____	_____
Number of games _____	_____
Practice on field _____	_____
Band Use _____	_____
Problem Areas _____	_____
Suppliers _____	_____

A concise form for evaluating a field's program enables Peterson to identify key problems and tailor solutions that will fit within a school's budget.

hash marks on the football field, or at the soccer goal mouth, they can't miss the difference.

"I use the Evaluation of Athletic Field form for each field, noting the type of play, and the fertility, cultivation, herbicide, mowing, seeding and irrigation programs currently in place. I also note the number of games and practices held on the field, band use of the field, and specific problem areas. Current suppliers are also listed."

He uses the on-site visit to answer questions, determine budgeting parameters and reinforce the multiple reasons a quality field is needed. Because everything tends to translate to dollars, and the administrator, athletic director and field manager each has his own perspective, it helps to have an "innocent bystander" on hand to supply key details and approximate cost estimates, while emphasizing the need factor.

Once all the information is gathered, Peterson prepares a list of key problems to address and how to do so and a suggested maintenance plan, then sends it back to the field manager. He'll follow up with a phone call a few days later to make sure the information has been received by the right person and to answer any additional questions that individual, or anyone else involved with the program, may have.

Each program is different, tailored to the needs of the facility, its budget and staffing levels, and its goals. For example,

some schools can only tackle improving the game field the first year, while others shoot for a total field upgrade. Some schools prefer to use the services of a lawn care company to handle materials that require certification or licensing, rather than having a staff person qualify to do so. Some schools may contract for specific services, such as aeration or drill seeding, that require equipment they'd rather not purchase, lease, rent or borrow.

Peterson continues to work with all the schools that have participated in the program. He says, "After the initial maintenance program is in place, the first two years are the most critical for the school. As results become more apparent and the person caring for the field becomes more comfortable with the program, the calls to my office become less frequent. By this point, we've helped the field manager establish a set of contacts with similar programs."

A Dream Coming True

Peterson's dream is to reach every field caretaker in the state. Obviously, given the limited staffing and budget levels of state extension programs, Peterson, Everhart and O'Malley can't do it all. But help is available.

"Iowa STMA members do a great job of welcoming newcomers and bringing them into the informal networking system," says Peterson. Meetings are

continued on page 10

Reaching Out

continued from page 9

held at different locations across the state to allow more people to take part in the educational sessions and hands-on training. The chapter has some very capable, very active individuals — like Mike Andresen, Dale Roe, Bill Anton, Mike McCaffrey and Kevin Vos — who also provide outreach themselves.”

As in several other states, the various segments of the Iowa turfgrass industry work together to achieve common goals. The annual Turfgrass Conference held in January has comprehensive general sessions as well as separate “tracks” for the golf course superintendents, sports turf managers, sod producers, and lawn care providers.

Peterson says, “When those just establishing a field maintenance program realize they have a whole set of resource

people just a phone call away, they’re much more confident about raising the level of maintenance.”

Quality sports fields take the cooperation of everyone — the sports turf manager, coaches, players, athletic director, trainer, parents, superintendent of schools, the school board and the general public. Once the program gets underway, the positive results draw in these people as willing participants.

Still, funding is tight and every program has it needs. Once a field management program is in place, the sports turf manager needs to set up an annual and a long-range budget, showing general maintenance needs and major purchases. The bigger purchases — such as equipment, irrigation systems, tarps, fencing, lights, maybe even fertilizer, weed control, pesticides and seed — could require “off-budget” assistance.

Peterson urges sports turf managers, “Tap all resources. Look at the school’s booster clubs or parent organizations. These entities traditionally have helped to supply player equipment. It’s not too great a stretch for them to provide assistance with field care through funding and volunteer task forces to tackle special projects.

“You’ll create more excitement and cooperation by asking these groups to focus on a specific goal, such as the purchase and installation of an automatic irrigation system; a year’s fertilization, turf seed or aeration funding; or financing a needed piece of equipment. Obviously, the more you acknowledge their support and help them see the results it is producing, the better the ongoing relationship.”

Small schools, parks and recreation systems will never be able to afford the premium college- and professional-level sports fields seen on television, but with the cooperation of the turfgrass industry in outreach programs such as the one in Iowa, every field can one day become a quality field.

For more information on this program, you may write to Gary Peterson at 619 South 6th Avenue West, Newton, IA 50208, or phone him at (515) 791-0765. □

Bob Tracinski is manager of public relations for the John Deere Company in Raleigh, NC, and public relations co-chair for the national Sports Turf Managers Association.

Life
is short.
SOD IT!

**WEST COAST
TURF**

GROWERS AND
INSTALLERS OF
PREMIUM QUALITY
SOD AND STOLONS

P.O. Box 4563, Palm Desert, CA 92261 (800) 447-1840