Nominate your project for the Rain Bird® Intelligent Use of Water™ Award. The Intelligent Use of Water Award serves to reinforce Rain Bird’s commitment to bring about even greater knowledge and awareness of the need to use water responsibly. This award recognizes projects that have raised the standard for landscape water conservation. One project will be selected to receive a $10,000 award. Individuals and organizations are eligible. To nominate a project, go to www.rainbird.com/awards. Nominations close September 1, 2007.

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FACILITY & OPERATIONS

acre active area includes six soccer fields, two baseball fields, three softball fields, outdoor ice skating rinks, tennis courts, a basketball court, a playground, a 280-car parking lot, a concessions building, and a maintenance facility. The passive use area is divided into a parcel that is a dedicated Illinois Nature Preserve, and a transitional area from the Nature Preserve to the active use area. The Nature Preserve is an extension of one the Village had already dedicated to the State several years ago, which borders the southern edge of the property. The transitional area has trails for cross-country skiing and hiking, and a picnic shelter. The park opened in the spring of 2001 and hosts on average 2,500 events per season. North Park has won several local awards as an outstanding facility and STMA’s 2006 Complex Field of the Year for Schools and Parks.

The first step in planning a project like North Park is to become educated about the basics of athletic field and park construction. Attend every seminar and read every article you can that has information about facility construction. Join professional associations like the STMA, which provides an excellent opportunity to develop contacts with other professionals who have done similar projects. This was perhaps the most important thing that I did that led to the successful development of North Park.

Through contacts I made with the STMA, I was able to discuss several key issues before and during the construction process with my peers in the sports turf industry. My membership in the STMA led to the development of a professional relationship with Ken Mrock, Head Groundskeeper of the Chicago Bears, who was brought in as a consultant on the project. I cannot overstate how valuable Ken’s knowledge and experience was to the project’s overall success.

When considering completing a project, planning is the key. We formed a committee that included government officials who would control the funding, representatives of the sports league that would be
TIFSPORT BERMUDAGRASS
IT'S IDEAL FOR ATHLETIC FIELDS OF ALL STRIPES

TifSport Bermudagrass has great color. It recovers very rapidly from day-in and day-out abuse and injury. It has a much finer texture than Tifway 419 and most other bermudagrass varieties. It's also extremely cold tolerant, which makes it ideal for fields in the transition zone. Overseeding TifSport is a routine job as well. It provides an excellent base for ryegrass and ryegrass blends. If you're looking for a certified bermuda that can stand up to the stress and demands of big-time sports, to the wear and tear from the cuts, starts and sudden stops you get from football and soccer cleats, to the punishment of baseball spikes, relax, you've found it - TifSport. It's what many experts are calling the new standard in sports turf for the 21st century. For more info and a list of licensed growers visit our website or call 706 542-5640.

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The 28-acre active area includes six soccer fields, two baseball fields, three softball fields, outdoor ice skating rinks, tennis courts, basketball court, and a playground.

the primary user's group, interested environmentalists who were concerned with the use of the natural area of the park, and the staff who would oversee the construction and be responsible for maintenance. This group worked with the architect to complete the design process.

Having a diverse membership on the planning committee was absolutely critical in determining the final product. Each faction was able to present the concerns and ideas that were important to them so that all of the important issues were incorporated into the design process. Also, the communication that took place up front between all of the interested parties led to everyone being on the same page when it came to the expectations for the final product and the level of maintenance and associated costs involved for the future of the facility. This process was absolutely crucial to the success of the construction and long-term maintenance of North Park.

During planning it is important to discuss:
- Expected type and level of use for the fields
- Available budget
- When the fields are available for play
- Required maintenance level to meet user expectations

By getting a consensus on these important issues, it allows for the design of a facility that will meet the users needs, and that can be maintained at the level necessary to allow for the best possible experience of the athletes using the field.

After the design process is completed, the next step is creating the specifications that you want the contractor to work with to complete the project. This is an extremely critical component of the development process. The specifications are a legal document, and should contain the exact methods and materials that you will be requiring for developing the final product as designed. The “tighter” the specifications, the less likely that there will be disputes with the contractor, and making it much more difficult for the contractor to cut corners and deliver an inferior product.

As the specifications are being developed, you will want to check with any government agencies that have jurisdiction in your area for...
Experts on the Field, Partners in the Game.

Name

Title

Employer/Facility

- Business
- Home

Address

City

State

Zip

Home phone

Work phone

Cell phone

Fax

Email

Signature

Direct Supervisor Name

Membership Category:

- Sports Turf Manager
- Sports Turf Manager Associate* (Additional members) $75

Please select the primary facility type where you are employed:

- Professional Sports
- Higher Education
- Schools K-12
- Parks and Recreation
- Academic
- Student (verification of enrollment)
- Commercial
- Commercial Associate* (Additional members) $75
- Affiliate (Person who is indirectly or on a part-time basis, involved in the maintenance/management of sports fields)

Please select the category:

- Chapter Dues (contact headquarters for amount)
- Chapter name

Please select the category:

- Contribution To SAFE Foundation (research, education and scholarship)

Total Amount Enclosed:

$_

Payment Method:

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- Money Order
- Purchase Order #: _____________

Credit Card:

- Mastercard
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Name on Card

Card #: _____________

Exp. Date: _____________

Signature: _____________

Phone: 800-323-3875              www.sportsturfmanager.org

*There must already be a national sports turf manager from your facility or commercial member from your company before you may sign up in the Associate category.
permitting requirements. Some agencies have a very long process that must be completed before a permit for work can be issued. Timing for an athletic field project can be critical, especially if turf establishment is involved.

It can be very frustrating to have everything in place and ready to go to start your project and then be delayed for weeks or even months waiting for the Army Corps of Engineers or your local county or state agency to issue a permit. Once the construction process has started, be sure that all of the requirements set forth in any permits are followed to avoid stop work orders that can significantly delay the completion of your project.

**Keep talking**

Before beginning construction, hold a pre-construction meeting to establish communication between all of the parties involved in the project, and answer any questions that the contractor may have regarding the construction process. Once the project is begun, consider holding weekly, or as often as is necessary, construction update meetings to address any issues that may come up.

Having a good line of communication with all of the people involved in the development of a project is a big advantage and assists in keeping a project on pace and running smoothly. It allows you to keep the owners or managers of your facility informed of the project’s status with timely information when necessary.

Keep on top of the project by making daily site visits. Observe the methods being used to construct the facility and watch to make sure the materials specified are correct and are being handled properly.

Point out problems to the contractor as soon as they are observed so that they can be addressed promptly. As components of the facility are completed, make sure that a thorough final inspection is accomplished and that all deficiencies found are corrected before signing off on an item and authorizing payment. This simple step can save you tremendous headaches down the road, and will help to ensure that you deliver the final product that was envisioned in the planning process.

The number one key to planning and constructing an award-winning field is communication. It starts with communicating with
peers in your industry to educate yourself on the proper methods and means to construct a facility. It involves communicating with the potential users of your field, the financiers of the project, and other interested parties to reach a consensus on the facility's use.

Communication with regulating entities assures compliance with legal requirements and can ensure that the project development starts on time. Communicating with the contractor performing the work and keeping the people involved in the planning on the project's status keeps everyone on the same page and avoids unrealistic expectations. By maintaining excellent communication between all parties during the entire development process, a successful plan will be created leading to a facility that meets the needs of the primary users, and can be maintained to the expected level.

Scott Pippen is Superintendent of Streets and Parks, Village of Lincolnshire (IL).

The number one key to planning and constructing an award-winning field is communication.
Top 5 Painting Recommendations, Part 1
e asked several top turf managers for their “Top 5” recommendations when it comes to painting or marking their football fields. We’ll share some this month and the rest in the August issue:

Five P’s to Proper Painting

1. **Plan out the job.**
   - Make sure all equipment, materials, supplies are on hand
   - Schedule the days and times based on time of year (frost, rain, snow, day-length, drying time) and scheduled games/events.
   - Make sure enough people are scheduled and trained to perform the job in a timely manner.
   - Have stencils made and on hand for quick, professional logo and decoration painting.

2. **Prepare the surface**
   - A good paint job is further enhanced with an aesthetically pleasing surface (clean, level and uniform green color)
   - For natural grass fields good agronomics promote good footing (soil stability and paint longevity), level surface (proper mowing practices), and uniform color (proper fertility and irrigation).
   - Set “benchmarks” around the perimeter of the playing field to eliminate the need to measure each time. Football “layout” sets are available from industry suppliers or you can make your own.
(for natural grass fields benchmarks can be 6-inch nails punched through a folded brightly colored ribbon and driven into the ground along the sidelines and backlines). Stretching a string from one nail to the other located across the field will provide each 5-yard line while a string stretched from one endline to the other will provide the top/bottom of the numbers and hashmark locations. The head of the nail should at least 1/2 inch below the soil surface and should not be placed within the actual playing field for safety reasons.

- When measuring for field lines or setting benchmarks always use a steel tape measure to minimize any tape stretching for more accurate measurements.

3. Proper paints and paint mixing
- Use paint made for natural turfgrass or synthetic surfaces (they are different).
- Mixing area should be in a safe and convenient location (paint and mixed paint...