

low the ADSR approach in executing the rest of the process. The first step is Anticipate. You've been to enough movies and seen enough TV cop shows to have a good idea of what that reporter will be asking you. Run through the journalist's checklist of the Five W's and the H. You can easily answer the "who, what, when and where" questions. They are very fact-oriented and not subject to much interpretation. Develop a handout of facts about the story to give to the reporter. That will save time as well as improve the reporter's accuracy. Consider the visual possibilities for this particular story. Take the reporter to the "where." You will get more coverage and decrease the possibility of a misinterpretation.

The "why and how" questions will be much more subjective and the likely focus of an interview. To handle the why and how questions, you must move to the Develop an Agenda stage. Decide what you are going to say before the start of the interview. This is the message you want to get across. It should address the reporter's question but be totally

based on what is best for you and your organization. Use it in a pre-interview as well as the one where the camera is rolling or the reporter is taking notes. Never say "No comment." That never looks or sounds good. If you can't answer give a substantive reason such as "This is currently going through the courts, and I wouldn't want to jeopardize that process," or "We don't have the answer to that right now, but we should know more in the next 48 hours." Never ask to go "off the record." Every reporter and source seems to have a different idea of what that means. If you must say something but don't want your name associated with it, be very clear when talking to the reporter. This is no time for subtlety.

The execution of the agenda comes next so remember to Speak in Bites. The world of TV is built on 10 to 15 second sound bites. Learn to speak that language and use it for radio, newspapers and online interviews as well as TV. Here's why. A 15 second bite will undoubtedly be narrowly focused (as in, focused on your agenda).

You won't have time to move off the subject. The 15 second bite also greatly reduces your chance of being misquoted. Give a 60 second answer and expect the reporter to get down every word—not a chance. Use a personal experience or anecdote to get your point across. Don't be afraid to express your feelings and show some emotion. Just don't allow yourself to move into the melodramatic. Think 15 seconds as your time limit for every question the reporter asks. Keep the focus on your agenda.

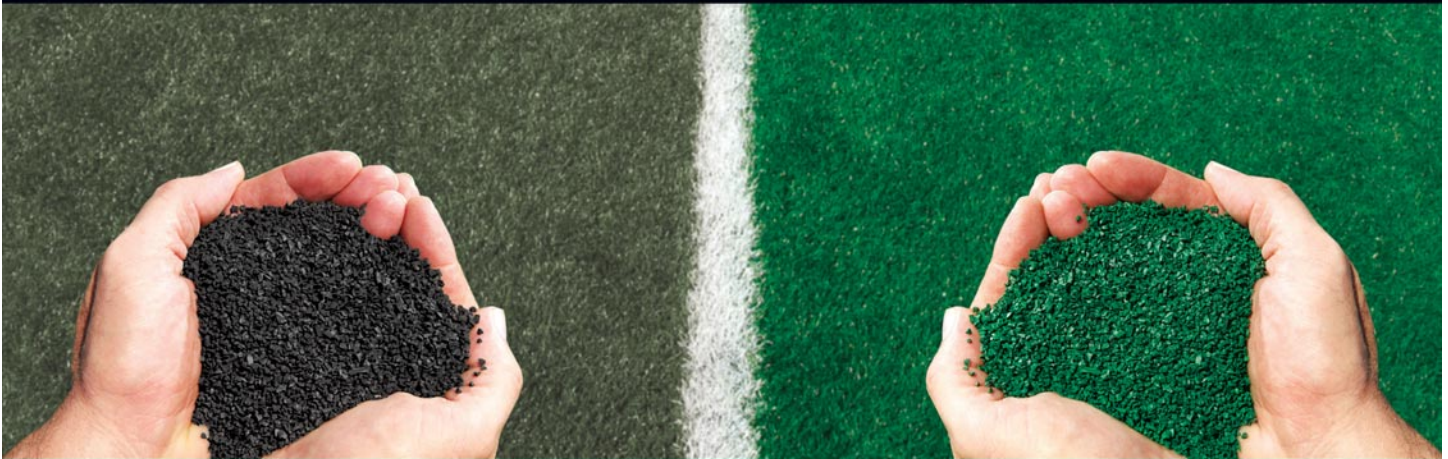
The final stage is Repetition. Know how to get your agenda across. Keep repeating it. Address the reporter's question briefly, and then bring it back to your agenda.

If you follow those steps, you will increase your confidence in handling any kind of a media situation. ■

Dr. Max Utsler teaches journalism at the University of Kansas. He is a former TV journalist and has trained business executives in how to deal with the media for the past 25 years.

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Will outsourcing become the new normal?

Editor's note: Hal Phillips is a writer for Mandarin Media, a worldwide public relations firm, here representing Lohmann Sports Fields.

WHEN LEO PECHETTE arrived at Lakes Community High School in the exurbs northwest of Chicago, he thought he'd stepped into a grounds manager's dream. It was the fall of 2003, and this brand new high school had just seeded its brand-spanking-new football field.

Nearly every grounds manager looks upon an inherited athletic field with some measure of trepidation: How old is the irrigation system really, and how sophisticated were the original construction techniques? How often has the facility been aerated, if at all?

Where exactly are the drainage trouble spots, and how does the field generally bounce back from heavy rains, especially between the hash marks?

Pechette had plenty of worries at the start in ramping up all the athletic facilities serving a brand new high school. But the new football field shouldn't have been among them.

Indeed, because Lakes Community High was a completely new school, and didn't even achieve full occupancy until the middle of 2004, the football field accommodated no play whatsoever until the 2005 season. That's an initial fall grow-in period, plus some 16 months of unfettered grow-in/root

growth before a game was ever played.

You can see where this is going.

"We didn't play on the field until the fall of 2005," says Pechette, looking back, "and that was a dry fall. It looked great. But the next year we had wet summer and that continued into the early fall of 2006. It didn't take long before we were clued in to just how bad the drainage was.

"It just wasn't built as it was designed, we learned. The contractor had short-cutted the sand depth, for example. The way they graded the field, it settled poorly after a series of rainfalls. A lot of shortcuts were

taken which, as far as I'm concerned, means the job wasn't supervised properly. The contractor did a lot of road construction. Enough said on that."

You can see where this is going.

Pechette and Lakes Community High School were obliged to rebuild after just four seasons of play. The \$150,000 reconstruction was handled by Lohmann Sports Fields (LSF) out of Marengo, IL. Based on plans by the Vernon Hills, IL-based engineering firm Gewalt-Hamilton, Lohmann re-crowned the field by installing a tapered sand cap, while adding soil amendments to achieve the proper, drainage-enabling soil profile and a better growing medium. The perimeter of the field was aggressively aerated and top-dressed with the same sand mix, and a 6-inch Multi-Flow drainage system was installed beneath the entire field before

A lot of shortcuts were taken which, as far as I'm concerned, means the job wasn't supervised properly.

JOHN MASCARO'S PHOTO QUIZ

Answers from page 17

At this high school baseball field in Northern Louisiana, a creek runs alongside the field and this area is wet a lot of the time. Even though this field is located more than 200 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico, these mounds were created by crawdads. I have to admit; I have seen many, many different things over my years in the industry, but this one, I didn't believe until I saw the photos. In this part of the South, it is fairly common to have aquatic crayfish in a number of tasty recipes offered at restaurants, especially around New Orleans. These crustaceans, also known as crawdads, have a relative that lives on land and likes to tunnel into moist and water-saturated soils. They do not actually harm the turfgrass, but deposit a significant amount of dirt on top of their tunnel entrances. Occasionally, they also pop up in the infield area and clay. This coach has been taking care of the baseball field for over a year now and is unaware of any eradication techniques that have been used in the past; however he is looking into it. Perhaps they could combine a crawdad round up and seafood festival.

Photo submitted by Glen Kyle, head baseball coach and sports turf manager at Homer High School in Homer, LA.



If you would like to submit a photograph for John Mascaro's Photo Quiz please send it to John Mascaro, 1471 Capital Circle NW, Ste # 13, Tallahassee, FL 32303 call (850) 580-4026 or email to john@turf-tec.com. If your photograph is selected, you will receive full credit. All photos submitted will become property of SportsTurf magazine and the Sports Turf Managers Association.

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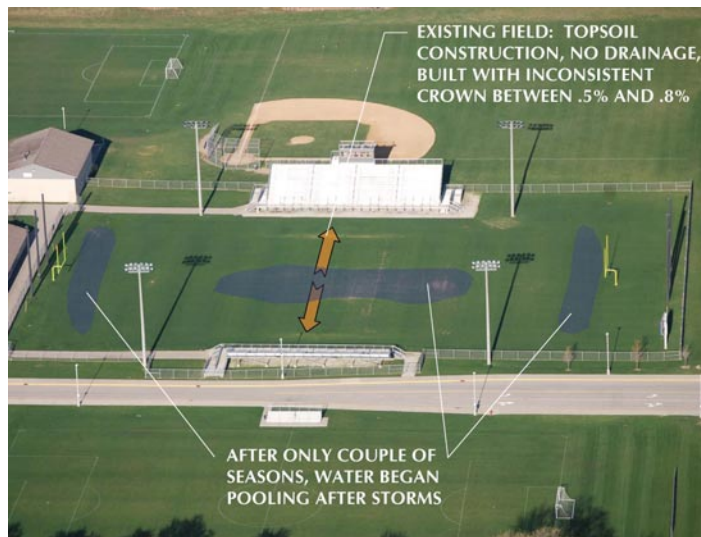


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“We went with Lohmann’s group because they do this for a living,” says Pechette, noting that LSF boasts a client list that ranges from local high schools like his, to the Notre Dame Football Stadium (re-surfaced in 2008), to the creation of minor league baseball diamonds from Grand Rapids, MI to Peoria, IL.

“These guys are experts at the big work, but they pay attention to small details. There were no shortcuts; everything was done according to the engineering plans from Gewalt-Hamilton. Everything was so transparent, and I especially appreciated their paying attention to work-limit areas and not damaging any more than need be. Everything was cleaned up so well when they were done.”

You can see where this is going—actually, maybe you don’t. If that were the end of the story, it would be a simple (if not terribly uncommon) matter of an experienced sports field contractor cleaning up the mess left behind by a less experienced contractor.

But Lohmann Sports Fields is forging a relationship with Lakes Community HS that may be unique to sports field management at the scholastic level because it will continue beyond the initial project.

LSF, along with Gewalt-Hamilton and other consultants are now formulating an ongoing maintenance schedule at Lakes Community that allows Pechette and his crews to tackle items like aeration within the confines of a normal budget cycle.

“This isn’t the sort of thing that the big contractors normally get involved with,” said Jim Lohmann, senior project manager at LSF. “But we’ve spent a big chunk of the last 2 years talking to park district executives, high school athletic directors and recreation directors from across the Midwest. The market is changing. A lot of these guys are dealing with long-term budget reductions, meaning they are looking for new ways to more efficiently (and effectively) care for their sports fields.

“That sounds very general but it’s really quite specific. These school and park districts all have the same maintenance needs. We’ve identified 10 of the most common needs and formulated individual programs to address those needs, each for less than \$10,000. This dollar figure is critical. Not all school and park districts operate identically, but the \$10,000 price tag generally falls

below the traditional threshold cost for projects that require a bid process.

“In other words, anything more expensive may require a bid, an RFP or months of planning, and a series of approvals from higher up in the bureaucracy.”

Tom Rychlik, a civil engineer with Gewalt-Hamilton, says that none of these advances in servicing park and school districts would be possible without an understanding of the public sector hierarchies and budgeting mechanisms.

“At most public agencies, budgets are not set up for capital improvements,” Rychlik says. “You need to add maintenance costs annually to properly care for a newly built or renovated field, to protect your investment. Park districts that have an agronomist on staff already know this, but if you do not—or you are a school district, which rarely have an agronomist on staff—then this sort of strategic outsourcing makes a lot of sense. It’s easier to budget and provides access to this expertise.”

At Lakes Community H.S., LSF would handle aeration on this out-sourced basis, if you will. As Lohmann noted, it’s a new high school and doesn’t have all the equipment on hand to efficiently prepare its fields, especially at the start and end of the season. The same holds true for established schools that are too small to invest in such expensive equipment.

“That’s where we see an opportunity to help,” says Lohmann. “We have the equipment, expertise and manpower to knock these jobs out quickly, on short notice. And the large volume of work that we do allows us to price the work just as efficiently, especially when schools in the same district contract together.

“Here’s another example of how this sort of out-sourced, ongoing maintenance can work: laser-grading,” Lohmann continues. “This is a big expense for park districts and schools. Every year when they’re getting baseball and softball fields ready for the spring season, they fill depressions and grade things off. Over time, the infield gets built up and is actually higher than the rest of the field, or the mix gets pushed to the perimeter leading to lip and drainage problems and a potential rebuild of that field, at some point. That’s expensive.

“We can laser grade quickly and easily each spring and save municipal clients the expense of adding materials year after year. Trust me: laser grading is a lot cheaper than buying a load of ball mix and laying it on there every spring, especially when annually adding mix ultimately leads to other problems that can easily be avoided.”

Rychlik noted that Gewalt-Hamilton are engineers, not agronomists nor soil scientists. Accordingly, they recommended to Pechette the services of Dave Marquardt at Dirt-n-Turf Consulting, Hinckley, IL which has developed its own ongoing relationship with Lakes Community HS.

“Dave takes soil samples and provides answers,” Rychlik says. “At Lakes Community, he found the water they use to irrigate had unsuitably high salt content. That means Leo’s annual plan should call for the laying down of gypsum to counteract the salinity.”

“During the construction process, we use consultants like Dirt & Turf to determine what sort of fertilization program to use going forward, but there is no reason you cannot make those soil findings and judgments regarding an existing facility... I like to include \$2500 for Dave to come out to a facility twice a year to report on soil strata, both chemistry and physical analysis. Again, no need for a bid and those reports tie in directly to the turf enhancement recommendations. I would say that if you have a good comprehensive maintenance plan that includes fertilization and overseeding, then the cost additions beyond Dave’s time to test and report are mar-

ginal, i.e. \$1,000 a year. You’re just dialing in the specific rates that you can have confidence are right.”

Pechette has a newly renovated football field, but he’s also committed to the aeration regimen he’s undertaken with LSF. “We’ve already seen a reduction in the amount of turf we’ve had to put down [in repairs]. But the biggest thing is, the field today is a safe field, for the athletes. It used to be a quagmire with 3-4 inch ruts from the cleats. Now it gets wet, but never muddy.”

LSF calls its specific ongoing maintenance program “10 under 10”, because it details 10 vital projects that cities, park districts and school systems can undertake to add value and performance to their sports field inventory. Most important, each project can be executed for “under” \$10,000.

“Don’t get me wrong: We have no problem doing rebuilds like the one we did at Lakes Community High School, but we’re honestly more interested in helping schools and park districts avoid that sort of major expense,” Lohmann said. “There are several things going on here. There are some park and school districts that simply don’t have the equipment or expertise to aerate or laser grade or install quick coupler valves on an irrigation system.”

“But there’s another group of districts that might have the expertise but don’t have the budgets, or the political climate, that allow this sort of work to get approved. The 10 Under 10 program was designed to get this important work done economically.” ■

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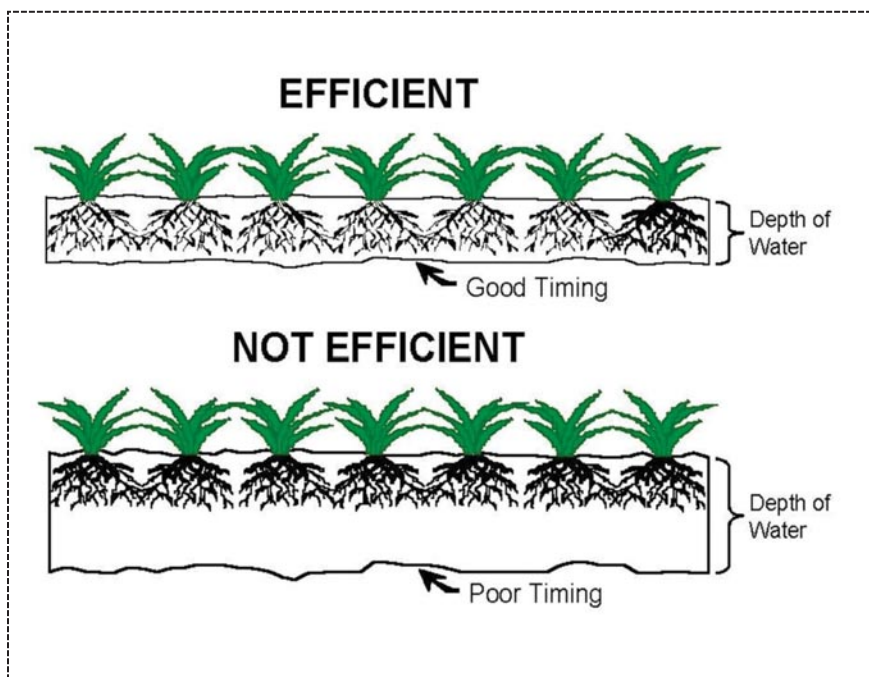
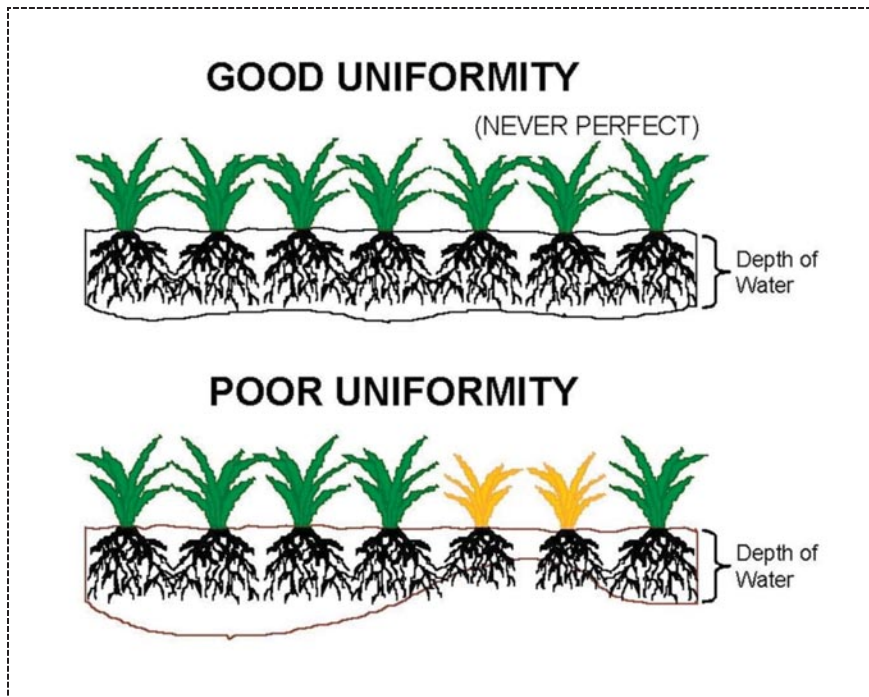
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Smart Irrigation Month: Why it's Important to Sports Turf Managers

Editor's note: This article was supplied by Warren S. Gorowitz, Ewing Irrigation, Vice President–Sustainability & Conservation, and Danny Motylewski, Hunter Industries, Business Development–Water Conservation.



WHAT IS SMART IRRIGATION MONTH?

July has been deemed Smart Irrigation Month, first launched in 2005 by the Irrigation Association. In most areas July is typically the month of peak irrigation demand. The focus of Smart Irrigation Month is to promote the use of efficient irrigation products and water conservation practices to the public. This includes reviewing your irrigation system's performance thru an irrigation audit as well as evaluating your irrigation system's various components to ensure they are saving water and energy.

Experts on the Field; Partners in the Game:

What does it mean to a Turf Manager? As a sports turf manager your priority is to provide a safe playing surface for those who use your fields. With the increased focus on sustainability everyone in the Green Industry needs to use our resources as efficiently as possible. Why not use SMART Irrigation Month as an opportunity to show your supervisors, players and the public what you're doing to use water efficiently at your facility? By understanding the difference of irrigation "uniformity" (how uniformly the water is being applied to an area) versus "efficiency" (how efficiently the plant uses the amount of water being applied), are some of the first steps to being a better water manager.

WHY IRRIGATION AUDITS ARE IMPORTANT

In order to understand how your irrigation system is performing, doing an irrigation audit is

Why not use SMART Irrigation Month as an opportunity to show your supervisors, players and the public what you're doing to use water efficiently at your facility?

critical. Think of this process as the easiest way to diagnose your irrigation system. In its simplest form, the irrigation audit involves placing catch cans in a zone on your field and measuring the consistency of the application of the sprinklers. The measurements are then calculated and can give a uniformity rating, in a percentage. These numbers can help you justify why you might need more funds for updating and/ or retrofitting your system. If you'd like to learn more about irrigation auditing, visit the Irrigation Association's Website (<http://www.irrigation.org>) and review the Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor program. Classes are being taught throughout the year, around the country.

WHAT TYPES OF WATER-CONSERVING PRODUCTS SHOULD YOU BE USING?

The Irrigation Association formed a group to create testing protocols for various irrigation system components. SWAT (Smart Water Application Technology), has been testing Weather Based-Climatic Adjustment Controllers for more than 4 years and is now working with the EPA's WaterSense Program, which will provide a WaterSense label on controllers that are 20% more efficient than their counterparts in the near future.

Controllers, with ET or soil moisture sensor adjustment, Water Budgeting, and Central Control software included, can allow the sports turf manager to have constant control over the fields and



landscaping. Many controllers have special features to allow for more efficient scheduling of the runtimes for the zones. Cycle and soak help save water and prevent runoff, especially if there is a clay soil and/ or slope that are being irrigated.

Flow management, which allows a zone to shutoff immediately when there is a break in a line and/ or sprinkler; thus saving valuable water and money! Real-time flow monitoring lets the field manager understand how much water is being used by each zone, with calculations created by the controller.

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Understanding the importance of various sprinklers and the nozzles that are included with each one is imperative. Uniformity of the application of water is extremely important as it creates and/or eliminates brown “doughnuts” around the sprinklers and in the turf areas.

Rain shutoff devices are being tested by SWAT, which will bring an important approval to these products. By installing a unit that stops the sprinkler zones from running during a rainstorm, the manager eliminates calls from the public and/or private operation reporting water wasted when it’s raining. Included in some of these units are wind and freeze shutoff devices, too.

Understanding the importance of various sprinklers and the nozzles that are included with each one is imperative. Uniformity of the application of water is extremely important as it creates and/or eliminates brown “doughnuts” around the sprinklers and in the turf areas. Depending upon the type of soil, the precipitation rate of the sprinkler is very important to know. High precip rates can leach expensive applied chemicals through a sandy soil, while low precipitation rates allow the water to infiltrate into the soil at a more efficient rate. Matching precipitation rates with various sprinklers on the same zone is vital for proper scheduling of the runtimes. Mismatched nozzles, with differing precip rates promote overwatering and under watering turf and landscape areas.

Pressure regulation is important for saving irrigation water, as the direct correlation between pressure, flow and velocity (basic hydraulics) affect the radius, uniformity and efficiency of a system. Too high of pressure also promotes small, fast moving droplet sizes; prone to going everywhere (but on the turf) in high wind conditions. Too low, and the droplets get larger and the area being wa-

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tered is not getting water applied uniformly. The higher the pressure, the more demand of the flow. Pressure regulation can be applied at the valve and/ or in the sprinkler head itself. An example of how much water can be saved with rotors is:

Rotor zone example:

- 3.7 GPM @ 60 PSI
- 3.4 GPM @ 50 PSI (optimum)
- 0.3 GPM X 20 minutes = 6 gallons

(saved)

- 120 irrigation days X 6 gallons = 720 gallons

- 20 heads X 720 gallons = **14,400 gallons per year saved**

Programs, Initiatives, Education: All Lead to Excellent Water Managers in the Field. There are many key water-related initiatives taking place throughout the nation today. The United States Green Building Council's LEED Rating System, ASLA Sustainable SITES Initiative, water budgeting per state, rebate programs, only to name a few. Many might be taking place in your region and you need to be aware of what's taking place and how it affects your fields and surrounding landscapes.

Water conservation is not a trend; it's a fact of life. Our most valuable resource is WATER...no two ways about it. Education is key to managing this and sharing your knowledge with colleagues, friends and families; much less your supervisor and your work establishment. There are many classes being offered by the Irrigation Association (online and in classroom settings); distributors conduct many types of irrigation-related classes that pertain to water conservation (Ewing Irrigation, for one); associations such as the Sports Turf Managers Association, have excellent regional and annual meetings with outstanding educational opportunities.

Finally, to ensure that you have a safe, healthy and beautiful playing surface, water conservation and awareness is vital. Professional turf managers need to constantly be ready to learn what is new and upcoming in this realm.

Remember July is SMART Irrigation Month but we should practice water efficiency throughout the year. You are the **Experts on the Field, Partners in the Game.** ■

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Water management: using soil surfactants

WE POSED THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS to Mica McMillan, the senior research agronomist for Aquatrols:

SportsTurf: What soil conditions most often lead to the need for using surfactants?

McMillan: The primary soil condition that leads to the need for using soil surfactants is less than ideal wetting of the thatch layer and/or soil. Soil surfactants, also known as soil wetting agents, are typically used to avoid or alleviate soil water repellency and/or reduce the surface tension water—in both cases to make sure that water effectively and uniformly infiltrates and disperses in the rootzone.

Water repellency in thatch or soil reduces infiltration rates and causes non-uniform soil wetting. It is caused by hydrophobic coatings which interfere with the ability for thatch and soil to accept and evenly distribute

water (and spray solutions). Even low levels of water repellency can lead to waste of water and increased need for irrigation.

Soil water repellency occurs in all soil types but is most prevalent in sandy soils due to the small surface area (compared to a clay soil) which more rapidly becomes affected by the coatings. Sandy soils also experience numerous wet to dry cycles, which are a factor in the occurrence and severity of soil water repellency. Numerous other factors also contribute to soil water repellency including fungal pathogens, root exudates, organic matter, organic coatings on soil particles, etc.

Soil water repellency is exhibited all over the world, under most climates and under many different cultural practices such as agriculture, golf courses, bowling greens, parks, forests, sand dunes, etc. So it's no surprise that it is a factor in the maintenance of sports turf as well.

Turf managers are encouraged to check the soil wettability by collecting numerous soil moisture readings with a hand held moisture sensor. If your soil is wetting well, the readings should be similar. If there is a lot of variation, a simple test for water repellency can be used. (Water Drop Penetration Time (WDPT) test information below). Unless it's ideal (instantaneous and very uniform) then including soil surfactants in your turf management program can be a good way to ensure that you are using your water efficiently.

It's important to not confuse soil surfactants with foliar adjuvants or stickers...

ST: How should a turf manager choose a product when using surfactants as part of a **soil applied** herbicide program? When might he know he should include surfactants in a program?

McMillan: If a turf manager is having problems with water movement on the turf/soil surface and into the root zone, i.e., slow water infiltration, runoff, percolation, groundwater contamination, minor drainage, poor water distribution, it is an indication that water repellency may be present and a soil surfactant could help address these issues. Soil surfactants lower the surface tension of water (influencing the cohesive forces) and, depending on the formulation, improve the wettability of soils (influencing adhesive forces). This allows water molecules to spread outward and more easily move into and through the soil. Since surfactants increase the uniformity of distribution of water, any material applied with that water and surfactant will also be uniformly distributed optimizing the efficacy of products such as fertilizers, soil applied herbicides and pesticides. Before tank mixing soil surfactants with any product, perform a jar test to confirm products are compatible.

It's important to not confuse soil surfactants with foliar adjuvants or stickers, which are formulated to enhance activity of foliar applied herbicides, fertilizers or pesticides. Many different types of surfactants or wetting agents are available just be sure to use the right one for your purpose.

ST: Any recommendations or general guidelines concerning what type of surfactants to use in specific situations?

Water Drop Penetration Time (WDPT) test

MATERIALS NEEDED: soil corer, tray, eyedropper, watch with 2nd hand/timer, paper and pen/pencil.

1. Following a dry period, pull some cores from the areas with variable soil moisture readings and lay them on a tray. If the weather is wet – pull the cores and let them dry in-tact at room temperature for several days.
2. Mark paper as follows: thatch/mat, 0 (soil surface), 0.5, 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, etc.
3. With cores on their sides and beginning at the turfed end of the core, place drops of water on the core at the thatch/mat area, soil surface and at 0.5 inch intervals along the core. Record how long it takes (from 0 to 60+ seconds) for the drop to fully disappear.

Anything above 0 seconds indicates some level of water repellency.

More information can be found in "Soil Science: Step-by-Step Field Analysis" published by the Soil Science Society of America, pgs 97-112.